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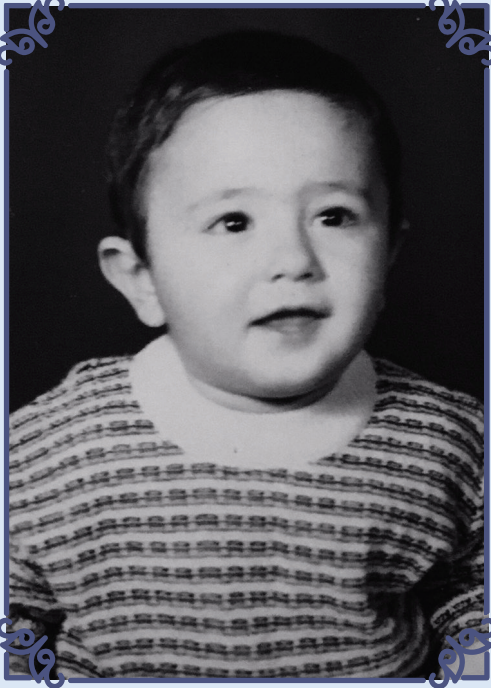
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SEYYED NAVID
SEYYED ALI AKBAR

Biography



One: Strawberry

Mon had heart disease. She had passed an open chest operation. When she was pregnant with me, the doctors told her she could not have a baby. They said this is dangerous. But my mom did not accept and wanted her new baby. For months, she slept while sitting and had to walk all day. She had no appetite for eating except for strawberry. I think this is the reason why my favorite fruits are strawberries, cranberries and all every fruit of the berry's family. I think that's because Berries remind me of my birth. My forbidden fruit, which was the cause of my fall from paradise

to this earth, is not apple, neither it is wheat, nor grapes; my forbidden fruit is strawberry. I was born in August 1983, right in the middle of summer.

Two: The toys are already mine!

Mom wanted me to be free and independent. They had covered the walls of the house with white paper to allow me to draw lines and paint on them freely. Because of her heart disease, she could not carry me, and from the day I learned walking, I had to walk by myself and she did not ever carry me. She says she never walked along with me and never she reduced her pace for me. My mom always walked ahead of me with her long steps and

I was running after her. This is the way I grew up, with no request from any grownup, with no crying for carrying me as it is common for children. Mom says once I cried and asked for something, she put me in the room and closed the door telling me to finish my crying and when it is over, you were allowed to exit. That day I stayed in the room and wept till the night. When I came out, I did not cry for anything else. Never ever. Mom used to tell me about the long hours I stayed in front of the toy shop vitrines, silently watching the toys. When they asked me if any toy I want so as they would buy it, I used to answer that the toys are already mine. Always I have turned away without choosing any toy.

I would do whatever I wanted to do. I was completely free and nobody told me to do this or that. I have brought up as an empiricist from early childhood. I had many trials and errors and failed several times. This is the case for my stories also. I experience all genres and literary formats, and all possible situations that come to my head in my stories. Some of them turn to be good. Some are bad. But I do not stop experiencing and feeling free in the world of words. I want kids to feel free in the story. I love the free and independent children; free from any bond adults would create for them; free from any dos and don'ts. I love such kind of children.

Three: the river

When I was four, I went to a house in Shemiran (north of Tehran), where a small stream of water passed through its yard. I did not have any siblings but I've played my entire childhood by this little river. I threw my toys in the water and then I ran faster than water and some twenty meters ahead I jumped into the water to save the



toys. At times, the stream was more turbulent and I failed, and water carried my toys away. Still, I fancy playing the game with water and am repeating the same game in my life. I throw whatever I have into the water and struggle to save it, sometimes I succeed to save them, sometimes I lose them. This is the way I throw my characters into the water, and the incidents, the struggles, and the internal and external conflicts carry away my characters away with me running beside all these. Sometimes, at the end of the story, the character is rescued, but if there is a strong and complicated crisis within the story, a flood is formed and I cannot do anything. The characters escape me, they leave the paper and I fail and a tragedy is created.

I have recreated these stories of the flow of water in *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River*:

Sara sat by the river.

“How beautiful you are!” the river said.

“Can I put my feet in you?” Sara asked.

The river made a short sound to mean reception.

Sara asked “You talk while you pass? I think the place I talked to is far away now! How can you remember me? “

The river replied: “The words are heavy, like stones. They stay right here. Tomorrow you can hear and pick up the words we used today.” “You mean all the stones were words in a day,” Sara asked. River said, “Yes, you see how I can remember you? I pass over the words we exchanged. I touch them and I recognize you.” Sara said, “How strange you are! You are always passing.” “It’s not that good”, said the river. “Sometimes I like to stop and to watch the things for a while ... anyway, who likes to be stagnant? Staying makes me thus.”

Four: Me and Mom and Dad (the family)

Daddy had a skinning factory and he played the piano. Mom was a nurse and read most of the time. Daddy was a party goer, a tourist and gambler; Mom was more political, a religious left with strong and rigid beliefs and attitudes. Daddy loved me to become a composer, Mom wanted me to be a writer. When I was a child, I was following both of these wishes simultaneously. I went to the piano, went to the painting class, read books and wrote stories. Mom, while in my childhood (before my seven years of age), brought me up as free as far as I was seven but because of her ideas, after the first class, she became rough and stiff on me and expected me to be more serious and dedicate myself to writing. Together with her friends, she launched a monthly magazine to circulate among members of their family and neighboring friends. The magazine was published only in five copies. Initially, the title was *Kalameh*, meaning “word”, later the title changed to *Speaking Doll*. Mom and her friends believed that they should work on children from the very childhood so as to make them aware. They should be informed about their society and this should be talked to through literature. They did not accept the common Persian literature of the time and did not recognize the books that were written by Iranian writers as au-



thentic and useful. In their view, the Iranian children's literature has gone astray and Iranian literature for children was under the heavy shadows of revolutionary and domineering ideas. This was the reason for launching the magazine. It was to struggle against the dominant flow in Iranian literature for children. It was a magazine to recapitulate another form of consciousness. Eventually, when I grew up and left the magazine at the age of twenty-seven, I realized that it was governed by another form of semantic authoritarianism and had little to do with freedom.

I used to write in that magazine, my friends, neighbors, and relatives wrote there, too. I always wrote stories. I wrote my first story at the age of seven, the story of "Two Flowers".

My story was about two flowers, a big one and a small one. The big flower shadowed the small one and did not let the sun to reach it. The little flower was drooping and fading away due to lack a light. The river changed its route away from the big flower to feed the smaller one. The big flower wilted and the small one survived.

I played the piano and wrote stories and I was happy by my parents. Everything was like a dream until the river brought up a trouble. Mom and Dad separated and the river drowned my family and took it away, and I ran all my life after the family and could not find it again. In fact, sometimes I think I have always been in search of a warm family center in my stories. Very much like Scrooge (the character in Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carole*), I feel in cold snowy night am watching the behind

a window the warm flow of life of a poor family who share with intimacy and joy share their simple food and love. Possibly, this is the biggest nostalgia of my life.

My stories are full of children living with single parents. They are either living with their mothers or with their fathers. In my stories, it is not uncommon for Mom and Dad to be together. If either of the two occurs to be in the same story, one of them is either asleep or out of the house and has no function in the story, he or she more like a shadow in the setting. The family is one of the most important issues that I have been worried about throughout my literary life. The river took my most precious asset and carried it away.

Five: breaking the boundaries

I stayed with Daddy. According to Iranian laws, the father has a parental right. Daddy was after his own pleasures and joys and Mom was also following his faith and beliefs; both of them were very ignorant of me. I have been alone since then and have lost both my childhood friends, my parents I mean. Eventually, in the early years of my teenage years, I gathered my books and clothes and left Dad's house to my grandmother's house (Daddy's mother). The river continued as usual and took me with itself.

Grandma's house was located in Shahr-e-Ray. A district in the south of Tehran known for its marginal, poor and old atmosphere. Right the opposite of where I grew up. The previous house was located in a very affluent district with rich people

around. The relocation disturbed me so much. Because I grew up with another culture and space. Now I have to adapt to the new situation. This relocation brought me to a new spot with new spaces and themes and it extended my view of the world. I find myself addressing the special issues and problems urban margins, to such topics as poverty, corruption, prostitution, the collapse of ethical values and so on. The hidden people living under the skin of the city, those who are marginalized and rejected from the streets and urban settings are my favorite subjects, I find it interesting to address such characters and spaces. In my teens, I still wrote stories and read. But deep I hated writing. Writing gave me a sense of captivity and I wanted to be free and unrestrained. When I was twelve years old, due to my talent in the writing, I became the editor of *Sokhankgoo* (meaning., spokesman) magazine and I had to write a story every month. But the stories they wanted from me were against my real self. Unlike what I really was. I then wrote lies and I was not satisfied with my writings. For this very reason, I always consider writing as very personal. I believe that the story is the master and that no external outlook, belief, or vision should distract the course and path of the story or take it away. The world of the story is for me the land of freedom. It is the location where the author has the right and must be in his or her own real self. The very real self. But I used to censor myself in those days. And the censorship is a blight to literature. It drains the story to the end, exhausts it and destroys it.

Those days I did not want to write a story, and I was doing it with the coercion of my mother and the *Speaking Doll* magazine. For me, writing has become a task, and I wrote stories very hard and with torture. Mom used to say that writing is a value and that if I want to be a good boy I had to write. Writing in my mind was synonymous with being good. And when I did not write, I felt bad and on the days and weeks when I did not write a story, I felt guilty. Daddy gave me a melodica. I



continued to practice music with it.

Life flowed in the same direction and the only difference was that I was alone. I felt free in this soliloquy, and I decided to break all boundaries that were defined for me. It was as if I wanted to fight with my fate, with the world and the river.

I smoked with my teenager friends and spent my hours playing soccer, staying in the street, and searching for girlfriends in the cemeteries of Shahr-e-Rey. The interesting was that the most important public place where we could find girls was the graveyards. Shahr-e-Rey was a city with crowded graveyards.

I was not a good student at the school. My grades were low and the teachers were constantly dissatisfied with me. I did not listen to the teacher in the classroom, and because of smoking and not observing the moral order of the school, I always had to stand for long hours behind the door.

I wanted to be economically independent and worked during the summers. I have done everything for this, from working in a photographic shop to a boutique, a bookstore, a print shop, hairdressing, and a computer game club. These different works expanded the circle of my experiences and later helped me in writing. Because I had experienced different spaces and I had seen a variety of different people. Those days the only the books I received and read were chosen by Mom and the *Speaking Doll*. It is a natural fact that these choices

were consistent with their beliefs, not with my literary tastes. Mom gave me the books by Samad Behrangi, Jalal Ahmad, Ali Shariati, Yashar Kamal, Ali Darvishian and such political and opinionated writers as these. All of them were writers with religious and political beliefs I could barely manage to finish reading the books. But in the bookstore and the print shop I worked, I met the real reading pleasure. In the bookstore, I read a book about Agatha Christie and I was fascinated by the mystery and discovery of the secret of Hercules Poirot. My interest in the genre of crime and mystery was formed in the summer when I was working in the bookstore. I spent a lot of time reading the detective works Agatha Christie and others. At the printing house, I also met another genre that introduced me to the more popular literature. Romantic novels! I started reading romance novels during lunch time and at nights when I was tired. In those years of adolescence and passionate love, these novels were very pleasing and influential to me.



Six: Loving a woman or loving literature?

I have no doubt that my relationship with literature is a romantic relationship. I love the story as a man loves a woman. When I was Eighteen years old, I fell in love with a writer who was 12 years older than me. She was a professional writer who had published her books and stories in various literary and professional magazines, and she was meeting with the professional writers of that time and she attended their classes and chatted with them. My attachment to that woman made me want to take literature and fiction more seriously and to become a professional writer. In a September day of the same year when I was at the age of eighteen, I chose my future career: “Writing”.

For hours and hours in my room, I detained myself to read a book and to write

a story. I played guitar also, but I left all my friends and that rebellious, hot and passionate teenage life to dedicate myself to writing as fully as possible. At the same time, I had to study to continue my education at a university. But, as always, I hated the study and education, and every moment I found, I dedicated it to story writing, thinking about stories and reading stories. This made me find acceptance in a second level university. I took an art course and received a degree in the field of fine art at the University of Zabul (a very remote city in the southeast of Iran, near the Afghan border).

Why should I write stories? Why should I remain a writer? In the student dormitory, when I was sleeping on the bed, these questions occupied my mind. But a little bit passed when I realized that I love the story and cannot leave without it. When I did not write a story, I felt very bad, as if I had been missing something. At the same time, I realized that I love storytelling, love adventure, love intricate characters and a lover of wonders of words. The lonely hours together with the long times I was busy writing, had found its special effects. I was addicted to writing, without writing my whole body and my mind was aching, life was bitter, dark, black and intolerable. Long times of loneliness with the companion of words and stories, has found its effects. I found myself in love with fiction.

Seven. Entering the official community of Iranian child literature

During the student days, to earn money and make a living, I had started journalism and sent many stories to magazines and newspapers for children and adults. Almost from that time till today, I have been doing the same job and I have made money in this way, through everything that is related to writing,

to the word and to literature. I have done journalistic works, I have written stories, written, edited and translated animation and cinematic scripts, I have edited and translated, I have taught fiction writing courses, I have been editor of magazines and newspapers, I had a special column, I have reviewed for various publications, and I have organized and ran storytelling workshops and have done so much more works, the works that are related to word and to fiction, in a way or another.

Since the very student years, I have been trying to enter the literary circles, communities, and publication offices related to children's literature. The official view of the children's literature did not accept the rogue, unscrupulous, deconstructive, and unconventional nature of my stories and I had to fight hard to publish my books and stories. As a writer, I had to struggle to prove myself in the harsh context of Iranian children's literature.

The ruling traditional perspectives in Iran demanded literature to educate. It wanted literature to advise children and teach them how to live and how to work and what to do. It despised the humorous and playful nature of childhood and was dominated by the sad and rigid adult life and stiff authoritarian and controlling outlook. In this view, there is no space for humor and laughter and the child is a captive creature in the hand of the adult and is controlled by them. I was against this point of view and the resulting literary approach. For me, vitality, enjoyment, freedom, humor, and curiosity were important elements in literature. For me, the reality of the existence of children beyond their failures or successes was important. For me, literature was important, and I believed in what Philip Pullman said about the relation between writer and the story, that it is the story that is the master and the writer is a servant.

of view. So, I fought with this dominant literary movement in Iran, and eventually, I was able to publish my books and to introduce myself as a writer. I had learned to fight in and for my life. The river had always challenged me, and I tasted the bitter failures several times. Despite all the problems, I finally managed to find my place beside this dominant literary form.



Apart from this, my life had no major event. From the age of eighteen to now that I am thirty-six, I have always been writing a story. Currently, I am a member of the board of directors of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, and the cultural director Hoopa Publications. I write, edit, and translate scripts and stories, and most importantly, I write stories. This is because I love this work.

Eight: Acknowledgments

Every writer when writing is living in a community of others and finds assistance in other people to learn and to mature the writing outcome. I too should thank many people in my life who have helped me along this way. I need to acknowledge them and cite their names in my personal autobiography.

Zari Naeemi (Managing Director, Owner, and Editor-in-Chief of the *Speaking Doll Magazine*, *Speaker* and Of course, the critic of children's literature).

The *Speaking Doll* magazine changed its ideologic and authoritarian attitude since 1996 and imported more modern lit-

erary thought, introducing to me the contemporary literary writers and outlooks of the world.

Azam Hasan (writer and illustrator), Mohammad Reza Shams (writer), Aliasghar Seidabadi (writer, poet and critic), Azra Jowzdani (writer and journalist), Fereydoon Amoozadeh Khalili (writer and journalist), Mehdi Hejwani (writer and critic), Hadis Lazar Gholami (writer and poet), Reza Faridi (Writer), Seyed Javad Rahnama (writer), Mohammad Hadi Mohammadi (writer, researcher and critic), Hussein Sheikholeslami (writer and critic), Hossein Mortazaeiyan Abkenar (writer and teacher of story writing), Mehrooz Taheri (poet), Hamid Reza Shahabadi (writer), Marjan Fooladvand (writer and journalist), Sokuhussadat Seyyed Ali-Akbar (my aunt), and Masoome Azizullah Moghadam (my grandmother who raised me), Shahram Eghbalzadeh (translator and critic), and Azam Mahdavi (writer and my wife).

All of these people among others have taught me great things and helped me to move in my writing career, and I appreciate them.

Nine: all of my interests

I like such great writers as Fyodor Dostoyevsky, William Shakespeare, Franz Kafka, J. D. Salinger, Agatha Christie, Charles Dickens, Milan Kundera, and Jorge Luis Borges.

Among Iranian writers and poets, I like Sadeq Hedayat, Gholam Hossein Sa'edi, Samad Behrangi, Ahmad Shamloo, and Forough Farrokhzad.

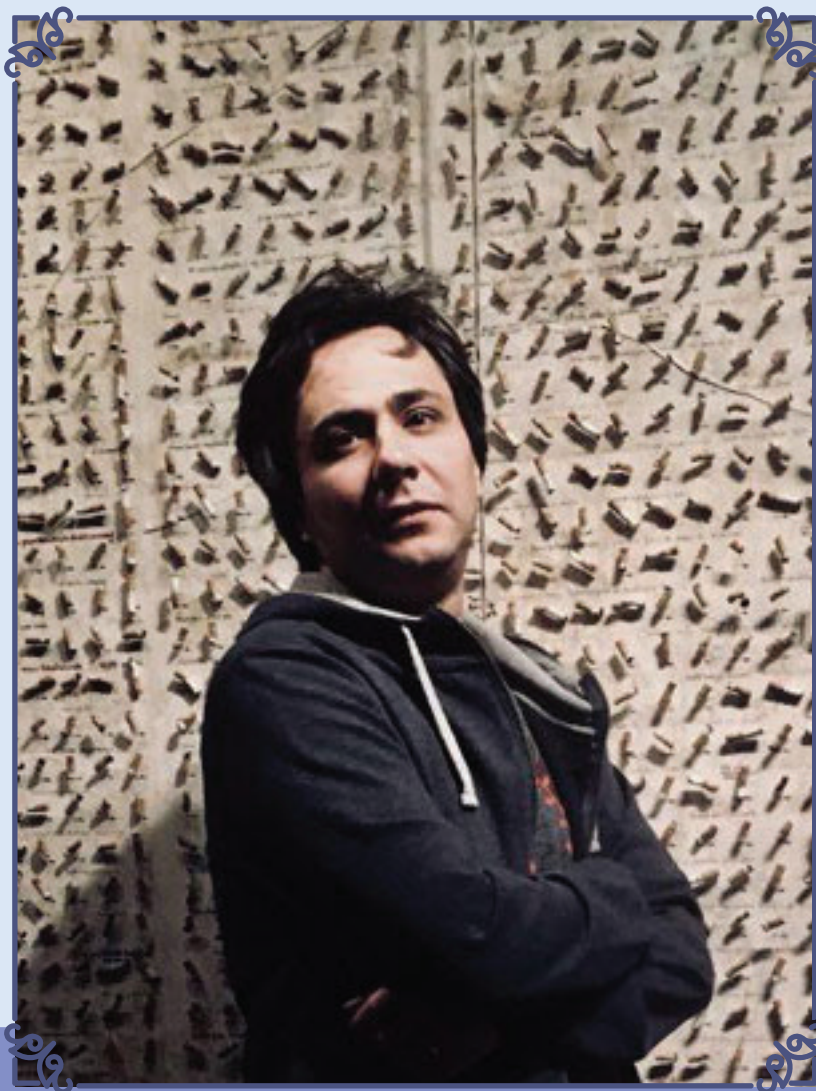
And I am a fan of such writers for children and adolescent as Philip Pullman, David Almond, Michael Andreas Helmuth Ende, Neil Richard Gaiman, Roald Dahl, Shel Silverstein, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

Chopin is my favorite composer. The color of my favorite is blue and this shows that I am a fan of Esteghlal football team in Tehran. Among the sports, I like to swim, kebab is my favorite food, and water is my main drink, I love wolves, among the musical instruments I like the piano and as for locations, I like forests and woods. Traveling and seeing new places around the world makes me feel good and I love writing.

Not much is left to say. I was twenty-nine years old when I met my wife, Azam Mahdavi, who was a student and has already begun to write fiction, we married in the same year. We do not have children and we live in Tehran with our two cats, Achoneh (a character of my stories) and Edward (a character of my wife's stories). We write together and our nights and days pass with stories.

Life for me is still like a river. I boat through the river. I do not know where it will take me, to the ocean, to open waters, to the swamp, to a small and silent pond, or to a waterfall (and I will fall). The only thing I know is that my life is tied up with the river, and I sit on the deck of my boat days and nights, and I write stories and this is how I spend my time.

November 2017, Tehran.



Resume

Activities

Writer and illustrator for the *Speaking Doll Magazine*, 2002 to 2008.

Director of meetings on fiction, Zabol University of Art, (2002-2003).

Editor-in-chief of *Speaking Doll* magazine (1997 to 2009)

The scriptwriter for the 28th episode of “Young Donkey” animation in Artistic Howza (2011-2012)

Member of the Idea Processing Group for Advertising in the Aftab Advertising Network (2013-2015)

The writer of the short film “Wood” based on a story with the same title by the same writer (2013)

The writer of “Fetylei’ha” puppet show (2014)

Literary reviewer, for Giraffe Publications (2014-2015)

literary reviewer, Hamshahri Newspaper for Kids, 2013 to 2015.

Literary reviewer, *Ghollak* Magazine, 2013 – 2016.

Member of the editorial board, *Roshd Rowshan*, Special Issue for the Blind, 2013 to 2014.

Literary reviewer, Shahar -e- Qalam publications, 2012 to 2015.

Literary reviewer, Chekkeh Publications, 2012-2014.

Literary reviewer, Ofogh Publications, 2008-2014.

Literary reviewer, Mehrab Ghalam Publications, 2012 to 2015.

Literary reviewer, Iran Technical Publications (Nardeban / Ladder), 2012 to 2015.

Cultural Consultant of Iran Technical Publishing (ladder) (2012-2014)
Member of the Publication Policy Council, Mehrab Ghalam Publications, 2012 to 2015.

The writer of “In the Land of Books”, a three-episode children’s and adolescent movie, 90-minute each, 2018.

Honorary Member of the Ketabak.org (A Virtual Writing Course in Short Notes + Interviews with Children’s Writers), 2018 to present.

Member of the board of directors of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, 2012 to 2014 and 2018 to present.

Cultural director of Hoopa publishing, 2013 to present.

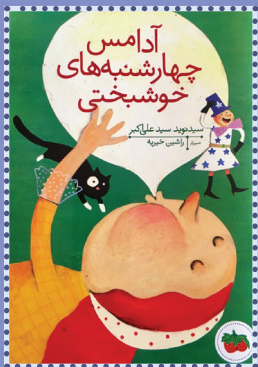
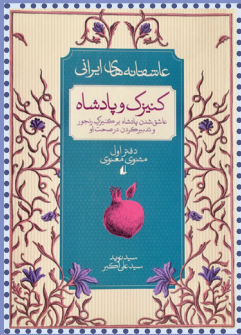
Editor in Tooti, Ofogh, Hoopa, Shahr Ghalam, Chekkeh, Zaffron, Nardeban publication offices, 2010 to present.

A fellow writer in such newspapers and magazines as *Docharkeh*, *Ghollak*, *Roshd collection*, *Secharkkeh*, *Nabaat*, *Speaking Doll Magazine*, *Doost*, *Sorush for Children*, *Sorush for Adolescents*, *Aftabgardan*, *Hamshahri for Kids*, *Aftab Mahtab*, etc.

A fellow journalist in *Yas-e-No*, *Etemad*, *Etemad Melli*, *Shargh*, and *Hamshahri* Newspapers

The author of adult stories in *Khanesh*, *Aftab*





Network, and Hamshahri Fiction magazines.

Manager of workshops on fiction writing, novel, and book illustration at various cultural centers in Iran.

Compilation books

The Moon Wants to Steal the Leopard, The Leopard Wants to Steal the Moon, Illustrated by Neda Azimi, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2006.

Sarah, Apple Jam and the River, Illustrated by Hoda Haddadi, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2008, Second Edition, 2018.

I did not eat your mom, Illustrated by Roja Alizadeh, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2008, Second Edition, 2018.

The Giant Baby Should Stay at School, Illustrated by Seyyed Hosamuddin Tabatabaee, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2007.

Melika and Her Cat: the cat does not have a trunk! Illustrated by Lissa Barjasteh, Tehran: horizon, 2010, sixth edition, 2017.

Melika and Her Cat: the giant with ten heads! Illustrated by Lissa Barjasteh, Tehran: Horizon, 2010, Sixth Edition, 2017.

Melika and Her Cat: The wedding of Melika's cat with Mrs. Fly! Illustrated by Lissa Barjasteh, Tehran: Horizon, 2010, Sixth Edition, 2017.

An excuse with five bright fingers, Illustrated by Hooshang Alavi, Tehran: Houshang Alavi's publication, 2011.

My Father is Delicious with Sauce, Illustrated by Ali Mafakheri, Tehran: Shabaviz, 2013.

Fairies of the apple tree, based on Iranian mythology, Illustrated by Haditheh Ghorban, Tehran: Horizon, Second Edition, 2016.

The maiden and the king, based on the story of Rumi, Tehran: Ofogh, 2014.

Drowned ships, Illustrated by Sahar Azadmehr, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2014.

The Circle, Illustrated by Somayeh Varzdar, Tehran: Aphrodite, 2014.

From the Diary of a Giraffe Writer, Illustrated by Nahid Kazemi, Tehran: Aphrodite, 2014.

Mom's Fiction Writing Lessons for Nothing, Illustrated by Salman Taheri, Tehran: Golagha, 2014, Third Edition, 2017.

The young donkey with two secret bananas, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

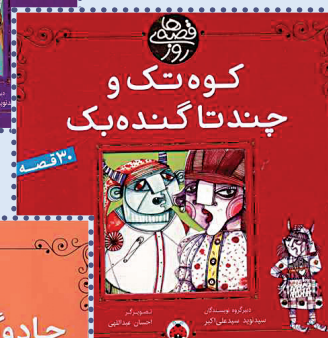
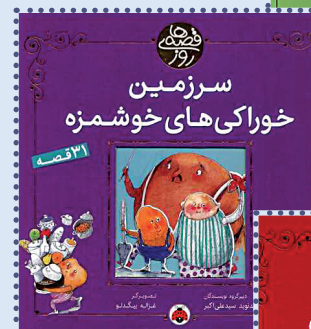
The young donkey and the white lion of the forest, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and uninvited guests, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and the trickster fox, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and the noisy fly, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and the pumpkin heads, Illus-



trated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and the school for literates, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

The young donkey and the golden necklace, Illustrated by Hamid Reza Beidaghi, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2015.

Chewing Gums of Lucky Wednesdays, Illustrated by Rashin Kheirieh, Tehran: Horizon, 2016.

Nightmare, Illustrated by Fatemeh Hagnezhad, Tehran: Chekkeh Publications, 2016.

I am Achooneh, open the door! Illustrated by Roodabeh Kha'ef, Tehran: Hoopa, 2016. Second Edition, 2016.

Hanging Candies and Wandering Carrots, Illustrated by Maryam Tabatabaee, Tehran: Hoopa, 2016, Second Edition, 2016.

Orchestra of wet dresses, Illustrated by Mystical Whisper, Tehran: Genesis, 2016.

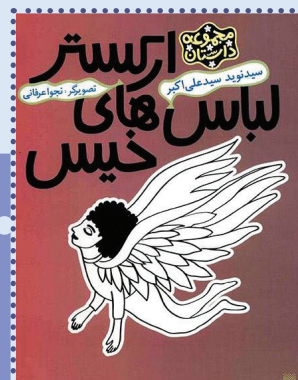
The story of crazy twins, Vol. 1: Hole Child, Goosi baa and Newton's Brothers, Illustrated by Roodabeh Kha'ef, Tehran: Hoopa, 2017, Fourth Edition, 2018.

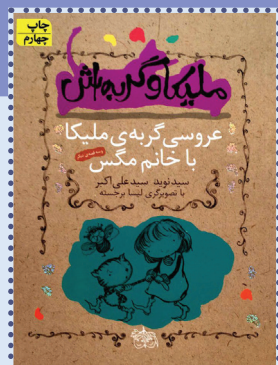
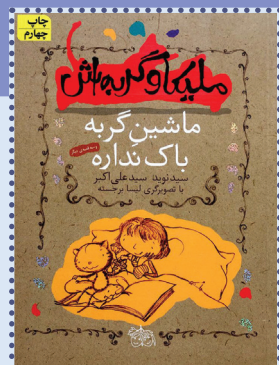
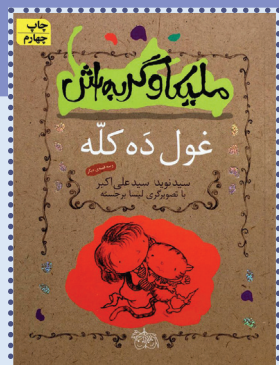
The story of crazy twins, Vol. 2: The carpenter beetle, Zinedine Zidane and the daughter of the iron king, Illustrated by Roodabeh Kha'ef, Tehran: Hoopa, 2017, Fourth Edition, 2018.

Tootuleh and sad astronaut in the toyshop of Mr. Arvareh, Illustrated by Shaghayegh Pourgiv, Tehran: Ladder, 2018.

Pebbles with no name, Illustrated by Ghazaleh Bigdlu, Tehran: City of Qalam Publications, 2018.

mysterious forest (as the author and secretary of the group of au-





thors), Illustrated by Somayeh Alipour, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

Wonderful planet (as the author and secretary of the group of authors), Illustrated by Ilgar Rahimi, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

The river of the distant lands (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Ilgar Rahimi, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

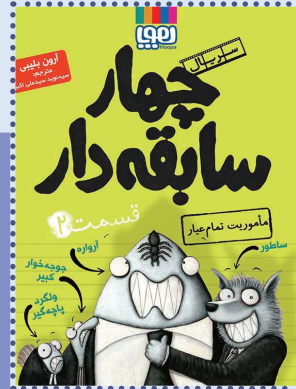
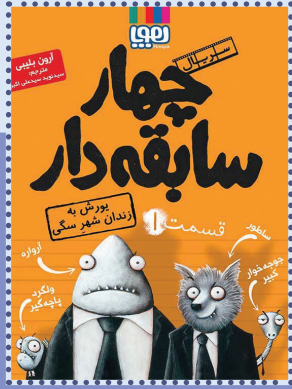
Stuff of the lost castle (as author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Masoomeh Etebarzadeh, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

The circus of the flying cans (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Bahar Akhavan, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

The land of delicious foods (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Ghazaleh Bigdlu, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

The boarding school of Nothing to Nihil (as the author and editor of the group of authors), Illustrated by Ghazaleh Bigdlu, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

Fortress of Chehelgis Wizards (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Najwa Erfani, Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.



The city of strange people (as author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Sara Nar-estan, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018
Single mountain and several big asses (as author and secretary of the group of writers) Illustrated by Ehsan Abdollahi, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

The starry hotel of pelican island (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Hassan AmmeKan, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

Museum of Dolls (as the author and secretary of the group of writers), Illustrated by Hassan AmmeKan, Tehran: Shahr -e- Qalam Publications, 2018.

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Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: Eva's Treetop Festival*, Tehran: Hoopa, Fourth reprint, 2018.

Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: Eva Sees a Ghost*, Tehran: Hoopa, Third reprint, 2017.

Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: A Woodland Wedding*, Tehran: Hoopa, Third reprint 2017.

Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: Eva and the New Owl*, Tehran: Hoopa, Second reprint, 2017.

Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: Warm Hearts Day*, Tehran: Hoopa, Second reprint, 2017.

Eliot, Rebecca. *Owl Dairies: Baxter Is Missing*, Tehran: Hoopa, Second reprint, 2017.

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“A Guard for the Pandora’s Box (Discovering Some of the Horror Literary Devices)”, *Children’s and Adolescent Literature Research*, Winter 2011 / Issue 1 of the New Period.

“Like the voice of a writer that is blue (critique of the works and the world of fiction by Susan Taqdis)”, *Journal of Child and Adolescent Literature Research*, Spring 2012, No. 2.

“Touchy Rose (a note on the discovery of a child’s realistic world)”, *Children’s and Adolescent Literature Research*, Summer 2012, Issue 3.

“Revenge with mosquito bites (some satire tricks based on sacred texts)” *Journal of Child and Adolescent Literature*, Winter 2013, No. 5.

“Fictional Goblins (Some of the sacred text features for child writing)”, *Children’s and Adolescent Literature Research*, Fall 2013, No. 8.

“If I marry you, how do you beat me?” (A note on the metamorphosis of Iranian women into beetles), *Khanesh Literary Magazine*, No. 13.

“Children’s parody tricks”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, Apr. 2010, No. 150.

“Comedy in Philippe Pullman’s World: Sergeant



Stripe Pants”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, February 2010, No. 160.

“White paper is the same white for everybody”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, April and May 2009, Nos. 138 and 139.

“At the end, loneliness always wins; a look at the cultural biology of Fereydoon Amoozadeh Khalili and Crows of Time Boulevard”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, December 2009, issue 147.

“A painful laugh at yourself”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, December 2008, No. 135.

“This witch is something else”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, July 2005, No. 93.

“The Scissor that Cut the Ropes”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, Oct. 2004, No. 84.

“A story of two lines”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, May 2004, No. 79.

“So, let us eat”, *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, September 2003, No. 71.

“Fear of White Paper (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“daily note, a text like ourselves (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“Habituated blind eyes (lessons about writing for children)”, Site Book, 2018.

“Hear it and do listen to it!” (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The drifting tic-toc of time (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The prison of crushed papers (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The hard path to maturity (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“Listen to a Breaking News! (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The singular garden of stories (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The Alchemist of words and images (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“A house with chocolate walls (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

“The bear whose land was stolen (lessons about writing for children)”, ketabak website, 2018.

Writing more than 50 social editorial notes in *Etemad Daily* (column: “accompanying street”), 2002 and 2003

Writing more than 40 book introductions and reviews in various Persian newspapers such as *Yas-e-No*, *Bicycle Weekly* and other Iranian magazines for children and adolescents.

Meeting, Roundtable, Conversation

Recreation of old literary works fills the gap between the new generation and the old literature. Mr. Zamanian, Ghods Online, July 2014 (Conversation).

The Recreations that have expanded the gap. ISNA news agency, November 2018 (conversation)

The teenage literature is the missing link in national literature. Di-



dialogue with Mohammad Reza Marzouki, Radio Dialogue, January 2017.

Awards

The selected work on Festival of Scientific and Cultural publications for *The Moon Wants to Steal the Leopard*, *The Leopard Wants to Steal the Moon* (2005)

Honorary diploma in Eighth Press Festival of the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults for *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School* (2007)

Nominated teen story in Story reading meetings of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents for “The story of that grasshopper....” (2008).

First rank in 6th Literary Award of Isfahan for “Do you let it snow?” in the unpublished works section (2008).

The third rank in the Literary Award of Isfahan for “The story of that grasshopper....” in the unpublished works section (2008).

The third rank in 6th Isfahan Literary Award for *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School* in the Best Children’s Book section (2008).

The selected children's story at story reading sessions of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents for "Karim Pari" (2009).

The selected children's story at story reading sessions of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents for "The painter termites and the singer mosquitoes" (2009).

Nominated for Seventh Literary Award, *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River* (2009).

The second rank of the Seventh Literary Prize of Isfahan, for "Hole" in the Unpublished Works section (2009)

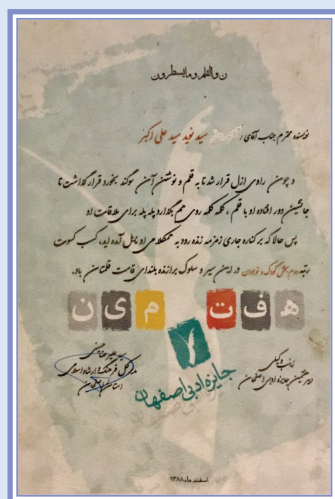
The selected children's story at story reading sessions of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents for "Little Soldiers" (2010).

Winner of the award of Children's Book Council and the IBBY, Children with Special Needs section, for *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School* (2010).

Selected by Children's Book Council and IBBY in the Illustrations section for children with special needs, for "Awakening of White Rabbits" (2010).

Nominated by the first Beihaghi Story for "Nightly Comedy-Nightmare of a Left Cascoe" (2012)

Receiving the silver badge (six flying turtles) for *My Father is Delicious with Sauce* from the Flying Turtle List (2013)





Nominated for Martyr Habib Ghanipour Award for the book “Apple Tree Fairies” (2015)

Honorary diploma, Eighth Children and Teenagers’ Book Festival, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adult for *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School* (2008)

Nominated for journalistic humor, Press Festival of the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adult, for the story of “Qikki Frog” (2014).

“Stripped Pajamas of the Sergeant” (published in *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*) nominated as the best book review by Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Nominated for the book of the Martyr Habib Ghanipour Book of the Year Prize, *The Young Donkey and the Uninvited Guest* (2016).

Nominated for the book of the Martyr Habib Ghanipour Book of the Year Prize, *The Ass and the Uninvited Guest* and *The Fraudulent Fox* (2016).

Apple Tree Fairies, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

The Circle, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

From the Diary of a Giraffe Writer, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

Mom’s None Tips for Fiction Writing, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

The Young Donkey 8 Volume Set, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

Hanging Candies and Wandering Carrots, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 5 Turtles.
Clever Stories of the Young Donkey, introduced in Flying Turtle List with 4 Turtles.

Workshops

Manager of storytelling workshops in the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents (2007-2008).

Manager of storytelling workshops in the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents (2012 to 2015).

Teacher of Story Writing for Children and Adolescents in the Children and Adolescent Academy of Culture and Arts (Sun City) (2013).

Teacher of Story Writing in Bicycle magazine (2014).

Teacher of Story Writing Workshops for Children and Adolescent Age Groups (2014).

Teacher of Story Writing at Khanesh Institute (2016).

Instructor of the Workshop on Creation of a Picture Book at the First Blue Bird Academy (2016).

Instructor of the Workshop on Creation of a Picture Book at the First Blue Bird Academy (2017).

Instructor of the Workshop on Novel Writing for Children and Adolescent at the Third Blue Bird Academy (2018).

Teacher of Story Writing at the Baharan Institute (2018).

Manager of Story Writing Workshop at Red Fox Bookstore (2018).

Judgments

Judge of the Story Task Group of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents (2012-2013).

Judge of the first Magical Finger Literary Festival in Shiraz (2013).

Referee of the Koomesh Literary Festival (2014).

Member of the Policy Council of the Sepidar Literary Award (2014).

Judge of the first festival on visual book creation, Scientific and Cultural Publications, (2015).

Judgment of the Biennial Festival of Books, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, (2015).

Judge of the Festival for Dastan Pictorial Book, (2017).

Main articles and notes about works

Mojaveri Agah, Masood, "The tree trunk is/is not a good place to write stories (review of *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River*)", *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, September 2009, issue 143.

Mirghiasi, Seyyedeh Robabeh, "Infectious Giant Baby: An Essay on *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School*", *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, August 13, 2008, Nos. 130 and 131.

Karimi, Abuzar, "Revising the absurd story of *Moon and Leopard: An article about *The Moon Wants to Steal the Leopard, The Leopard Wants to Steal the Moon**", *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, February and March 2007, Nos. 124 and 125.

Azadi, Shahnaz, "A laugh on the hidden wound; A critical reading of *Chewing Gums of Lucky Wednesdays*", *Journal of the Review of Children and Adolescents*, Spring 2017, No. 13.

Joveini, Atefeh, "climbing the neck of a delightful giraffe: a note on *From the Diary of a Giraffe Writer*", Yadban Website, 2014.

Mohajeri, Zahra, "Mr. Giant, eat my grandfather! Eat him with sauce: a note on *My Father is Delicious with Sauce*", Khabar Online Website, July 2013.

Dindar, Fariba, "Dad is more delicious or sauce? A note on *My Father is Delicious with Sauce*", Yadban Website, 2014.



Fatehi, Victoria, *“I am Achooneh, open the door”*, Ketabak Website, June 2018.

Mortezaei Fard, Fatima, *The Story of Sarah, Apple Jam and the River*, Ketabak Website, Oct. 2010.

Mortazayefard, Fatima, *“The Wedding of Melika’s Cat with Mrs. Fly and Three Other Stories”*, Ketabak Website, April 2011.

Naeemi, Zari, *“The Moon Wants to Steal the Leopard”*, World Book, March 21, 2007, and March 2007, No. 214 and 215.

Azizi, Atefeh, *“Eva sees a ghost,”* Ketabak Website, March 2011.

Azizi, Atefeh, *“Wedding in the Land of the Tree”*, Ketabak Website, August 2017.

Naeemi, Zari, *“Owlomania: A Memo on the Owl’s Dairy Collection”*, *Speaking Doll Magazine*, June and July 2017, No. 303.

Naeemi, Zari, *“Come in, Relax, Stay with us, a note on the Cute Young Donkey eight-volume set”*, *Speaking Doll Magazine*, October and November 2017, No. 305.

Naeemi, Zari, *“The nightmares of our children’s literature: A note on*

Nightmare", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, February 3, 2016, No. 301.
Naeemi, Zari, "The Best Workshop on Fiction for Everyone: a note on *Mom's None Tips for Fiction Writing*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, June and July 2016, Nos 295 and 296.

Naeimi, Zari, "I'll be silent: a note about *The Moon Wants to Steal the Leopard, The Leopard Wants to Steal the Moon*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, April 2007, 185.

Naeemi, Zari, "Defense Shield against Black Magic: a note on *Melika and Her Cat Collection*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, September 2010, No. 226.

Naeemi, Zari, "Who has eaten the apple jam? A note on *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, August 2009, issue 213.

Naeemi, Zari, "Circle: A Note on *Circle*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, February and March 2014, No. 279 and 280.

Naeemi, Zari, "The end of a giraffe: a note on *From the Diary of a Giraffe Writer*", *Speaking Doll Magazine*, February and March 2014, No. 279 and 280.

A group of writers, "A Survey of Jobs Stories by Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar", Review Group of the Children's Book Council, May 2010.

Abazari, Hamid, "*Chewing Gums of Lucky Wednesdays*", Ketabak Website, Nov. 2018.

Editorial, *Journal of Child and Adolescent Literature*, *Apple Tree Fairies*, Ketabak Website, October 2013.

Mirihati, Robabe, "The Giants Never Get Lost: a note on *Melika and Her Cat Collection*", *Children and Adolescent Literature Monthly*, February 2010.

Mohammadi, Mohammad Hadi, "The Fictional World of Seyed Ali-Akbar (Modern Voices in Iranian Children's Literature, Part II)", Ketabak Website, May 2011.

A group of writers, Character analysis of *I did not Eat Your Mother*, the review group of the Children's Book Council, autumn 2017.

A group of writers, Character analysis of *Melika and Her Cat*, the review group of the Children’s Book Council, autumn 2017.

A group of writers, Character analysis of *The Giant Baby Should Stay at School*, the review group of the Children’s Book Council, autumn 2017.

A group of writers, Character analysis of *My Father is Delicious with Sauce*, the review group of the Children’s Book Council, autumn 2017.



Naeemi, Zari, “Just for the children to read: a note on *Melika and Her Cat Collection*”, *Book World*, August and September, Nos 255 – 257.

Hedayat, Alka, the construction of the “Circle” drama based on a book of the same title by Seyyed Ali Akbar.

Arab, Yasser, production of *Wood*, a short video based on one of the stories of “*Hanging Candies and Wandering Carrots*.”

Overview of Work

Excerpts of a memo by Mohammad Hadi Mohammadi (on the ketabak.org website) + the introduction of Mehdi Yousefi on “pebbles with no name”.

Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar represents a new generation of writers for children who can be considered one of the forerunners of the modern outlook in Iranian children’s literature.

Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is a writer born in the 1980s and has a different lived experience with the Iranian writers of the 1960s or 1950s, the two dominant literary writers that are making the contemporary children’s literature of Iran. He is a child of the Iranian Revolution and the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq, at the end war he was only 5 years old. Naturally, his mind is occupied with social unrest that has surrounded him, his family and millions of fellow Iranians. In the 1990s, he has experienced an ideological and closed system in the educational environments, while has lived some very different atmospheres at home, the two contradictory and paradoxical situations that were reigning the Iranian society of the time. In the second half of the 1990s, he was inspired by the attitude of a group of leading women, including his own mother, who set up *Speaking Doll* magazine for children’s literature society of the modern era. He had started writing for the magazine and later found his unique way to become an independent literary figure.

To analyze the works of the author as one of the modern voices of Iranian children’s literature, a collection of indicators is required without which it is impossible to analyze the literary devices and artistic images of the works.

Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is a complex writer; he is modern both in idea and in style of writing. Sometimes it happens to

a writer to be a modern-minded person, but traditional in narrative style. Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar, however, is a modern stylist in every story he writes, both in his fantasy stories and in the works that reflect a magic realism. Modern stories are different from solution-oriented narrative stories. Rather, they are open-ended and invites the reader to find an ending or solutions to the narrative. These stories have a special language that is sometimes very



different from the standard language. In fact, the language in these modern stories is alive and dynamic. The modern aspect of narrative affects its very form and the structure of the story has a modern form. Possibly, one of the main characteristics of Ali Akbar's stories is that for every story he searches for its specific forms. For example, in the story of "Melika and Her Cat", what makes the story fresh and alive, is Ali Akbar's narrative form: "Melika was asleep. The cat went over her head silently. She did not breathe so as not to wake up Melika. She calmly dipped Melika's heart from under her blouse. Melika woke up. The cat was laughing. "I finally picked it up, sleepy Melika!"

The beginning of this story shows that the narrative form chosen by the author is different from what has been common in Iranian children's literature. The characters and language of the works are so mixed as the story is formed by characters and their language. This feature has been used by Seyyed Ali Akbar in most of the work he has been published so far.

From a genre studies perspective, any form of writing Seyyed Ali Akbar has practiced, he has produced successful literary results. These include a variety of genres from magic realism to pure fantasies. When Ali Akbar writes fantasies, as in the example of *My Father is Delicious with Sauce*, he proves to know the structure of a short story and he masters how to use the existing conflicts in his surrounding environment of modern society. Modern societies are full of conflicts and contradictions of parents fueled by thousands of years of gender bias of patriarchy. These are the ideas that find its place both in philosophical and literary works. In this short fantasy work, the same conflict is apparent in the background. For a reason unknown to the reader, the mother and child are at one side and the father on the other side. The story begins when the electric power outage and ends with the return of light to bulbs. The darkness makes the atmosphere frightening to the child. Darkness is the most horrific phenomenon that man has faced in the evolution process. Darkness has been more frightening to humans than any evil because, in addition to the physical disability that man faces in the dark, it is a dark cover for hiding the worst enemies of man. So, in the heart of darkness, giants, and demons become active, and in this story, the giant emerges with the advent of darkness. The sense of swallowing by darkness has always been with humans. The darkness, like the monster, swallows the light and kills life. Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar uses this existentially horrific archetype to build up a fiction that is both funny and humorous and at the same time plays with the dark aspects of existence. In contrast to the parent's behavior, the child chooses the side that is more beneficial. The mother is associated with peace, therefore, as the story unfolds, the



monster is suggested to eat the father, but as the author knows thresholds of childhood fears, he arranges the story in a way as when the monster pours souse on the father suddenly the lights are back and the monster disappears. In the inner layers of these images contains an idea that is usually described by psychoanalysts as the wish to find freedom from the dominance of parents, here from father. These are the ideas that are active in Ali Akbar's unconsciousness and when we study his other works, we notice the strong presence of the image of divorce or separation of parents. The intellectual roots of this story are due to the fact that Ali Akbar is the author of the new middle classes and he focuses on the issues of this special class. These issues include such phenomena as cohabitation with domestic animals such as cats and dogs, the instability of life from various material and social aspects, divorce, and special childhood syndromes, etc. However, identifying these stories and writers such as Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar and linking them with a chain of relationships



and social causes is more important. Without recognizing the set of social relations and contexts in which these stories are formed, and reading the connection between these two, it is impossible to find the real position and effects such writers. For example, in the story of “I drink my bottle alone” from the collection of the story *I am Achooneh, Open the Door!*, the writer presents a full representation of “Over-Hospitality Syndrome”.

Such stories reflect the spirit of the time. Now, in many parts of the world, especially in urban and modern cultures, in some middle-to-high class families, it is the child who imposes his or her desires over the wishes and aspirations of the parents.

This testifies to the fact that Navid Seyed Ali Akbar is the author of his time, and he reports the existing structure of relations, including the relations between children and the parents. He reflects an artistic image of these relations to society. Selection of such subjects are not arbitrary or accidental and is based on a special outlook: a modern outlook to children’s literature.

Yet, the forerunning writers of children's literature are not easily identifiable unless their theoretical bases are explicitly attached to their works. When we can a writer as representative of the modern voice of children's literature, the underlying assumptions and theories should be made clear. Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is a writer who has grown up and written in a metropolitan city as Tehran, so he a carrier all these contradictions. To know him, he must know the set of social and cultural relations within these metropolises and the people living in these cities, then one can claim that this if this is a modern writer. Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar's works can be viewed from the perspective of metropolitan sociology and individual and behavioral psychology.

From a sociological point of view, due to the fact that the setting of the works by Seyyed Ali Akbar happen to be in a metropolis like Tehran, the very structure of relations between the elements of the story is also affected by the structure of this space. The image that metropolis constructs in the mind of its inhabitants are very different from those in small communities as villages or smaller towns. In metropolitan relations, people are indifferent to each other. In such a situation the worst events for others is a simple spectacular scene that will quickly be washed up from the mind and memories. An example of this behavior is well illustrated in Ali Akbar's story:

“The police car turned and was lost by the end of the street. Alireza was afraid. He was afraid of loneliness. He was afraid of all the tall cedars and the crowd of crows. The sky was cloudy and the autumn leaves were falling on his head. That small, pretty and colorful candy was his little delight. As if it was from a different world. Alireza looked around. He wanted to ask help from a human being, but no one was paying attention. People walked fast and fast and they

were oblivion of everything here.”

Such a way of looking at the environment and peripheral events happens daily for its inhabitants; the structure of metropolises also affects greatly the family relations. In the long story of the “*Hanging Candies and Wandering Carrots*”, that is a high achievement for Seyyed Ali Akbar, we confront with the counterpoint to Titash, the main character. In the first story, we hear the narrative of the destruction of the body of the child. But in *Hanging Candies*, the body who is wondering between his father and mother is at the verge of a psychological breakdown. The main character of the story is a boy named Alireza, whose parents are on the verge of separation and he is confused between them. In this story, the world is narrated from the author - Alireza’s perspective, a story that continues in eight episodes. Seyyed Ali Akbar’s prose is not only intensive but intensifying. There are a group of modern stories that creates tension in the mind of that the reader. Such a phenomenon has traditionally been common in Iranian childhood and adolescence literature, especially during the pre-revolutionary period of Iran. In the works of Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar, this type of intensifications is evident, with only the difference that his view is not traditional and is rather derived from the structure of relations within the modern society.

For Seyyed Ali Akbar, the story is more than anything else is a piece of writing that should surprise us and this surprise does not just happen when we are waiting for the adventures and main events of the story. In most of his writings, this surprise happens at every level and for every element: in characters and relations between them, in the dialogues, and in the very definition and manifestation of surprise.

Seyyed Ali Akbar knows how pleasurable this surprise is

to the reader when it happens in the fictional works. This is the second thing that defines his the world of narration: enjoying the story. Above everything, he writes for his reader to enjoy the story and love the book. A combination of amazement and enjoyability is different from making an amusement park or a meaningless amalgam of strange creatures. His tales are more than fanciful narratives because the third aspect of his work is based on reality. At first glance, this third side is not very similar to the two other sides, but he knows that nothing is more surprising than reality. For this reason, the very incidents of the real world appear right in the middle of his stories so as the reader, in the middle of all the strange things of the story, incidentally, is surprised by the cold logic of reality.

Review of important works

Hanging Candies and Wandering Carrots



Mohammad Hadi Mohammadi (author and critic)

The hero of the book, Alireza, as the son of a single child family, is caught in a struggle between his parents. In fact, the author has chosen a point of view that at least in the Persian tradition of storytelling for adolescents is a rare choice: divorce from the point of view of the child. So, when you look at this phenomenon from the child's point of view, nothing is seen except an intensive and gray ground. This is why right with the beginning of the second episode or chapter,

the author divides Alireza into two halves, one beside the mother and the other with the father. The images of the beginning of this episode are very impressive and shocking.

A few special themes can be identified in this story. An important one is the themes revolves around the idea of seeing and looking. Looking has deep social and emotional connotations. The mother cannot see her child while the child can see things that the mother is not able to see. Likewise, the father has the

same behavior, actually, these are the facts that reflect a cool look from about in the entire context of the story. The act of not seeing is intensified throughout the course of the story. Especially when Alireza is not seen in the classroom. The same situation is included in another chapter of the book, "A boy that resembles himself", that is, similar to Alireza. The author creates a character similar to Alireza so as he could represent himself in this character. The narrative finds a more complex form from this point on. The morning of the day Alireza is waiting for the school bus to arrive, he finds a boy similar to himself in the same bus, the driver does not notice him and does not stop for him. Then, his mother brings him to school, and at school and in the classroom, he finds a boy like himself sitting on the bench, and when he introduced himself with his own name, Alireza Shiri, the other children are surprised and laugh at him.

The other theme that is highlighted in the story is "the fragmentation of childhood identity." In fact, the main focus of the story from the author's point of view, and not from Alireza's point of view is about disintegration. The author narrates this story in a way that a child with an isolated or fragmented identity is continuously lost or disintegrated or has missing status. Alireza is lost when he confronts another person like himself. When he gets lost, he loses his mother too. For example, he loses himself in the classroom, but when he's shopping with his mother on the street, another mother appears who has the same characteristics his mother and takes his hand. At this point, Alireza is feeling dismissed. Being dismissed is a status of being present. It is an existential state. It is a kind of losing one's ties with being, some form of futility in being. But being lost can truly be a loss of time and place. The fact that Alireza feels that her mother or a woman like her mother is a stranger, means Alireza is alienated from his environment. Reflection of the sense of being lost internally and the idea of being dismissed from the external world is a phenomenon that



the author introduces into the narrative.

In the chapter of “Crystal Shoes for Cinderella”, the tale of the loss and dismissal finds yet another story. This time Alireza feels that her mother has found a double personality: that is his mother is both original and fake. Is this disorder a psychological and mental disorder, or it is a broader cultural and social disorder of modernity? In the first layer, we are faced with a disorder in Alireza’s fragmented identity; that is, he has reached a degree of diversion that he can no longer find his mother among the other women in the store space: *“Alireza returned and looked at the gold shop. His mother was still there. Still behind the same showcase. Her other mother was here too. They were similar. The second mother took Alireza’s arm and said: “What do you look at there? Have you found shoes for yourself?”*

But when we investigate deeper into the subject, behind this psychological and identity disorder, we hear the voice of similar women that fill the space of the passage. This is how human beings have turned to similar consumerist creatures, the same phenomenon as described by Theodore Adorno the German philosopher as the dark side of modernity and considers consumerism as massification factor.



In another episode, “A boy sat in the dark throwing rocks in the water”, it is as if the story shifted from an objective space into the Alireza’s subjective space. The dark room, which is not lit with any lights, even with a chandelier that has twenty bulbs, is a sign that Alireza’s mind cannot bear light and remains dark. This chapter of story and narration is an expression of the breakdown of the relationship between Alireza and his mother. Mother is in the same house where Alireza cannot overcome the darkness, a mother who cannot help him either. In fact, the gray and dark atmosphere of this episode is a symbol of what happens when the child is not seen in the adult world, because in the next episode that is the final one, Alireza is reduced to a particle like a snowflake. A particle that still has his own desires. However, even in this situation, Alireza expresses himself: *“Maybe she would have been a kind of toy for chicken crows. He was thinking about what is the difference between being a toy to chicken crows or to human beings?”*

And this wish is nothing but the wish of children to distance themselves from a world made by the selfishness of grown-ups or parents for their children. In this story, Alireza does not seek to reunite her parents, because every husband and wife have the right, as they are married, to be separated from each other for any reason. Parents are not entitled, however, to split the identity of the child apart or to deprive him or her from the right to enjoy life.

In fact, this is the main message of the author, which, of course, is different from traditional forms of message delivery. The writer, with his sharp look, has penetrated into the layers bipolar modern society dominated by such dichotomies as the individual and the society, warm look and cold look, loss and retrieval, presence and absence, mental health and disintegration, etc. The author does not seek to provide children with a solution, but in fact, he shows them a view of life that may have answers to those questions if they are confronted with similar situations.

Hanginɡ Candies and Wandering Carrots

Fatemeh Tarajman (journalist)

Hanginɡ Candies and Wandering Carrots by Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is a long episodic story about a teenager's life. Eight short and interconnected stories, which in total narrate the teenage days of Alireza, whose parents do not live together. Alireza (the main character of the story) sometimes lives with her mother, and sometimes with her father and nowhere, we see him living with both of them. Even when he is living with one of his parents, he is not seen by them. at school also Alireza experiences disturbing behavior his in interaction with the teacher or classmates; he experiences turbulent ideas and images so as the story progresses, this turbulent imagination become more overwhelming and overcomes his realistic view of the world. Gradually, imaginary, hallucinatory and mysterious images are

replacing the real and actual images around him. This continues to the extent that we read such sentences as: “To joke, the kids inserted the head of little Alireza into pencil sharpener or glued him to the chewing gum and hung him under the table. The teacher did not see Alireza at all...”

In the early episodes, Alireza’s image is displayed realistically alongside other characters like his parents or street people. The stories are narrated from Alireza’s point of view, and we see at the world through his eyes and consciousness. A unique and singular point of view that has been less used in such stories before. Also, the story follows a new and strange narrative form, which perfectly portrays Alireza’s silence and tranquility and his inability to improve the situation against existing tensions. This bizarre characterization, which follows Kafkaesque mazes, is also displayed in the portrayal of the behavior of other characters. Somewhere in the story, the mother takes Alireza to the park, but she is talking to the cellphone herself (it seems that Alireza’s father is on the other side and they are constantly quarreling with each other.) As the mother speaks on the phone, she throws a broken branch of the tree for Alireza to pick up. Alireza runs after the branch and his mother continues to talk over her phone. Every time Alireza brings a branch back to his mother and she reluctantly throws it in another direction for Alireza and continues talk over the phone conversation. In the following episodes, the narrator directs the attention of other characters to Alireza, and the story continues around the inner aspects of this teenager. This is a sign of the loneliness of children of divorce that can be exacerbated over time and by inappropriate treatment of others and can cause even more damages to individual and society. In this story, Alireza is driven out of external reality and is drowned his nature. A very silent nature that takes him in. Finally, the branch of the tree breaks and Alireza must return to his sad routine life again.

Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar also studies the concerns of a contemporary family with a sociological lens. Seyyed Ali Akbar presents the cool and



gray space of children of divorce in big urban backgrounds. He reminds us that although the form of life changes after the specific changes in modern society, children who are affected by these changes should by no means be forgotten. We read in the book: “He wanted to ask help from a human being, but no one was paying attention to him. People walked slowly without noting.”

In the middle of the story, a new character, parallel with Alireza, appears. Just another Alireza. Just like himself. There are other Alirezas on the bus, in the classroom, and in other locations and at times it is impossible to determine which one is the real Alireza and which one is an imaginary one. This representation can be an emphasis on the inner aspects of the teenager as gradually finding external objectivity. It could also be a nightmare of separation from oneself, A nightmare that seemed to invade Alireza’s real existence.

Feelings of grief and loneliness, emptiness or loss of life, internal and private questions on how to pass life usually occur in mind of anyone at the age of adolescence. This finds even stronger resonances in the mind of a teenager who has a divorce and loneliness crisis. In this narrative, Seyed Ali Akbar has been able to portray the highest moments of the internal tension of a teenager. For example, in a part of the book, Alireza in his father’s car stares at the droplets on glass finding his own image on small droplets swallowed up by larger drops. Or in the store episode, at the height of his confusion, he finds another woman just like his own

mother. Not like her mother. He actually finds out in the store that he has two mothers. Two people are alike, both of whom know him and as if they were with him. Alireza's nightmare starts again. An image of Alireza's helplessness in accessing the family and not knowing how to resolve his problems. He does not know to which mother he can turn. His fear is not to be with his real mother. And his other fear is about the other mother who will be there without a child. What shall she do?

The collection of episodes of the book reveals that Alireza's childhood identity has been challenged and his psychological pressure is greater than that of a normal teenager could bear. This makes the audience to think on the importance of paying attention to children and adolescents who do not have a role in parental disputes but is affected by it.

by showing these tensions Seyyed Ali-Akbar, on the one hand, tells the other teenagers who are in similar conditions, that he or she is not alone, the writer tells them that possibly there are other children and young people in other places who have the same problems. On the other hand, it attempts to stimulate adult audiences' emotions and show the vulnerability of children and young people during family crises. Therefore, the narrativity and open-ended structure of the book is justified. Rather, the book, as a modern work, shows the intellectual troubles of children who suffer family problems, and for teenage readers, it conveys yet another image as reflected from the reality of life.

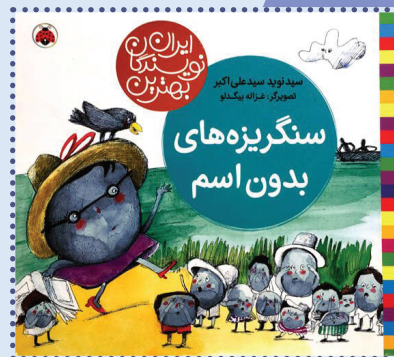
We are not supposed to intensify the grief and loneliness of the poor children with so many ideal and colorful images. In a story similar to this, a teenager with similar conditions may encounter such an undesirable condition from a safe distance and thus grow up in his social vision and fully understand his damaged position; such a child would know how to find more rational positions and take better steps.

Pebbles with no name

Niloofar Nikbnayad (author and journalist)

Pebbles with no name as a brilliant work by Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is an illustrated short story and has many important strengths and

meanings. The story is about a family tour and the way they face new phenomena in their life. The pebbles come alongside with their mother to the pond, where they realize that they do not know much in life; for example, they do not know the meaning of walking, swimming, having names, etc. Just like any other child, they try to find the answer to their questions by asking questions. The questions that make the mother angry and is the source of strange adventures.



The first positive feature of this book, like many other writings of this author, is start working on an original subject. As the title of the book suggests, Seyyed Ali Akbar deals with pebbles in this story as the main characters of the story. The pebbles that each of us do not notice throughout the day, we pass over from them, when we are sad we throw them to different directions and never think about the possibility of a personality and adventures for them. For many of us, a pebble is an insignificant object even for attention. But Seyyed Ali Akbar has produced a fictional reading on these very little things.

In his story, pebbles, just like humans, have families, they go out, read books, and each of them has its own behavioral characteristics. Baby pebbles are unaware of their surroundings, just like a human child, and they express this even in the poetry they read:

“We are all stones. We are all stones. Ever since we opened our eyes, we are enchanted.”



The pebbles of this story lack many things, they do not even have a name. This having no name is their most important feature, subtly made as the subject of the story by Seyyed Ali Akbar. The author uses the title of “pebbles with no name” for the book and when a floating wood on the water calls himself Farshad, the pebbles just begin to understand what is a name.

The characters in this story are pieces of stone and wood and similar simple things. Seyyed Ali Akbar, however, has created extraordinary and unforgettable characters out of these petty things in a very readable short story. The floating piece of wood on the water has its own tones and so do the pebbles. Of course, Ghazala Bigdelou’s wonderful illustrations has also helped to achieve such characterizations. Despite the fact that there is no difference between pebbles in the real world, the images of this book, illustrate each pebble with its own special appearance and style of dressing. This makes the book very attractive to the final audience, the children.

ence, the children age group. The text of the story and the dialogues it contains are very similar to the spoken language of most children. The sentences have many repetitive words that are often heard from the children: “Mom, we promise not to go the bottom. As we enter the, we’d stay on top.” (The actual words in Persian are closer to children’s language than these).

The behavioral characteristics of the characters are similar to the behavioral characteristics of four to seven years old children. The insistence of pebble kids to enter and making their mother angry together with the snobbish behavior of wood kids about the things they do not know are examples of such characteristics.

If we want to mention some other strengths of this story, we can point to its reference to facts and to the truth. As Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar has shown in his other works, although he masterfully creates a fantasy world for children, he never mixes the fantasy world with a colorful world where everything is good and positive. He portrays bitter facts of life along with the beauties. For example, like most of the mothers, mother of pebbles becomes angry and shows her anger with dangerous work (like throwing one of the pebbles into the water), but just as many other mothers, she becomes upset with this anger and tries a way to compensate it. Here, like many people, instead of looking for solutions, she tries to cover this grief with a greater one.

In addition to being attractive and entertaining, this story has an educational dimension, too. Children are indirectly introduced to scientific ideas and subjects. They learn, for example, which bodies remain floating on the water and which ones sink into the water due to their weight.

Innovation is another aspect of the story that requires attention. In this story, unlike all tales and stories we have ever read or heard, mermaid a male character, a departure from accepted norms and images that can help the story to find its life and way in the reader’s mind. No

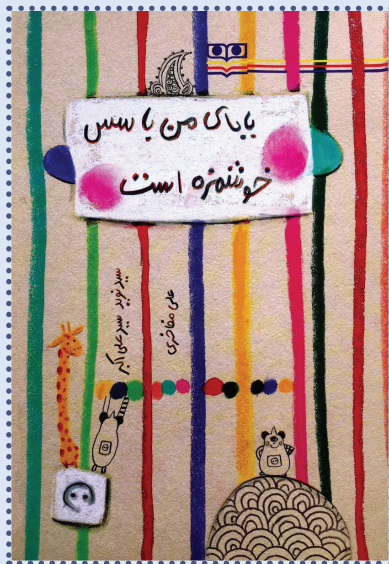
one can deny the fact that a mermaid in men's dress and appearance, with long hairs and curly will ever be remembered.

As the last point, we must point out that Seyyed Ali Akbar does not underestimate his audience. Even when he is writing for age group A or B, we see his acknowledgment and respect toward the audience. Unlike others, he does not think a series of literary techniques (such as open ending) is only for older adults. The final scene of *pebbles with no name* illustrates this very well. The pebbles jump into the water with their mother, but this is not the end of the story. The end of the story can be anything that the reader imagines in his or her mind. Ali Akbar introduces two distinct ends for the reader, providing the opportunity to replace each ending they may like. The stones are either drowned or the mother-stone marries Mr. Mermaid. As indicated in the last two lines of the book, "We always have different things in common. He thinks for herself, I think for myself; you can also think for yourself." And this means the freedom to act and to end the story according to the will and creativity of the audience.

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to invite the creativity of the audience to find an ending for the story.

My Father is Delicious with Sauce



Children's Book Council

First of all, *My Father is Delicious with Sauce*, has a humorous texture and is a kind of fantasy. The power of the imagination of the author in his use of signs is greatly instrumental in assessing the fantasy aspect of this book.

If we want to examine this narrative work in terms of characterization, its most obvious feature is that stereotyping and characterization is avoided due to the shortness of structure. The character of the

giant as an absolute and imaginary character with a mythological origin and with such characteristics as eating and scaring humans is undoubtedly the most interesting character of the story, which, while fulfilling the general characteristics of the giant in children's stories, clearly shows the intention of the creative mind of the author in building a new giant.

The message of the story is to be found around fear of darkness, and in the relations of structure and the indirect communication process, the giant is an allegory for darkness. In fact, the giant is an incarnation of fear of darkness. The writer consciously and intentionally has made this structure a feasible one. In the process of the story, we encounter similar mysteries and questions like, "Why should a giant eat the father?" Perhaps even the author's main device in this book is that the reader will wait for the discovery of these secrets and riddles.

Throughout the story, the actions are in chains and interconnected, and a cut in electricity and the entrance of the giant out of darkness

creates the fictional and narrative action of the story. Although there are some complementary signs, such as the father lying on the sofa, the main characters of the story are the mother, the giant and the girl who equally proceed the actions of the story. The contradiction and conflicts between the main characters of the story are the other positive aspect of this story, making the story memorable for the children. Characters are generally divided into two groups. Mother and daughter in a group and giant in their opposite group. They have a common function with opposite directions. The giant wants to eat somebody and they try not to be eaten.

As for the analysis of name of characters in the story, it should be mentioned while the characters have general names, it is their spoken features, along with their visual features that are well depicted in the images, bear the burden of characterizing the story. This enables the reader without knowing the names or particular characteristics, to remember them just by reading or listening to the story. This is one of the characteristics of the works of Seyyed Ali Akbar, which is also seen in some of his other books. The author, with the knowledge he has on the behavioral aspects of characters and with minimal expressions, creates new spaces for the story. The characters are introduced through action and dialogue and the same actions guide the entire story.

From the perspective of the psychology of color, the images of the book have clear colors that create a sense of safety. With regard to the font and its color and size, the importance of the characters can be understood. For example, for the giant, bold and red font is often used which is a symbol of warning and danger, and this is the cause of the fear of darkness. For the mother, a bold and blue font uses that is a symbol of tranquility and kindness, and indeed she has a bold role. Father, with a small purple font,

has a sign of awareness and insight in himself, he has a relaxed imagination and does not fear the dark. In general, the illustration of the book, using captivating colors and forms, adds to the adventures in the story and offers it more efficient. As for the subject of the book, we must say that fear of darkness is one of the permanent problems of all children, a fear that in the story is incarnated in the giant and has been creatively dealt with within the story. The beauty behind the story is that the mother, in partnership with her daughter, wants to help her overcome her fear of darkness. To understand this the delicate moves of the author, a high degree of precision is required. Of course, with the help images, one can understand the general game and its jokes, especially since the giant looks very cool and funny. Such elements as the location of the power outlet on the chest of the giant, the presence of the mother beside the girl, the mother's time killing behavior to pass the time until lights are back, the suggestion of eating one another, the relaxation of the father at bed, and ultimately the evaporation of the giant, challenges the imagination of the audience to have a new look on their fears and problems. The book conveniently approaches the world from the perspective of children and is trying to find a solution to their problems. In other words, this story, along with the goal of fun, adds to the capabilities of children and indirectly has a certain factual educational effect.



I am Achooneh, open your door!

Hossein Sheikholeslami (critic and researcher)

To Talk about a writer's literary project in Iranian childhood and adolescence literature field is not simple or trivial.

Indeed, organizing a personal

project based on the creation and discovery of literature, in a space that has been infected with oil for at least seven decades, and with a government that has ideological and strategic outlook, and on the other hand, is under heavy pressure by educational and training ideologies who usually assess literary works in terms of their educational achievements, and has never experienced a natural, healthy, and organic relation with the market, is indeed, a complicated task. An author who wants to pursue a personal and professional project in the context of children's and adolescent literature and with its theoretical and fundamental sense is confronted with many problems.

However, in the short lifespan of the modern Iranian literature for children and adolescents, Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar is one of the few figures who has tried to accept such a risk and devised a personal, distinctively literary path for his literary creation. His work, even when read and studied on their own, are the cornerstone of the efforts of a creative mind that try to find, follow, and personalize the delicate but free literature among various currents that infect Iranian child literature. Along with this path which was not safe for him, Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar has always been criticized for his activities, he has always had to stand against the offenses and objections for his works, and defend both himself in particular and free children's literature as a whole. Perhaps we can see the culmination of this confrontation in the short story *My Father is Delicious with Sauce* where he stands against all non-literary criteria that span from morality rules to educational methods and defends the Nietzschean freedom and joyful flow of literature. Perhaps if he wants to present a manifesto for his literary project in a day, it would be rhymed with these two components of joyfulness and freedom. These are the two elements that will recall the relations between

artist, child, and philosopher according to Nietzsche.

This time, and in the story of *I am Achooneh! Open the door!*, Seyed Ali Akbar has tried to recreate the two components of “playfulness” and “joyfulness” in the relations between parents and children in a field of literary situation. The result is 18 special stories/situations, which both carry his developing style and draws a new path for his personal project. In this collection, Navid focuses on the relationship between parent and child and has tried to play in this field. As a result, during these 18 stories, we encounter children who in a way or another challenge one conventional and fabricated red line and create new adventures for the reader. The red lines include a wide range of situations such as child and adult complicity for the persecution of a third person (as in Hans and pepperoni pizza), to extremism in questioning the parent (as in “why you are not a philosopher”). Though the result of the work is a fascinating tale that can make any audience, from children to adults, to smile, in its foundation it also offers a different suggestion to the audience. It is the reader to look at the situations and conditions that are so close that cannot be seen. Highlighting these situations will introduce the fundamental idea that “one can live another way”, a message that maybe be the main theme of the book, and an invisible thread that unites and connects all these eighteen stories together.

Reading “I am Achooneh! Open to the door”, can be a pleasant and sweet experience for ordinary children and teenagers, it would make the more reflective audiences to think about their approach to life and being and would inevitably make the stricter preachers of morality at schools nervous. However, it would be a source of surprise and pleasure to the literary critic. The critic would be surprised by the sheer volume of courage of the writer and his inattentiveness to anything other than a pure and borderless literary creation. The critic would be pleased that even in the most difficult circumstances and under the most closed conditions, literary creation is still possible and even within the closed cage of political, ideological, educational and conformational concerns one can enjoy a free dance of literary production!



The Story of Sarah, Apple Jam and the River

Hadith Lazar-Gholami (author, poet and literary critic of children and adolescent literature)

How to make a bitter and poetic story with a Sarah, an apple and a woodpecker?

Seyyed Navid Seyyed Ali Akbar, in *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River* has reached the point of intersection between poetry and story. This is not limited to a simple poetic prose or creation poetic moments. Not! He has combined the story and the poetry, and have reached the point of solidarity between them.

Everything in this short story suggests a bitter incident. There are various narratives about Sara, but all narratives can make you sad. Sara's fate has been important to you because she is a very mysterious and innocent girl.

Now, do you want to know which story about Sarah is right? Something you will never understand. Because the narrators are different, each one telling a different story. You can believe any of them or reject all of them. Whenever you see the woodpeckers, you are free to ask them about Sara. They only know one story; the story of Sara and the apple jam.

How to narrate a criminal story in the most poetic form?

Act as the author of the book *Sarah, Apple Jam and the River*.

First, entertain us with a few narrations, then make us interested in your character and then create a "snake" that appear on the path

of the character your love.

Then do not tell the whole story. Respect your audience imagination. This is what the author of this book has done. Let the details find shape in the mind of the audience. The audience will portray the rest of the story. Your task is only to create a space to guide the audience on illustration. The audience will do the rest of the job. He or she will understand where is Sara heading to. The subtle image of the book will help the reader to be sadder than you were expecting and will eventually accompany Sara along the river.

What is Sara's fate? We do not know exactly. This is very the ambiguity that brought the story closer to poetry. We are only worried that Sarah would throw herself into the river to drown. Is this possible in a book for children? Yes. In the stories this writer writes, this is also possible. It is only pictured so as you can see no horror, nothing but beauty. Sinking in the river and stepping on the river rocks, all are simple words, they transform Sarah into a mysterious story, and it is such mysteries that good stories are born.

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