

Mozhgan Babamarandi



Literary & Translation Agency

About the Author:

Mozhgan Babamarandi

Mozhgan Babamarandi has started writing for children since 1995 focusing mostly on teenagers. She is a well-known figure in Iranian children & teenagers' literature and her books are published by famous Iranian publishers. Her stories reflect her own childhood. Her books contain ethical and social themes. She is fond of short-story format and this is the prominent format of her books which are published in Iran.. At the time being, she lives in Tehran. She is the author of more than 28 books of novel and collection of stories for children and young Adults.

Awards:

- Winner of Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults 16th Festival for novel “I will become a Spiderman like Rostam”, 2013
- Winner of Salam Bacheha Festival for book “Hi Grandp”, 2009
- Appreciation of the book “ Gold Fountain Pen” at Roshd Educational Festival, 2003
- First Prize in story for “Hi Grandpa” at Press Festival, 2001
- Top Trainer Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran Province, 2009
- First Prize in Drama for the Play “I Miss the Sun” at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults 5th Puppet Show Festival in Tehran Province, 2003
- Third Prize in Music Selection for the Play “I Miss the Sun” at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults 5th Puppet Show Festival in Tehran Province, 2003
- First Prize in Directing for the Play “The Man Had No Lips” at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults 4th Puppet Show Festival in Tehran Province, 2002
- Top Trainer Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in the country, 2001
- Top Trainer Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran Province, 1999

Sample of Works:

Title: Ghelghelak's Cocoon was beside Grandma



The narrator and his grandmother find a silkworm among vegetables. The narrator makes a nest for the worm, calling it Ghelghelak, and starts feeding it. A few days later the grandmother gets sick. Ghelghelak converts into a cocoon. When the narrator accompanies her parents who are visiting grandma's tomb, they roam the grandmother's gravestone and recite Sureh Hamd from the Quran for her. At the same time, Ghelghelak comes out of its cocoon.

The author tries to explain a grandmother's death and the evolution of a worm into a cocoon and then its conversion into a butterfly, to a child as her book's reader/addressee/audience. As children in our culture have not learned that death is an integral and inseparable part of life. Perhaps, this way, they will learn that death is merely an emancipation of the body. It should be noted that this book used to be recited (to the children) personally by its author in the libraries of the Center for the

Development of Intellectual Property of Children and Teenagers. Hence, those children are familiar with the book and established a good relationship with it.

Title: What is the taste of secret?



Setareh finds out about mother having a secret. Although she promises not to reveal it, still she restlessly is dying to tell someone. That's why she acts weird and engages in doing things that her mother doesn't approve of. They don't know that mother has to keep her secret despite of what she has been eating. Finally mom announces grandma's birthday. Grandma is happy now. At last Setareh tells the secret. Now everybody knows why she had been weird acting in weird ways. Children are typically curious to know everything even the most secret things. But they will be dying to reveal it and cannot keep a secret. The writer tries to express this important issue in the most simplified wording. It is not nice for someone not to be able to keep a secret. Perhaps if people learn to keep secrets during childhood then many secrets will remain secrets forever. Then many cases of heartbreaking and scandals would be prevented.

The writer who has been a coach and trainer of children and teenagers (in Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Teenagers) for over 20 years strives to help children to get enabled to keep some secrets so that they could contribute to prevention of creation of stress in families and society, thus help tranquility be created.

Title: My mother is lost

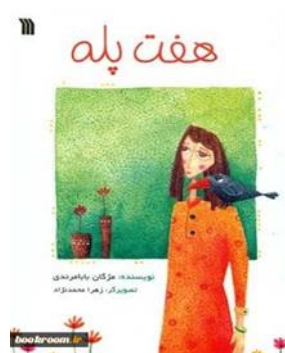


The narrator's mom just passed away. The mom has failed to use any of her valuable belongings. They all look brand new and remained untouched. Even her expensive unused perfume has evaporated. Advised by her aunt the narrator has to give away mother's personal and brand new belongings to charity. The aunts try to help their brother to get settled and get married. They are recommending their mother's intimate friend for this marriage, who frequently used to warn the mother to use her expensive furniture and household belongings, "otherwise, someone else will be using them". But mother never cared. One day, when the narrator is alone she finds a dried whiteboard marker and a tasty pastel in her own closet. Thus, she realizes that she took after her mother (being stingy). She also realizes that although she is the winner of a photography contest and has an expensive camera, she has

failed to take even a single portrait picture of her mom (hence she feels guilty). She concludes that everything including human being has an expiry date.

This book is a collection of six stories. The author has tried to use her twenty years of experience as a coach in the libraries of the Children's and Juvenile Intellectual Development Center, and the close relationship she used to have with those teenagers and children to choose the theme of her stories including the themes of love, getting lost/loss in a large and seemingly modern society and death in the midst of "Chahreshanbeh Soori" ceremony, (when everyone is merely thinking about herself/himself). Clearly the author is aware of the fact that adolescence is neither childhood nor adulthood. A teenager understands all the problems of today's life, such as betrayal, love, and identity crisis even in old age. A teenager like all the grownups tries to escape, but in vain he/she finds it useless to try to run away from problems (the realities of life).

Title: The Seven Steps



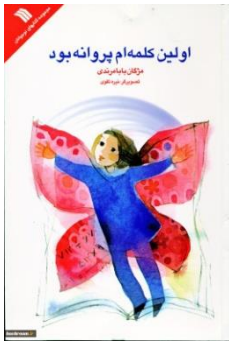
This collection includes six stories with different themes. Poetic themes heard in the "Crowd of Silence" and "Crow You heard Singing". The grandmother's loneliness theme in The Story "My Eyes on Your Window". The mysterious theme of life for everyone in the story "Everything was a mystery", the teenage savage theme in the story "Why you never reach the seventh step?", and the emotional divorce theme in families in "My father does not like to wait standing in the Line". These are common themes for teens in all societies. Whether in a developing country like us or in advanced countries. When a writer who loves her job, practically spends eight hours a day with teenagers, although she is not conscious of the fact, she will be able to choose from among many influential themes. The story ""My father does not like to wait standing in the Line/My daddy does not like the queue", is based on Albert Camus's famous quotation, "Writing is the same as jumping out of the line of dead people". Here, a father is an artist who intends to draw pictures and this way "jump out of the line of the line of dead people" by drawing and painting images from Shahnameh stories by Ferdowsi. The mother, a university professor, is tired of her husband's laziness as she has to shoulder all the household responsibilities and chores by herself/ alone. The narrator of the story quotes the mother as saying: "I will run out of patience any day now." The narrator describes the father's snoring and various types of queues, including the waiting in a line to buy bread, the queue for failing the College Entrance Exam. Now the narrator's classmate comes to see her. She is surprised that her friend (the narrator) has a talent for writing and admires her. At the end the three of them walk through the yard filled with dried leaves, lizards, beetles and bugs to reach their daily routine jobsite while the father is still snoring.

In the story "Why you never reach the seventh step?" Sheyda as usual is trying to spoil the classroom tranquility by bringing to the classroom (with her) a small metal owl during the Arabic Class. The owl makes lots of noise. But when she comes to

school, she is surprised to find out that the school is weird. She sees her best/intimate friend, Ely, and is told that their Arabic language teacher, Miss. Noushi, is dead. She remembers noticing a feather on Miss. Noushi's dress last session, and she had secretly written a note before passing it to Ely, saying "Miss Noushi is dead and is now in heaven". They all go for her funeral to cemetery "Behesht-e Zahra".

Over there she notices Miss Noushi's family who are there. She notices that the teacher's daughter is exactly her own/their age. Feeling guilty while bringing out the small metal owl, she throws it away on the mud. The owl is buried with Miss Noushi. They all get on the bus to go back.

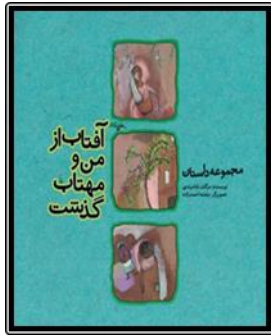
Title: The Butterfly Was My First Word



Parisa is greatly attached to her elder sister, Parvaneh. All her grades in school are 20, except the mathematics. She dreams of becoming a painter and an author (when she grows up). A suitor comes for Parvaneh to propose marriage. Her family gives a positive answer to the proposal and accepts it.

Parisa deliberately burns the food at their party. But the aunt of Peyman, the groom, finds out everything. Shirin, Parisa’s classmate, recounts about her sister who is married and lives in Isfahan. Parisa is afraid of losing Parvaneh. Her math improves with Peyman’s help. And she wins in a composition competition. Her father’s colleague and the groom’s aunt hear her composition (which is broadcast on the radio) from the radio. She thinks she will definitely become an author. The wedding ceremony takes place the day before the Norooz. Parisa wakes up early in the morning. While she is watching two doves with their chicks eating seeds (feeding themselves) in their little flower garden, Parvaneh and Peyman arrive at their home for Norooz visit

Title: The Sunshine Passed Over Me and Mahtab



That day I was mad. I did not compliment anyone in the house. I did not return any greetings either. I thought saying hello must be such a silly thing. I went to school. On the way, the street sweeper said hello to me but I ignored him. In the shop, Mr.Hassan the shop owner, greeted me but again I declined to reply. In the school,

my friend Mahtab sat beside me. Other kids greeted her or she returned the greetings and they radiantly interacted with one another. The principal's assistant said hello to all when they had been lined up and all of them returned the greeting but me. I went into the classroom. Some of the kids bothered to say hello but I ignored them. Mahtab came and sat beside me and said hello. In that moment I uncontrollably uttered a Hello. Madam teacher checked our home works and praised Mahtab for her non-stop in and out greetings. It was time for gym. All went to the yard. Kids were eager to be grouped with Mahtab and I turned green with envy since she was always in the spotlight. During the game, Mahtab pointed out a flower twig that had projected out of the cracks on the wall and showed it to all. The sunshine had spread down to the middle of the yard but it had way to go to light up that branch. "This twig is going to say hello to the Sun" Mahtab said. Madam teacher talked a lot about the benefits of greetings in one's life, now I feel alright and I want to say hello to the entire world.

The main feature of the story is the word Hello. The heroine (Mahtab) goes mad when she turns away from this term and her friend is always feeling good by constantly using the term and is always a point of focus among all other friends. The author employs elements like flower twig and sunshine to draw the kids' attention to the beauty of the word Hello. Children who read the book will be inclined to stubbornly say hello to everyone and strengthen their relationships with the world and the society.

memories cause grandpa to cry. The grandson is fed up with him . Covering a cart's interior with a blanket helps his grandfather get inside the cart. He then pushes the cart (with his grandpa) around the yard. It starts snowing. The grandfather (in his imagination) is driving his bus. He tells people what to do and argues with them. Later on, grandfather sends his wife and son (Massoud) on a pilgrimage to "Shah Abdul Azim". He is supposed to pick them up (from the bus terminal) when they return from their pilgrimage. Grandpa's memories is fluctuating and going off and on/back and forth (he cannot remember everything). Grandpa says: "Alas! I regret that I never (even for once) accompanied them to have lunch, ordering the well-know delicious kebab of Shah Abdul Azim. Now the parents arrive and scornfully criticize their son (for taking grandpa to the yard). Whereas, the grandpa says: "Luckily, my last dream/wish has been materialized". After a while Hamed looks out of the window watching his grandpa accompanied by Javaher, his grandma, walking in the snow, leaving the house and walking way.

Leaning against Essfand's Window. There is this family whose members have shaved their heads to sympathize with their child who is suffering from cancer (due to chemotherapy he loses his hair). The father even shaves the head of his daughter's doll.

It should be noted that this book was published a few years ago, and stories have been written two or three years earlier. These days, special attention is being paid to such diseases. While the author did this in the library (where she used to work/ the Center for intellectual development of teenagers and children). In that library the writer practically asked every child to shave their heads, so nobody would mock the sick child. Occasionally, a writer might have to have a second job to make the ends meet. Mozghan Baba-Mrandi actually has had the golden opportunity to work

among children and teenagers. Her job has greatly contributed to her main profession as a writer.

Title: Whish under the all snow was viola



Three women, three generations, grandmothers, grandchildren, and grandchildren, have experienced all kinds of wars. Each of them has also studied at the same school. Schools are closed and everyone has left Tehran fearing bombardment. Those who have stayed have covered their windows with black or dark cardboards (to conceal the light from the fighter pilots). The siren goes off with a loud noise warning the residents about imminent bombardment. The narrator answers the phone. Her grandmother is stuck in the crowded street. She has to drive to give her a ride home (go and fetch her). She finds her in the schoolyard. Searching her memories the grandma recalls and says that when the school was being built, it was during World War II and she was only a child. She had been watching the school being built. The school owner, fearing the war had fled to Tehran. Her brother goes to buy bread. A Russian soldier gives him bread while showing him his son's picture. The frightened brother runs the entire distance (all the way back) to the house. The father forbids him from going out again. After the war, the grandmother, in spite of her father's

protest goes to school to study. Although her father is disapproving her education the grandmother continues her education

This book contains five stories, as the followings:

-“I wish violets would grow under snow everywhere”

"-Silent Room and (Second Grade)"

"-It's better if the seeds of people's hearts were revealed"

"-The windows drapes are black"

"-Snowmen do not know how to cry"

The themes of each of the five stories are completely different from one another. Even their genres are different. The story of the "Silent Room and Classroom 2B" is an irony and extremely humorous, while the story "I wish there were violets under snow" was extremely sad and bitter. The story "Snowmen do not know how to cry" is a poetic look at a little princess who is in love with a snowman, a scarecrow and a crow. The story "It's better if the seeds of people's hearts were revealed", is about a teenage girl who very much suffers from loneliness (it is against the school rules to carry a cell phone in school). But her teacher finds out about her carrying a cell phone at school. The point of the story is: Her teacher fails to realize that it is not a cell phone which the girl cares about but it is her missing mother.

Title: The news presenter was silent

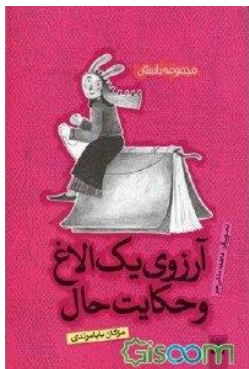


The girl gets off a car. She has to attend her English class. But she has failed to do her homework. She is worried and anxious fearing her strict teacher would check on her to see if she has learned the lesson. The crowd makes it too difficult for her to advance (in the sidewalk). It is so crowded as if the whole crowd is coming back together from a big party. People are frying fish and breaking seeds. The further she advances toward the city's main square, the bigger the crowd (gets). Surprisingly, when she finally arrives at the classroom, nobody is there but her teacher. She learns that everybody's gone to watch the hanging (execution) of a criminal who is going to be hanged.

This book includes 14 short stories the narrator of which is a teenager. The writer in the book brings up bitter and unpleasant problems, which play significant roles in the world of teenagers. With making age groups and trying to keep them away from problems caused by naivety. ?? They are directly involved in the modern life and its problems. Nowadays, there are two kinds of teenagers: child teenager, and adolescence teenager. The main concern of this book is the second category, the grownup teenager or the adolescent. Adolescence is an age or stage in life when

individuals develop (from a child) into an adult (which is referred to) as reaching puberty or physical adulthood. At puberty, girls begin to menstruate. Usually it is very painful for girls. At puberty they (teenagers) are undergoing a self-dependence seeking and identity crisis. On the other hand, the women sometime in their life reach the age of menopause. They get involved in love with no consequences. Teenagers' ending up in loneliness is resulted by mistakes committed by their parents. Today we witness in our society too many single parent children whose parents have been divorced. The single parent children are attracted to a wrong kind of love not only due to their needs but also due to absence of attachment and emotions. Perhaps we should consider the entire book as focusing on the teenager at puberty who struggles to be himself.

Title: The Story of Situation and Wishes of an Ass



The narrator is accustomed to reading lots of books, but not her school books. In the English class neither the topic of “Passive, Active verbs” nor the subject of “modals/would, should, could” make sense to her. Her classmate, Catherine, who is

sitting next to her, tries to help her. Catherine gives her address. The narrator realizes that to go to where her classmate lives she has to walk on the opposite direction from her own home. However, the distances of their homes from school are equivalent to each other. The next class in “theology”. That is how she finds out that the classmate is of a minority religion, and that is why Catherine looked so surprised when the narrator took a bite of her bread. As soon as the bell rings she runs towards Catherine's home. She notes that Catherine's neighbor is dumping a bowl of soup in the garbage can. She knocks. She steps in. Catherine sits down next to her with two bowls of soup and offers one of them to her guest.

This book covers 9 stories. The writer, while using irony, tries to express teenagers' problems. Perhaps we can say that the difference between this book and the writer's other books is that the teenager characters in it are somehow reflection of their families' characters and represent theirs. In other words, they (each teenager) play the role of a mirror which shows the small community (family) where they come from, in which they have grown up, where they have been brought up/have been raised. Therefore, they would react to problems the same way the grownups of their family would react... .The writer in this collection of hers also unveils the social problems such as inflation, high prices, sickness of head of the family, as well as the peddlers. The story titled, “Hope God will turn this command” of this book which participated in a contest named “The 12th Children and Teenagers Periodicals/Press” and reached the final phase.

Title: Lady Poetess and Mr. Beethoven



Her stepmother discriminates between her own daughter and the narrator. But the narrator loves her stepmother as she is alone and feels lonely. When the stepmother dies, no one tries to comfort the narrator for her death. No one presumes that she might be sad. She is so sad. Finally she concludes she is not going to wait any longer for her stepmother (who only used to comb her own daughter's hair) to comb her hair too. Now that she is not alive she can own the stepmother in her imagination.

The book contains nine stories titled: "When will you comb my hair?", "I am a crow that is lost under your shadow", "Soraya Qasemi and the Little Sparrow's nest", "Shams-ul-emareh's turn is over", "The elders do not know the language of the angels", "Kolah Gheremezi, Sarv-e naaz" and me, "The First Day of School", "The Flowers of Louis" and "The Lady Poet and the Brave Mr. Beethoven". Mozghan Baba-Marandi has been a mentor for children and adolescents for twenty years. Considering the theme of the collection it becomes obvious that the teenagers' themes of the day are understood by the writer. Apparently the author chose those themes and started to write. The themes of love for teens and their timeliness in the closed society of Iran, the treatment of families with the elderly, the debate of

parents, japing of various Iranian dialects, teens living with their stepmothers or stepfather (stepparents) in some families. This book was praised by many literary critics in Iran.

Title: I was my Grandma's Mom



Noushin is a child who is so young that she still urinates in her bed. Her grandmother does the same. Also urinates at herself. Mom and dad, who are tired of working for low wages have to struggle to make the ends meet. They cannot afford to hire a nurse. Mom has to/is forced to change grandma's diaper. Noushin is upset that her grandmother, like her very young sister, Nora, who is an infant uses diapers. She decides to nurse her grandmother who is suffering from Alzheimer disease. Grandma mistakes Noushin for her own demised mother who had passed away died a long time ago. The grandmother is constantly commuting through her memories and keeps doing childish things (continues to sabotage and spoil the peace of the family members). Finally she passes away.

The book involves a novel the implications of which is Alzheimer's, a disease we are all familiar with, as one of the few terrible diseases in our present society. She has tried to address children and adults to say that:

-The current financial situations together with social crisis threaten people's mental health more than ever. We should watch out for various forms of stress (nervous breakdown and pressures).

Alzheimer is a disease that diminishes people's grandeur/ glory/ splendor/ dignity and returns them to their childhood and to memories (takes them back to the past as they approach state of childhood). We should be kind to the patient.

- Perhaps, children would learn how to deal with their parents' fatigue and take care of them. They should learn not to avoid them, not to keep distance from them. That is how they can prevent them from diving into loneliness.

On the other hand, parents should also mind these troubling days by making sure children will not be adversely impressed by such days of hardship (not cause them to get depressed) and while encouraging them to move on, must remind them that those days will eventually pass (and that life still will be going on).

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