



Winter 2022

Rights Catalogue

**NEEM TREE
PRESS**

**Books that change and
broaden perspectives.**



We are a vibrant, independent publishing house producing books that change and broaden perspectives. Dedicated to the enthusiastic discovery of both British and international literature, we are truly global in scope, with titles under contract from across the world. We are the recent recipients of a prestigious English PEN grant, a literary award for an upcoming work in translation, and our books have been featured in Harper's Bazaar, Vogue, on BBC Radio, and at the Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City.

The neem, declared by the United Nations as the 'tree for the 21st century' is a hardy, drought resistant tree that thrives in poor soil conditions and has many medicinal properties. It provides generous shade and oxygen to those who rest under it, as well as producing pesticides to keep plants healthy in its vicinity. We hope to follow in the footsteps of our namesake and thrive under difficult market conditions, providing much food for thought through our adult and children's lists.



NEEM TREE
PRESS

CONTENTS

NON-FICTION

Head Above Water: Reflections on Illness 04

Belly Woman 08

FICTION

The Book of Perilous Dishes 10

Can I Stray 14

House of Atreus: Clytemnestra's Bind 28

CHILDREN'S (MG/YA)

War of The Wind 24

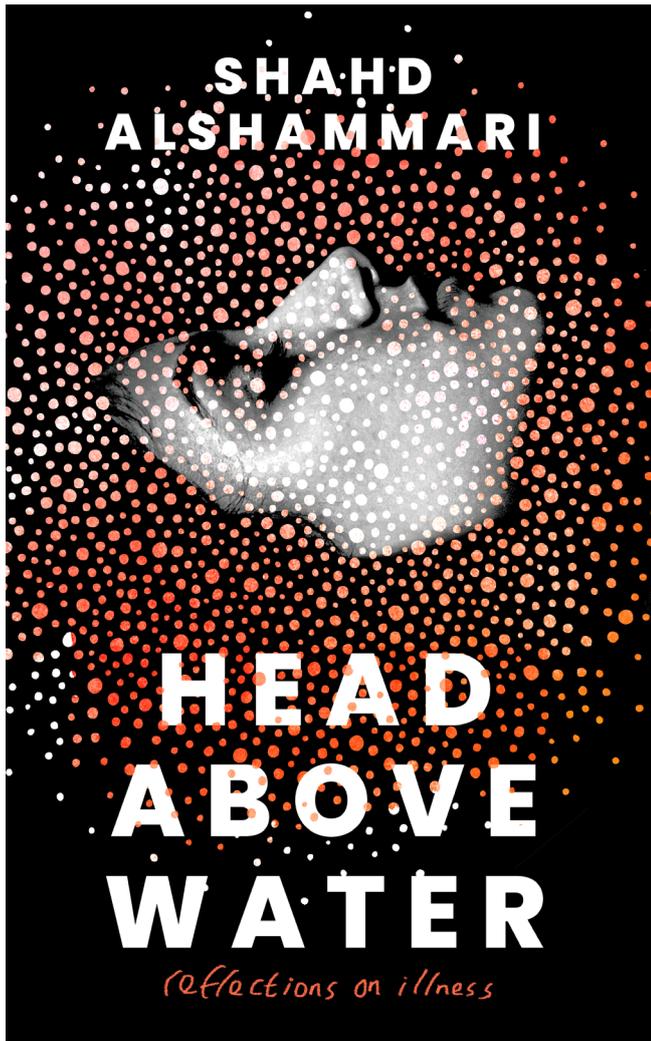
The Three Hares Trilogy 28

The Djinn's Apple 33



Head Above Water: Reflections on Illness

By Shahd Alshammari



Narrative non-fiction chronicling an Arab woman's experience of disability. At once a vivid account of illness, and a personal journey involving stigma, healing, friendship and the power of storytelling.

Head Above Water: Reflections on Illness centres a Kuwaiti professor's conversations with her student. The author details her account of being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of eighteen in a strictly conservative Kuwaiti society. Alshammari draws on diary entries and snippets of conversations from her failing memory (as the disease is still progressing). Referencing literature and poetry to consider broad themes – death, love, loss, shame, family, identity, mental health and illness – the narrative expands. These topics are explored but left unanswered, thereby allowing the reader to reflect on their

Narrative Non-Fiction
Hardback / Paperback / eBook
Released: May 30th 2022
All Worldwide Rights Available
Categories: Memoir, Disability,
Medical Humanities.



own ideologies and how they navigate life. Life is, more often than not, interrupted by illness. A toolbox for survival is presented here as stories emerge out of human connection and a politics of love.

Head Above Water invites us to ask big questions about life, loss, and the stigmatisation of illness. The narrative builds a bridge that

reminds us of our common humanity and connects the threads that tie us all together.

TO BE RELEASED ON
WORLD MS DAY 2022

All rights available

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sahd Alshammari has Multiple Sclerosis and sits on the judging panel for the The Barbellion Prize Meet Our Judges, focused on disability in literature. Her PhD was from the UK. Alshammari is an Assistant Professor of Literature. Her research interests focus on mad-women in different literatures, including Victorian, post-colonial, and Bedouin. Alshammari is especially interested in the concept of hybridity, having been born to a Bedouin father and a Palestinian mother. She is also interested in Disability Studies and the correlation of disability studies with identity in the Arab world, having been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of 18.





EXCERPT from *Head Above Water*

By Shahd Alshammari

From pages 187-188:

“**Y**asmeen hands me the binder and I pull the heaviness of memory lane into my lap. There is a beautiful familiarity in the pages and each paper I flip through feels as though I am leafing through an archive of memories. I had stored these pages and now was retrieving them to guide myself out of the isolation I had been feeling. With my MS progressing, I was feeling more isolated than ever. I had begun to turn inwards and could hardly remember how my circle of friends and connections had always kept me going. I was searching for guidance and I wanted to read Farida’s words again, share them with Yasmeen, use their maternal power to heal. The words are meant to be read out loud, to be used to console us and give a voice to the experience of being Farida, a mother, a friend, part of my circle of survival.

The letters are not blurry. The words are clear but my eyelids are heavy. I squint at them and wear my eyeglasses, thinking that will solve the issue. But I know better. I ask Yasmeen to read the article, handing the paper to her, almost as if lending her my voice and Farida’s, a generation to speak with the other, an abled-bodied woman speaking with (not for) the disabled community. I want the experience to be visceral for her as she



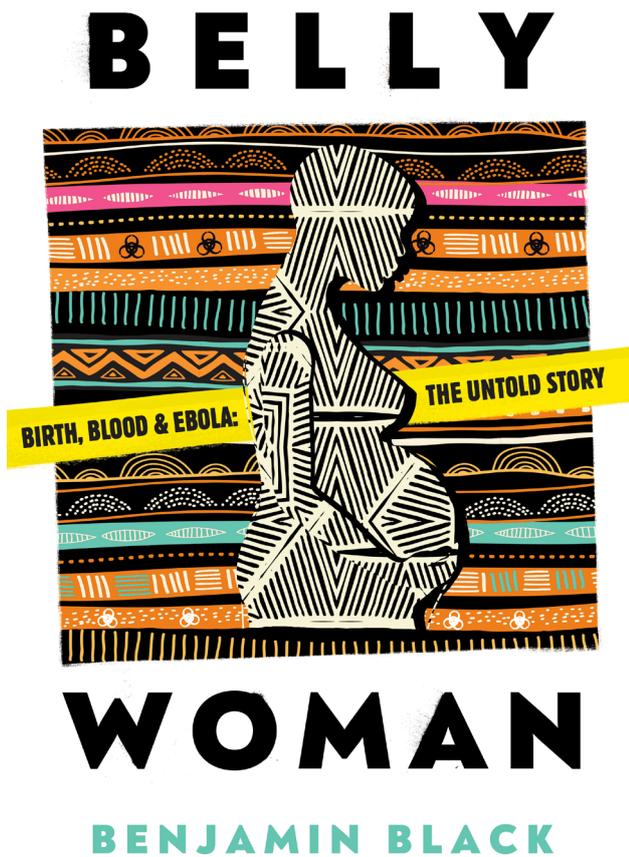
reads the words out loud. Just like my experience teaching poetry, telling my students to read the words out loud, hear the rhythm rise and stretch, bring meaning to the poet's experience. We all suffer differently, but each suffering has a rhythm, a quality that is to be recognised in its difference. I don't want to lose sight of suffering as part of our circle, part of the reason we connect so strongly, our similarities as women, whether abled-bodied or disabled, and yet I need to emphasise the differences. But the differences are meant to be a bridge that connects, rather than separates. We have a bridge between us, and we access it willingly because we built it together over the years.

Farida and I still live next door to each other and our experiences with disability became part of the communal energy that we put in our everyday lives. Each meal she cooked for her daughter she would send half of it to me. Each time I got some groceries I would send some over to her. We had, as the Egyptians say, *_aish wa milh_* shared between us. Bread and salt, bread and butter, bread and anything you want it to be, but this act of sharing food was a part of the bridge that helped us stay afloat. Above water. Always, together, knowing that family was a women's circle that wanted to ensure you stayed alive. There have been many times where I would not leave my bed but would have to get up because Farida and Dana were knocking the door, a hot meal in hand, and would burst through my apartment, opening the windows, making my home their home."



Belly Woman

By Benjamin Black



Memoir / Narrative non-fiction
 Paperback / eBook / Hardback
 Released: October 15th 2022
 All Worldwide Rights Available
 Categories: Global Health, Maternal
 Health, Ebola, Development Studies,
 Humanitarian Emergencies.

Belly Woman is a testimony to one of the greatest health emergencies of modern times. It raises questions on the lessons not learnt and opportunities not taken for the Covid-19 era and exposes the global inequality of birth.

May, 2014. Sierra Leone is ranked the country with the highest death rate of pregnant women in the world. The same month Ebola crosses in from neighbouring Guinea. Arriving a few weeks later, Dr Benjamin Black unexpectedly finds himself with Medecin San Frontiers at the centre of the largest ever Ebola outbreak.

From the impossible decisions of the maternity ward to the moral dilemmas of the Ebola Treatment Centres. One mistake, one error of judgment, could spell disaster. Every day the maternity ward receives women in critical conditions, often indistinguishable from deadly Ebola infections. As the epidemic encircles the hos-



pital the stakes reach breaking point. What is safe? What is deadly? The team close the maternity, a devastating blow to women and health workers.

In the months that follow Benjamin's journey collides with the epidemic's pivotal events. He recalls being present as the disease takes grip, spreading exponentially, colleagues get infected and the international response splutters into

action. Returning after the epidemic, Benjamin reckons with the demons of the past, trying to help build a different, more resilient, future.

COMING WINTER 2022

All rights available

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Benjamin Black is a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist in London and a specialist advisor to international aid organisations. He has worked with humanitarian agencies, government departments, academic institutions and UN bodies. His focus on sexual, reproductive and maternal healthcare for populations in times of crisis has taken him to many countries.

Benjamin has contributed to several medical textbooks, international reports, guidance and authored many articles in the medical literature. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic he provided frontline healthcare to pregnant women and supported international guidelines development.

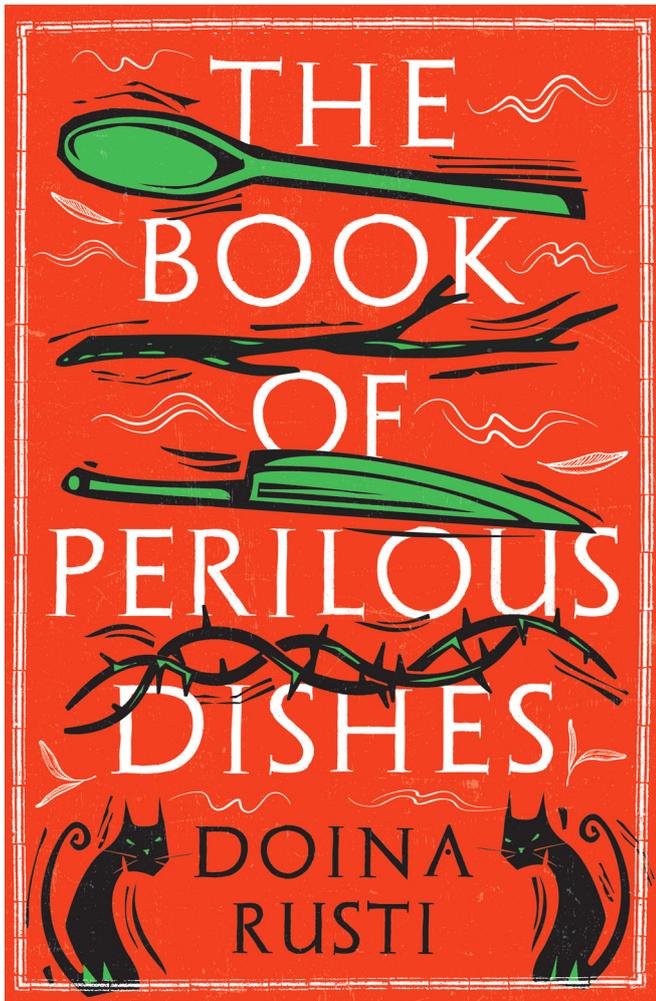
He teaches medical teams around the world on improving sexual and reproductive health care to the most vulnerable people in the most challenging of environments, including throughout the pandemic. Benjamin is also a member of the expert panel enquiry into racial injustice in UK maternity services.





The Book of Perilous Dishes

By *Doina Rusti*



Winner of a major award from the Romanian Cultural Institute, this fantastical novel mixes elements of magic and folklore to create a dark and playful tale that traverses Europe at the turn of the 18th century.

Bucharest, 1798. A sublime chef lives in Bucharest, sought after by everyone. His cooking satisfies even the sophisticated tastes of the Prince, who takes him to the Palace. However, no one knows that the cook has in his possession a witch's recipe book: the 'Book of Perilous Dishes'. His food can bring about damaging sincerity, forgetfulness, the gift of prediction, or hysterical laughter. And the rightful owner of this book is fourteen-year-old Pâtca, an adolescent initiated in the occult arts. Pâtca comes to Bucharest, to her uncle, Cuviosu Zaval, to recover this book, but she finds him dead, murdered, and the 'Book of Perilous Dishes' has disappeared without a trace. All that Zaval has left her is a strange map...

The Book of Perilous Dishes is the story of Pâtca, who uses her powers

Literature in Translation

Hardback / Paperback / eBook

Released: March 3rd 2022

Rights Available: All Rights Related to English Translation, Except Film. Translation Rights Available for Turkish Only.

Categories: Magic, Adventure Story, Folklore, Fantasy, Cookery.



to avenge the death of her uncle and retrieve a magical recipe book left in his keeping which has been stolen by Silica the cook. Travelling from Romania to France and on to Germany to do so, Pâtca's family's true past and powers are revealed, as is her connection to Silica the cook...

This atmospheric novel has been translated into German, Spanish and Hungarian and is told much like an adventure story, going from place to place, from one fantastical encounter to the next.

COMING MARCH 3rd 2022

Rights Available: All Rights Related to English Translation, Except Film.

Translation Rights Available for Turkish Only.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Doina Rusti is one of Romania's most successful writers of historical and speculative fiction. Known for the originality of her novels, Rusti is the recipient of many major Romanian awards, and her books have been translated into multiple languages. Rusti is known for exploring aspects of fantasy and the supernatural, as well as tackling darker themes such as political corruption.



James Christian Brown, originally from Scotland, has lived in Romania since 1993 and teaches in the English Department of the University of Bucharest. His most recent book-length translations from Romanian to English are *The Tiger of Our Town* by Gianina Carbuariu (2016), *About the World We Live In* by Alexandru Dragomir (2017), and Doina Rusti's novel *The Book of Perilous Dishes* (Neem Tree Press, 2022.)



EXCERPT from

The Book of Perilous Dishes

By Doina Rusti

Translation From Pages 12-14 by James Christian Brown:

“**A**t the crack of dawn, Maxima was taken out into the square under the gaze of the scavengers sweeping around the Walachisches Tor. I knew what was coming. I gathered a few things and left by the back door. The butchers carrying their beef carcasses passed by me without a glance. I walked quickly to the end of the street. All around it was deserted, although I could well imagine that there were eyes pressed up against all the net curtains.

When the Şchei patrol pounded on some gate or other, the whole district heard it. They had batons with metal heads, specially made for hitting the little plate with the number of the house. First, they would strike a few times to attract attention, and then they would shout the name of the guilty person out loud. And it was only then that the gate would begin to rattle, as each tried to strike harder than his fellows and they all kept yelling at the top of their voices, moving on from the person's name to the reason why they were wanted. I had heard it all many a time, especially at night, but it had never entered my head that they might pound on our gate too. The city guard was for scoundrels, for robbers and for those who had killed people. And so, I didn't even open my eyes at the first blows. Our gate had a new overhang, and when they first struck it, the sound was like hail to my ears. It was only after they had shouted Maxima's name several



times that I jumped out of bed, frightened to death. In the entrance hall the washerwoman stood trembling, and a few moments later Maxima too appeared. She descended the stairs in her bare feet, wearing nothing but her nightshirt.

‘Get some clothes on and go out by the back door!’

‘Don’t for a moment imagine...!’ I protested.

She took me by the shoulders, and looked at me with those eyes that left no room for discussion:

‘Listen to me: don’t forget your mission! In a short time the braşoveancă leaves for Bucharest, and you absolutely must at all cost get a place in the carriage! I need you. Go to Cuviosu Zăval, who will tell you what you must do next! And until then, you know...!’

I knew: I was not to say a word about myself, not to indulge in loose talk with anyone. The first and foremost rule was never to say my true name. Even if someone should prove that he knew it, I was to flatly deny it. Not even dead was I to say it. My clothing was to be modest. My eyes cast down. Don’t laugh! Never show your teeth! Smile. Don’t grin and don’t chuckle! Joy shows only in the eyes. And of course—I was not to deviate from my path!

Someone had already put my satchel in my hand. At the gate the guards were yelling as I put on my shoes, trembling. In the neighbours’ houses, lamps had been lit.

My money was already stowed in the soles of my boots, sewn into the lining of my jacket, and in various objects in my travelling bag. I was to keep only small change in my pocket. My yellow dress was stuffed with useful items.

‘And don’t forget, Pâtca! Make use of Sator’s power when things get hard for you!’

These were her last words. She was still standing barefoot at the bottom of the stairs. I didn’t kiss her. We didn’t say good-bye. I heard the gate opening, but I kept running towards the back door. From the garden, I saw them shoving her out into the street. There were three uniforms, three loudmouths. I opened the garden gate. Tears were running down my cheeks. I ran till I got to the end of the street.”



Can I Stray

By Jenna Adams

FINAL COVER TO BE
REVEALED

CAN I STRAY

Jenna Adams

Can I Stray follows the story of Brooke's age-gap relationship with Matt and the lasting impact it has on her life. It explores themes of consent, mental health, co-dependency and toxic relationships.

Fourteen-year-old Brooke Tyler has spent her whole life waiting for a boy to choose her. Matt is about to go to university, scared to leave behind everything he knows. When both are cast as romantic leads in *Romeo and Juliet*, they fulfil the roles of forbidden lovers both on and off the stage. Brooke is sure that her fairy tale is coming true - and best of all, Matt is older.

Brooke considers secrets and lies a small price to pay for her first boyfriend, but the

Adult Contemporary Fiction / New Adult
Paperback / eBook
Released: October 11th 2022
All Worldwide Rights Available
Categories: Mental Health, Consent,
Toxic Relationships, Coming-of-Age.



relationship is set to cost her the moment they have sex. When Brooke learns that Matt's actions that night were illegal, her world shatters.

Years later, Brooke and Matt reunite as adults. Matt wants to undo all the damage he caused, but Brooke makes a

choice which forces them both to question their relationship.

Told in three acts this debut reveals a young woman's journey for independence as she strays away from everything she has ever known to navigate her traumatic past.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jenna Adams lives in London and writes from her third-floor flat which is covered in plants. She always has a book in her handbag, and runs a Twitter and Instagram where she posts about her favourite novels. Jenna's debut novel *Can I Stray* is a new adult book about co-dependency, mental health and issues of consent.





EXCERPT from *Can I Stray*

By Jenna Adams

From pages 98-100:

“**I** know I said that being with Brooke was a bad idea. But it was too hard to keep away from her. The way I felt was like nothing I’d ever experienced before. It was a force that pulled me towards her, like my own personal gravity. She understood me in a way that no one else could. And when we were together I forgot her age because she was so mature, and she looked older, and she acted older, and she told me she wanted to be with me, so I let her be with me, because I wanted to be with her too. It felt impossible to do anything else.

The next week at rehearsal, Stephen and Meg announced we were going to have to learn another song.

‘The second half needs some padding out,’ Stephen said. ‘So we’re going to have Brooke and Matt sing *Dangerous Game* from *Jekyll and Hyde*, right when Juliet finds out that Romeo killed her cousin.’

So Brooke and I went downstairs with Stephen to the piano to learn the song, then came back up to run the choreography – mostly simple steps and a lot of near-embraces. There were also parts where I had to spin Brooke around, or practically waltz with her, and she smiled at me shyly as I sang my lines.

Brooke’s voice surprised me, too; I didn’t know she could even reach those high notes, let alone belt them out. As the song progressed, our movements became more vigorous and our singing became more intense, and by the time we were finished we were panting. I downed my bottle of water.

Stephen was grinning. ‘That was brilliant! You picked that up so quickly!’

Brooke and I looked at one another, and I put an arm loose-



ly round her shoulder, giving her a friendly squeeze.

‘We’ll go over it a few more times next week, just to be sure you remember it...’ Stephen went on, but I wasn’t listening. Over his shoulder I saw Meg, notebook in hand, observing me sternly. She wasn’t smiling. I retracted my arm.

By the end of the session I really needed the bathroom after drinking all that water. Stephen was giving some announcements. I crossed my legs, listening for the end of his speech, waiting for the ‘See you next week,’ that never came. Eventually I just had to dart out the door as he was mid-sentence, hearing Lewis say ‘Oh, he’s off,’ as I went. When I came back up I had somehow managed to miss all the goodbyes – the only people left were Stephen and Brooke, who were talking about the song.

‘Yeah, I see what you mean,’ Stephen was saying, ‘but I wouldn’t worry about it, you managed fine today.’ He picked up his bag and headed for the door, waving to us as he went. I heard his footsteps echo down the stairs and Brooke turned to me.

‘Is he going to lock us in?’ she said.

‘Mum’s a keyholder, she can let us out,’ I laughed. ‘Though it wouldn’t be so bad, would it?’

Without saying another word, we walked towards one another. She wrapped herself up inside my arms and I kissed her gently, like I’d been wanting to all night.

‘Do you want to meet up soon?’ I asked.

‘Yeah,’ she said, ‘it’ll be easier when school ends next week.’

‘How about after the session next Friday? My parents have this dinner thing. We could have our first proper date—’

Over her shoulder I clocked Meg, standing in the doorway, her eyes burning into me with a ferocious look.

Shit. How long had she been listening? How much had she heard – or seen? I was certain she’d only just appeared there. But she saw us now, our arms still round each other, and my heart was pounding, and I knew I was in trouble.

Instinctively, I tried to pull away from Brooke, but she held on tightly to me. Hadn’t she seen Meg? I was sure she had, or at least had noticed my face turn white.

‘What’s going on?’ Meg’s voice was like thunder.”



The House of Atreus: Clytemnestra's Bind

By Susan Wilson

FINAL COVER TO BE
REVEALED

THE HOUSE OF ATREUS: CLYTEMNESTRA'S BIND

Susan Wilson

A mesmerising feminist retelling of the ancient Greek myth of Queen Clytemnestra. Perfect for readers of *Circe*, *The Children of Jocasta*, *Ariadne* and *The Women of Troy*.

Queen Clytemnestra's world is shattered when a rival to the Mycenaean throne storms her palace, slays her husband, and tears her newborn son from her breast. Her baby's dying cries have no sooner ceased than the murderer of her family, Agamemnon, forcibly marries her. Only one thing matters to her now: vengeance.

But her attempts to kill Agamemnon, and later to abort his child, fail. Clytemnestra reluctantly concludes that the gods willed her family's ruin. For the sake of her children, she forces herself to forgo vengeance and

Historical Fiction
Paperback / eBook
Released: Spring 2023
All Worldwide Rights Available
Categories: Greek Mythology, Historical-Fiction, Feminist Stories.



swears to let no man destroy a son or daughter of hers again.

But when Agamemnon pledges a sacrifice on their firstborn child, will Clytemnestra break her vow and continue the cycle of vengeance? Or will she leave the killer unpunished free to kill another family member.

COMING SPRING 2023

All rights available

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Wilson discovered her interest in Greek mythology as a child after stumbling on the names of gods and heroes while looking up naughty words in the dictionary. She loves to explore what makes us human: the eternal motivations, desires and instincts that cross time and place. Her ambition is to make ancient stories resonate with a modern audience, through historical fiction and contemporary retellings. In preparation for writing about ancient Greece, she gained a diploma in classical studies from the Open University.

Wilson's debut novel, *The House of Atreus: Clytemnestra's Bind* was long-listed for the Mslexia Novel Competition 2019.





EXCERPT from Clytemnestra's Bind

By Susan Wilson

From pages 43-45:

“**I** was a bridegroom on my wedding night. I crossed the moon-washed courtyard, sure that every patrolling guard must sense the bronze blade beneath my skirts, secured to my thigh by my belt. I avoided the colonnades, lit as they were by flickering torches in sconces, in case the guards detected a flush on my face, a new gleam in my eyes.

With my dagger I'd consummate my marriage to Agamemnon, and the spray would bring not life but death to us both.

And when his body lay still, what then? Turn the blade on myself? Or exult. Show myself to the people and offer thanksgiving sacrifices. Such thanksgiving.

No, there would be no time for celebrations. At their king's screams, his guards would burst into the bedchamber and drag me from his gore, toss me from the citadel walls with his blood on my face. I was ready to die; I welcomed death. Only, let them leave me unburied out on the mountainside to search for the shades of my dead.

I knew Agamemnon couldn't put off visiting me for ever if he wanted heirs, but my lost ones would wait not a day longer. They demanded justice. Tantalus, gentle shepherd-king, dragged from his bed and murdered in his hall. Iphitus, who'd never babble sweet baby-words, never be weaned from my breast, never clutch his first wooden sword carved by his father's hand. Even Thyestes shouldn't have died so wretchedly. Momentarily, I leaned against the wall for sup-



port. I mustn't weep now. I'd weep afterwards, if I still lived.

A guard approached me. 'Are you hurt, lady?'

I touched my thigh through my flounced skirts, half expecting my fingers to come away wet with blood. The material was soot-black in the darkness.

'I'm stiff through lack of exercise, that's all,' I said.

'Would you like me to help you upstairs?'

I toyed with the idea of a traitor—for these men were all traitors—escorting me to the killing of his king. But this one merited no special punishment. He mattered nothing.

'Not especially,' I said.

He grimaced and slipped away.

I tried to walk naturally, past the guards in the porch outside the hall. My heartbeat pulsed in my ears as I entered the side doorway and picked my way upstairs. The walk seemed endless through the long Gallery of the Tapestries where, in a former life, I sat around the hearth fire with my ladies in colder weather. Onwards I went, to the second flight of stairs. Up, to the domestic quarters. I could hardly believe my ambition was at hand.

There were no more guards until I reached the apartments where Thyestes once roared in his sleep for his murdered boys, next to the room where his remaining son dreamed a last dream. They'd hauled Tantalus past the spot where I now stood, along the passageways I'd just walked through, to meet his death at Agamemnon's hands. My heartbeat slowed, my euphoria dissolved.

Another beat and it returned. The guard outside the bedchamber door said, 'You've taken a wrong turning, lady.'

My voice seemed to radiate from outside myself, as if my goddess spoke through me. 'Isn't this my husband's chamber?'

'He's not expecting you.'

'Then announce me.'

He crossed his spear over his body, as if an empty-handed woman might try to force a way past him. The bronze dagger goaded me, pressing against my thigh like a lover's insistence. But Protectress Athene whispered a warning in my head: I had only one chance. Agamemnon wouldn't suffer a failed executioner to live."

A photograph of a bookshelf filled with books, with a warm, bokeh light effect in the background. The text 'SEVEN SEAS' is overlaid in a white, serif font, with a horizontal line under the word 'SEAS'.

SEVEN SEAS

Our Seven Seas collection focuses on Middle Grade and Young Adult fiction that showcases diverse cultures and protagonists. Seven Seas titles invoke a sense of adventure, danger and exploration with stories grounded in art, culture and history from around the world.



NEEM TREE
PRESS

ADVENTURE.
CURIOSITY.
EXPLORATION.



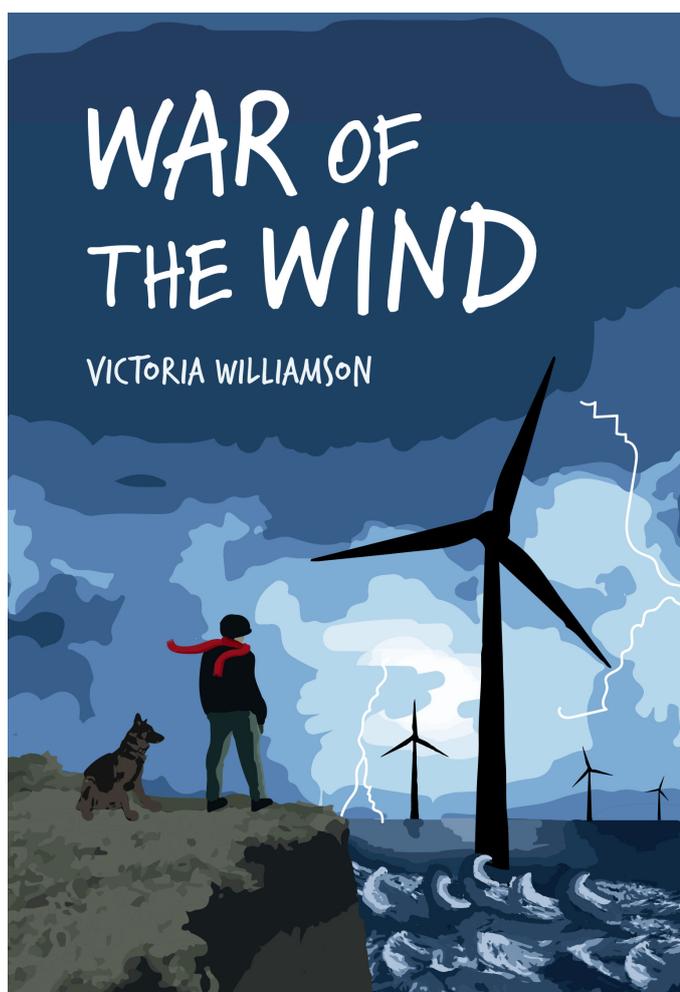
Stories from around
the world.





War of the Wind

By Victoria Williamson



War of the Wind is a Teen eco-thriller about secret government weapons testing gone wrong. Featuring a cast of children with special needs, it shows their abilities in a positive light and allows them to take centre stage in the unfolding drama.

On a remote Scottish island, fourteen-year-old Max's life changes forever when he loses his hearing in a boating accident. Struggling to make sense of his new life and resenting having to attend the 'special class' at his local high school, he begins to notice strange changes that take place when a new wind farm appears off the island's coast.

Children's / MG Fiction
Paperback / eBook

Released: September 23rd 2022

All Worldwide Rights Available

Categories: Environmental Fiction,
Adventure Story, Disabilities and Special
Needs, Coming-of-Age.

Soon it becomes clear the islanders are acting odd. In a few short weeks they become irritable, bad tempered and unpredictable. As the strange behaviour spreads to the children, acts of violence threaten to tear the community apart.



Unaffected by the changes due to his hearing loss, Max discovers that a sinister scientist, Doctor Ashwood, and the government are using the wind turbines to test a new sound-wave weapon on the island population. With the help of three school friends with additional support needs, Max must find a way to shut down the wind farm's signals and stop

Doctor Ashwood's plan before the out-of-control experiment has tragic consequences.

COMING WINTER 2022

All rights available

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Victoria Williamson is an award-winning children's author who grew up in Glasgow, Scotland. After studying Physics at the University of Glasgow, Williamson set out on her own real-life adventures, which included teaching math's and science in Cameroon, training teachers in Malawi, teaching English in China and working with children with additional support needs in the UK. Victoria is a qualified primary school teacher with a degree in Mandarin Chinese from Yunnan University and a Master's degree in Special Needs in Education. She is passionate about creating inclusive worlds in her novels where all children can see a reflection of themselves in a heroic role.



EXCERPT from *War of the Wind*

By Victoria Williamson

From pages 82-85

“**A**t first I thought the substation was deserted. Blinds were drawn over the windows of the nearest hut, and its door was sealed tight with a heavy padlock. On top of the second hut was a bank of dishes and aerials that looked like something from one those NASA spaceship documentaries. Whatever was in that hut must've been important, as the door was solid steel, and metal bars were welded across the window. But when I tiptoed round a row of big grey boxes connected to the pylons with high-voltage cables I stopped dead. The door of the third hut was standing open. I just caught sight of Twister's wagging tail as he disappeared inside.

Crap to the power of infinity.

“Twister, come back!” I hissed. I'd got used to judging the volume of my voice by little hints like the hum in my throat when I talked, but it was hard keeping my voice to a whisper when I couldn't hear it. “Twister!” I called again, a little louder.

It was no use. If I wanted the stupid dog back I was going to have to go in there and get him. I could only hope this was the soldiers' day off.

I crept to the door of the hut and peered inside. I thought it would just be a shelter for the generators, or maybe a storage hut for maintenance gear. I didn't expect anyone to



actually be living in there.

There was a camp bed set up by one wall, and Twister was sniffing the boots by the locker and lapping up cold coffee from the cup on the floor. Filling the rest of the hut was a desk cluttered with computer equipment, document files in enormous folders and a mountain of graph paper. I was pretty sure it all belonged to that weird scientist I'd seen down on the beach. But I wasn't about to stick around to find out.

"Twister, get over here!" I grabbed the end of his lead and managed to drag him out from under the camp bed where he'd been trying to reach the remains of a digestive biscuit. He fought to get back under, pulling on the lead and sending me stumbling back into the desk. I knocked over a whole bundle of folders, and computer printouts spilled to the floor in a waterfall of paper.

"Crap!" I muttered, scooping the folders up with one hand and smacking Twister with the other. "Stop that! Look what you've gone and done!"

Twister's tail went limp and he looked up at me like I was the world's biggest party pooper, but at least he wasn't trying to bite me. As I was stuffing the paper back into the folders as best I could, the words on one file caught my eye. I riffled through it, blinking in surprise as I scanned the reports.

'Wind Turbine Noise Pollution Analysis'

'Wildlife Disturbance Metadata'

'Bat Population Loss Critical Cutoffs'

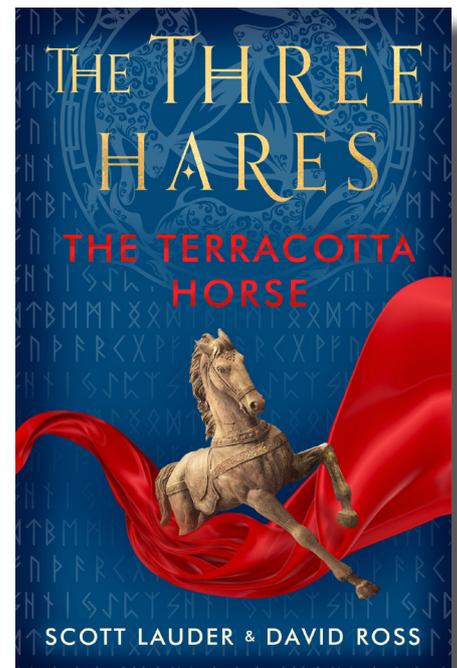
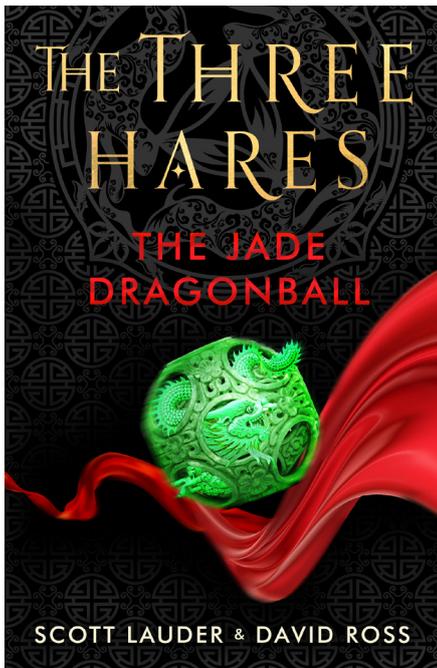
'Detrimental Health Effects of Low Frequency Exposure'

My hands were shaking by the time I got to the end of the file, but there was something else I had to see before I made my escape. A black briefcase was sitting half open on the edge of the desk, a dark red folder sticking out of it. When I opened the lid fully I could see the word 'Confidential' stamped across the front. I drew the file out, my heart pounding as I turned the pages."



The Three Hares Trilogy

By Scott Lauder and David Ross



A historical fantasy series

Across the ancient Silk Road - from Kaifeng, the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty, to Byzantium, the greatest city of its age, to the British Isles and their Viking-ravaged coastal settlements - silk has travelled and with it has gone murder, espionage, and intrigue.



Sara Livingston in Beijing, Sanjeev Roy in New York, and Salma Mansour in London are just three ordinary teenagers who do ordinary things: eat pizza and laugh with their friends. Some say art is an adventure, but for these three, it's a perilous trial pitting their wits against a formidable and violent foe escaped from his thousand-year imprisonment and bent on revenge. Follow Sara, Sanjeev, and Salma... to where the road leads them.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Scott Lauder was born in Ayrshire, Scotland. Having taught in Greece, Japan, and England, he now lives with his wife and four cats in the UAE where he teaches English. In his free time, he enjoys hiking and drinking good coffee. His other books include *The Right Thing*, *A Single Shot*, and *The Boy-King Tutankhamun*.

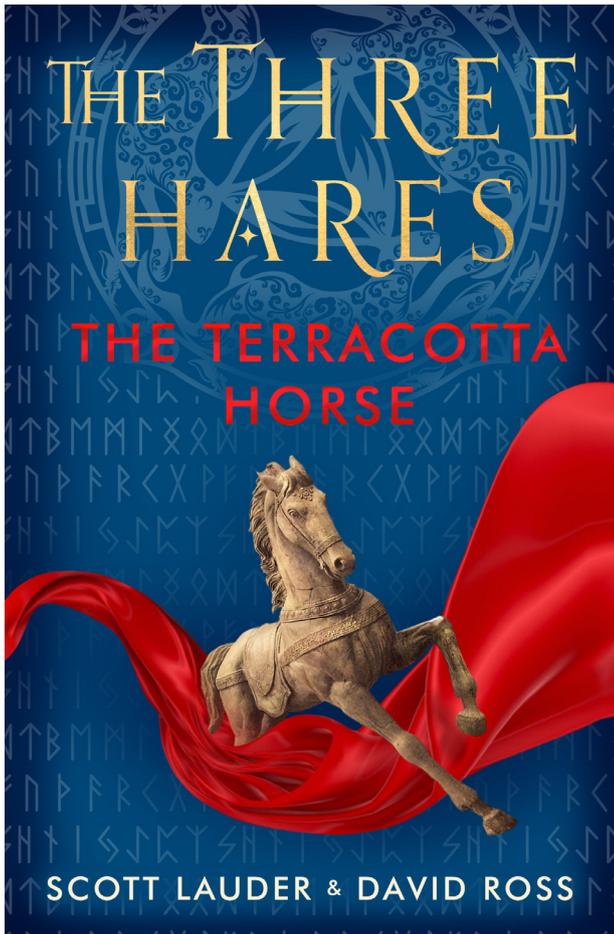


David Scott Ross has traveled and taught throughout Asia since he first moved there in 1987. He currently teaches in upstate NY, where he lives with his wife and two sons. When David is not writing or teaching, he dreams about becoming a chef, a rock star, maybe an actor, but probably not all at once. At present, he is wrapping up two projects: *Pastimes*, encounters with a Stone Age people, and *Dim*, a detective novel.



The Terracotta Horse

By Scott Lauder & David Ross



Salma Mansour is a black belt in taekwondo, a skill she will need to stay alive. One second, she's in the British Museum, the next a thousand years away in a battle between the Saxons and Vikings. And she's supposed to help? Things momentarily brighten when she encounters Sara and Sanjeev, who seem to understand. They don't have much time to plan though; without warning, all three are transported to Xi'an, stronghold of Chan, a wealthy gang leader bent on immortality. Chan has kidnapped world famous geneticist Lin Dan and assembled fragments of an ancient magic. Chan will stop at nothing to fulfil his dream... even if it means releasing forces far beyond his control. The Three Hares must work together to defeat Chan and the power that controls him ... or else.

Children's / MG Fiction
Paperback / eBook

Released: October 6th 2022
All Worldwide Rights Available
Categories: Historical Fantasy,
Adventure Story.



EXCERPT from The Terracotta Horse

From Pages 41-42:

“**A** wave of hot, sweetened air pushed and shoved its way along the platform, hitting the two girls and making them stagger slightly. A second later, the train emerged from the darkness, rushing along the track, lights blazing, brakes screeching, hauling carriage upon carriage full of bored passengers past their eyes. Whatever Kaylee wanted to say would have to wait. The train slowly lost speed and stopped. As soon as the doors slid open, Kaylee dived in. To Salma's embarrassment and, if she were being honest, irritation, she saw that Kaylee was guarding a place for her.

'No! I'm fine. You have it,' Salma said, but Kaylee wouldn't listen.

'Just sit down!' Kaylee cried and practically shoved Salma into the space. Salma had no option but to sit. The train doors closed. A moment later, they were hurtling out of the station.

Salma glanced at the adverts above her as the train entered the tunnel.

For a moment, Salma wondered if she had closed her eyes and fallen asleep. She was positive she hadn't, but just to be sure, she blinked, hard. They were definitely open; she was definitely awake.

'What the ... ?' she whispered into the dense blackness and equally dense silence surrounding her. Why was it so quiet? Had everyone gotten off the train?

'Hello?' she said, her voice wavering ever so slightly, which annoyed her.

She strained her ears. Nothing.

She cleared her throat; tried again, this time louder: 'Hello? Is anyone there?' Again, nothing. And yet somehow, it didn't feel like she was alone. Was there someone next to her? Either side of her? In front of her? She dared not reach out: what if there was? What if she touched someone? What if they could see her



but she couldn't see them? A shard of fear, small but sharp, stabbed at her heart. She was sitting: she could feel the seat's cushioned fabric below her, the weight of her body on it, her feet against the metal floor of the passageway. But there wasn't the slightest tremor, not the faintest hint of movement of steel wheels travelling over steel rails. Had the train stopped? Had the power failed? Was the train in the depot?

She tilted her head down; looked at where her arms were supposed to be. Nothing: she could see nothing. She raised her hand - so close, it touched her nose. She waved it back and forth, twice. There was no sign of movement. She sat very still and, holding her breath, listened, slowly turning her head one side then the other. The thrum of blood pounding through the veins sounded in her ears. She allowed herself to breathe again. Should she stand up? What if she made a noise? Was it safe to make a noise?

My mobile is in my backpack! The surge of joy she felt almost made her laugh until she realised she had no idea if her bag was still at her feet. Reaching down, she padded around with her fingers. She touched something metal and her eyes widened as she realised what it was: the zip on her bag! Pinching it between her two fingers, she unzipped, cringing at the loudness of the rasping sound it made. A sudden thought - that a hand was going to grasp her wrist and never let go - flashed into her mind. Breathing harder now, she delved inside the bag and began pushing through the mass of tangled stuff inside it. Where was her phone? It had to be in here somewhere.

'Come on,' she hissed. 'Come on.'

But then her fingers touched a hard, rounded edge. The mobile! Grabbing a corner, she eased it out, the worry of dropping it making her heart thump harder as she raised it up. With the mobile in front of her face, she pressed the 'Home' button. The screensaver, a picture of her mother, immediately appeared. Its bluish light was harsh, over-bright. Scrunching up her eyes, she dragged her finger upwards. The swipe brought up the control panel. Choosing the 'Flashlight' icon, she pressed it and held it out at arm's length, following its brilliant white beam as it pierced the gloom. What she saw made her recoil in horror."



The Djinn's Apple

By *Djamila Morani*

Translated by *Sawad Hussain*

FINAL COVER TO BE
REVEALED

The Djinn's Apple

Djamilla Morani
Translated: *Sawad Hussain*

Historical YA Fiction
128 Pages

Hardback / Paperback / eBook

Released: Spring 2023

All Worldwide Rights Available

Categories: Adventure, Fantasy,
Historical Fiction, Crime.

Winner of a prestigious English PEN Translates grant, this is a fast-paced Algerian crime novel featuring a strong female protagonist who breaks cultural and historical stereotypes.

The Djinn's Apple is a fast-paced whodunnit set in the Abbasid period (700-800 AD), and told through the eyes and inner monologue (including flashbacks) of twelve-year-old Nardeen. Splashed across the opening pages of the novel is the storming of her home by mysterious men frantically searching for something. Or someone. Nardeen manages to run away while the rest of her family is left behind, and murdered that very night. The rest of the book details Nardeen's quest to find her family's killer.

Part crime novel, part historical fiction, The Djinn's Apple is an enlightening and gripping read, particularly as the reader gets to see the evolution of the gutsy Nardeen as she grows to positively flout society's expectations of girls at that time.



It hooks you with...

- The swirling, magical atmosphere of the Abbasid period.
- The murder mystery of how her father was killed.
- An intelligent, feisty, 12 year old protagonist who becomes an adult during the story.

COMING SPRING 2023

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sawad Hussain is an Arabic translator and litterateur who is passionate about bringing narratives from the African continent to wider audiences. She was co-editor of the Arabic-English portion of the award-winning Oxford Arabic Dictionary (2014). Her translations have been recognised by English PEN, the Anglo-Omani Society and the Palestine Book Awards, among others. She holds an MA in Modern Arabic Literature from SOAS. Her Twitter handle is @sawadhussain.



Djamila Morani is an Algerian novelist and an Arabic language professor. Her first novel, released in 2015 and titled *Taj el-Khattiaa*, is set in the Abbasid period (like *The Djinn's Apple*), but in Kazakhstan. All of her works are fast-paced historical fiction pieces. She is yet to have a full-length work translated into English.



EXCERPT from The Djinn's Apple

By Djamila Morani

Sample translation by Sawad Hussain:

“**I** rushed to the balcony and craned forward to see men with their swords drawn, chanting, “Kill the apostates! Kill the infidels!” They didn’t look anything like Al-Rashid’s guard. Terrified, I turned to my father, who had jumped up from his chair when he heard the word “apostates.” He grabbed my hand and dragged me behind him down the stairs, his eyes surveying the area before him. My eyes clung to the fear in his. What was fear? Fear was my father’s wandering look that night. I pulled on his hand and mumbled, “Baba”

He stumbled but didn’t stop. I pressed my small palm into his sweaty one. Fear, for me, was usually a bogeyman from my mother’s stories chasing me; he would melt away, disappearing completely, whenever I leapt into my father’s embrace. But this fear that had engulfed his eyes was uglier than any bogeyman. He opened the back gate and threw me out. I tried to open it again but Baba had locked it from the inside.

I stood on the doorstep, listening to the sounds of bodies and things crashing to the floor; my brother and sister yelling; everyone calling out for everyone



else, but nobody answering, like they couldn't hear each other; Bayan's loud wail . . . I could pick her out in the middle of the storm of shouting. Usually her cries were loud and annoying, but now it was just a desperate wail that tore my heart up. It was a heavy wail, heavier than her tender age of five. Suddenly she fell silent, the quiet slithered slowly all over, and the voices fell away. I only heard the cautious, firm steps that Death itself took inside, searching, it seemed, for another life, the final one to snatch before it left the place. My grip on the door handle loosened and I pushed my ear up against the door.

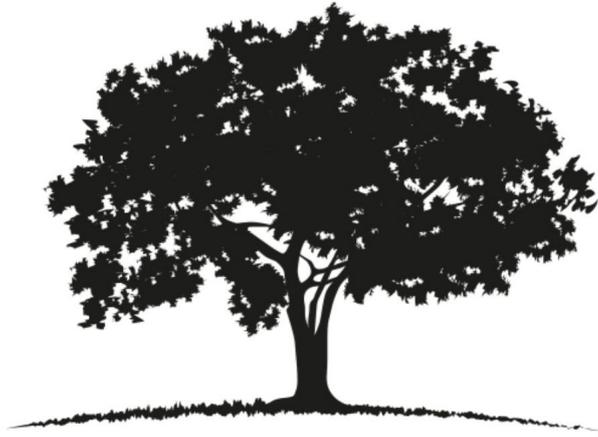
"Sire . . . I've looked for her everywhere."

"She must be here, look harder," Death ordered.

Fear rushed through me. I backed up a few steps. My foot slipped and I fell. Are they looking for me?

"I told you, keep looking!" Death yelled.

I stared at the shut door and imagined it opening. I sprinted outside the garden, not looking right or left, terrified that if I glanced back even once, Death would swallow me whole. I ran without knowing where I was going, my feet leading me to a nearby mosque. I steadied myself against the wall and sank to the ground to catch my breath, my heart pounding so wildly it felt like it was going to run out of my chest. I caught sight of the ink that had drawn a line along the length of my hand. It looked like henna, actually, just like the henna of the Bedouin women! I remembered the face of that woman Anan, the dark Bedouin soothsayer, whose hand was dyed with henna—she had visited Mama a few days before. A cold shiver traveled through my body, without me knowing why. Was it the cold night wind or what she had said?"



NEEM TREE
PRESS

Books that change and broaden perspectives.

London, UK

 info@neemtreepress.com

 [@neemtreepress](https://twitter.com/neemtreepress) 

