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**ATOOSA
SALEHI**

Biography



I was born in 1972 in Narmak (a neighborhood in East of Tehran) and have lived the early years of childhood in a house with a yard together with my family, parents and my brother who was four years older than me. My father was a math teacher and my mother the teacher of the first grade in an elementary school. In those years, she was also a volunteer to eradicate illiteracy in deprived areas. I was a girl with curly hair and rounded eyes who loved chocolate and storybooks and hated fluorescent lamps and the smell of fishes. I recall my Armenian friend, Imran whose mother used to invite for coffee at ten in the morning. Irman had smooth and golden hairs causing me as a girl with curled and black hairs to wish every night to wake up in the morning to see my hairs turned smooth and golden as Irman.

I was five when we changed our neighborhood, departing to Tehranpars (a neighborhood in East of Tehran). We lived in the first square and I went to Khodabaskh Primary School. At the same year when I started school, the 1979 revolution happened. My mother was a teacher at the same school but never mine. My mother did not like me to rely on her, never carried my school bag and never allowed me to meet her during the breaks. My mother and father were so orderly that I and my brother are habituated to wake up early in the morning. We lived in a five-story apartment. Western 150 was the most

famous street in the district. Our five-story apartment had a yard full of seven-color roses, four BlackBerry trees and Amin Al-dawlah Jasmines flowers climbing on the fences. After school, we kids played together in the yard or in the silent alley. I had a bosom friend named as me Atoosa, who was my confidant. Every day in the afternoon the girls and boys played a variety of street games as Zou or Seven Stones. Western 150 Street that was the only street where you could see happy cycling girls and cheerful football matches. I had a number of dolls at home and at the same time I used to play with boys in the street and my knees were often wounded in football matches. I was at the same team as my brother and I was usually played as the gatekeeper.

The last Wednesday of the year, known as Wednesday Fireworks, was so spectacular in Western 150 Street. This is an ancient Iranian ritual when people make piles of fire in the streets, sing together and jump over the fire. Several piles of fire were burning all along the street and a number of colorful firecrackers completed the feast. Finally, both boys and girls veiled themselves with a Chador and started Spoon-banging. Until I was 14 when my brother was in Iran, we used to play football and badminton and even we went to the cinema, Golriz Cinema in Yousef Abad district.

The great yard of our childhood was full of joy and laughter when the Iran-Iraq war broke out and I was about 9. Then nights then were accompanied with the sound of warning sirens. We taped the window glasses



so as to prevent shattering of the glass and we used to sleep in the living room to keep the distance from windows. Several times the people talked about Iraqi fighters as breaking the sound barrier and the terrifying image of shattered windows was beyond what we could imagine. Every moment we expected the sirens to warn. With the sound of sirens, all light bulbs were turned off except the little blue light at the elevator that intensified the terror in the air. The red alert moved all inhabitants of the ten apartments to the parking and we stayed there until white alert was heard over the radio. For the kids, even the red alert situations were the time of joy and entertainment



and narration. My mother narrated several stories and anecdotes from *Shahnameh*, the Persian epic, she narrated the story of Zahhak, the king with two snakes on his shoulders who had to feed them with the innocent young people, and the story of Simorgh, the mythical bird. She also read anecdotes by Saadi. She narrated and read all those stories so as to make us forget the frightening situation. I heard and fell in love with so many stories by Saadi at the same nights.

Until I was ten, everything was black and white. If I had lost my golden hairpin that was a new year gift, if the grandmother was going to Abdul-Azim Shrine and leaving me, if father was against my participation in the birthday party of a friend, then I found myself at final hour of the world with everything finished. But when I found a rusty little coin in the street, if by Nowruz night my mother bought me two red fishes and a cassette of Cinderella story, or if I was allowed to sleep on grandma's

roof under the starry night, then there was a new world and everything had just started.

When I was at the fourth grade of elementary school, I started reading a number of simplified classics including *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Crime and Punishment* and *Gone with the Wind*. My brother was a fan of poetry and he sometimes introduced me to such figures of contemporary literature as Forough Farrokhzad and Ahmad Shamlou to read. Many of the books that I accessed were from the relatives who had left Iran. Also, there were many books I had collected individually. One of the books was a pictorial for children about the Seven Labors of Rostam. I spent hours looking at the pictures by Nafiseh Riahi and reading the simplified text by M. Azad. The book was published by the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. There are a number of other books I never forget, including *Truth and the Sage* by Bahram Beyzai (the contemporary dramatist and mythologist) and *Deer and the Birds* by Nima Yooshij who is often considered as the father of new Persian poetry. I was a member of Tehran's public library and I remember reading the books by John Christopher and *The Kid, Soldier, and Sea* by Georges Fonvilliers. Later on, my mother distributed many of my books among the neighboring kids as gifts.

My childhood was full of friendships, quarrels, and reconciliations, full of letters I have left on the desk of my friends, full of travels with my father's brown car that lasted several weeks. Both my parents were teachers and they were free during summer vacations and their love of nature moved everybody in the family toward



nature. Sometimes my father showed me a scenery and talked about his wishes for building a house there. He was a serious math teacher but at home he was soft and patient and together with my brother, we usually played chess and backgammon. Sometimes in pretended to be sleeping in the car so as he would take me to the bed.

Despite all the stories my mother told me, I loved math more than any other subject. In composition classes, with its repetitive and boring subjects for composition – I memorized some materials and presented them as my composition. To tell the truth, I was not interested in literature at school. Sometimes my father who was teaching in several high schools asked us to help him in grading the papers. He used to read the correct answer and I and my brother marked the grades on the paper accordingly.

My math was very good. I loved the magic of numbers. I fancied to answer and submit my exam papers before anybody in the classroom. It was the subject I chose for high school years to study. However, one magazine changed my interests and all of a sudden and I found myself interested in stories and poetry. *Soroush for Adolescents* was the magazine that published during the 1980s until 2000s for young adults. I was in high school in those years. Those years the schools were very tough and they reproached me for carrying a couple of poetry books in my bag. It was a teacher of literature who rescued me. She was a dedicated teacher with so many extra-curricular works including reading stories and organizing poetry memorization contests in the classroom. After a short time, we found ourselves memorialized hundreds of poems without any hassle. In the contests, I used the old notebook of my father who kept the poems alphabetically; it helped me to ask more complicated questions.

The high school was very close to Hosseinieh Ershad, a religious and cultural center with a large library. Together with a friend, Behnaz Barati, I became a member of the library. Behnaz was a great reader of both books and magazines and she was writing to *Soroush*. I borrowed and read many books from the library. I was in love with Russian literature and such writers as Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, and Turgenev. This was possible

because my mother often quoted Raskolnikov. At the same years, New Age Cinema screened *Twenty-Six Days from the Life of Dostoyevsky* that I watched several times and memorialized many dialogues. I spent those teenage years in the library and together with Gita attended some classical music classes. Gita was born on the same day as me, also, our mothers had the same name, Manijeh. This made us like twin sisters. Together, we went to the library, attended calligraphy and music classes and everywhere I looked for books by or about Dostoyevsky. One day, Behnaz, my classmate showed me a page in *Soroush* magazine that was a call to a contest, the Honorary Correspondent Contest.

The call was in a very sincere tone and it pleased me. Later I found that Mr. Fereydoon Amoozadeh Khalili (writer for children and young adults and editor in chief of *Chelcheragh Weekly*) was the writer of the call. I wrote a parody about the paper handkerchiefs in Tehran and asked Behnaz to post it. A few days later, I saw a copy of the magazine in a newsstand under Seyyed Khandan bridge. I searched for the names, my name was there but not Behnaz's. It was a bad situation. I received a letter of invitation to a meeting with the writers of the magazine. Together with my father, I climbed the sloped street and my heart beat fast. In the meeting, there were many boys and girls and it was at the same meeting where I met with a friend of later years. Mojgan Kalhor was the girl who read her story and there was a boy who criticized her for repeating the word Grandmother 12 times

in the text. After the meeting, I went to Mojgan and told her not to take these talks too serious. Later on, I found we are living in the east of Tehran and we can meet even more.

Then the monthly meetings of the magazine started. Occasionally, I practiced writing poetry, it was shorter and easier. Gheisar Aminpour (contemporary poet and influential figure in the teen's literature) was the editor of the poetry section and we became the editorial staff of the magazine. As part of the educational plan, we were dispatched with the reporters



to other cities to practice reporting and it was a good occasion for writing. Those years I traveled to Turkman port (in the Caspian Sea port in the North East of Iran), Ashuradeh (the only island in the Caspian Sea) and Gorgan (a northern province) and I wrote reports on cotton farms.

One day, when I was a senior student at high school, Mr. Amoozadeh Khalili called me, Mojgan and another friend and asked us to accept the editorial of *Soroush for Adolescents*. They had designed a special section for the magazine with all its contents including poetry, story, report, pictures as well as the management to be done by the adolescents themselves

The first salary I received was for a report I wrote for the magazine. Together with my friends I went to a bookstore and bought some books. We were in love with rare and out-of-print books. In my favorite bookshop, I bought *Dear Michael* by Natalia Ginzburg. Later on, I found *Little Virtues* and fell in love with Ginzburg.

At the same years, several of my friends were arranging a scriptwriting course with Professor Bahram Beyzai. On Thursdays from 2 to 8 in the afternoon we had script writing classes where we watched movies and wrote scripts. Also, I had found a stable position at *Hamshahri Monthly* to edit two pages, one for fairy tales and folklore and the other for 40 years anniversary of published materials. For the first page, wherever I saw an old man or woman, I talked to them to hear a fairy tale or fable. Later, Hamshahri became a daily newspaper and on the very first issue published a poem this time not for children but for adults.

Since the time I was 18, I was a member of the Young Poets Group and we regularly met at City Part in the center of Tehran. Gheisar Aminpour was teaching poetry there and it was a source for writing the *Dear Darya*. We had a poetry seminar and the member published their works periodically. There were many members from smaller cities who could only attend the seminars and often sent their works by mail. Gheisar Aminpour asked me to answer some of the letters; they were almost at the same age as me. One of them was a girl who became the prototype of Marzieh in my *Dear Darya*. Cheshmeh Publication published it in its collection for arts. Initially, I was afraid to write it. Gheisar Aminpour gave me a collection of books including *My Story with Poetry* by the Syrian poet, Nizar Qabbani. I still have the book and read it occasionally. I read the book and decided to write the book in the format a story so as better to communicate with teenagers. Therefore, the form of the story was a dialogue between two characters with different outlooks on poetry and a teacher who could balance the views. I worked on *Dear Darya* for a year. When finished, I felt it is not a good job and decided to publish it with a pen-name but it was Gheisar who read it and, in a letter, praised it, changing my decision.

At the same days, *Sunflower* started publishing as an appendix for



Hamshahri (the newspaper with the highest circulation in Iran that is still published). *Sunflower* was a weekly, attached to *Hamshahri*, and it was me who was once was thrown into the world of writing for children, wrote the first editorial of *Sunflower*. The poetry section was for me to manages and also together with my friend, Mojgan Kalhor, I edited the page for the works by readers and, at the same time I was the editor of *Soroush for the Adolescents* and wrote some scripts for radio. At the same time, together with Mojgan, I attended English classes for two years and then I passed advanced

courses on etymology and English literature. Later, I attended an online course in English literature.

Sunflower changed its publication cycle from weekly to daily. The first Iranian daily for young adults with the editorship of Mr. Amoozaheh Kkalili and with me and Mojgan having our special pages to edit where the works of young adults and volunteer journalists were published. Sometimes we arranged seminars and called young adult writers to attend or we arranged special workshops on writing and translation for them.

Between all of these adventures, something was going on in my mind and I was not aware of it.

Possibly it happened during the classes with Bahram Beyzai or before during the air raids of the 1980s when we resorted to the parking and listened to my mother's narrations of the story of Rostam in *Shahnameh* or the pictures by Nafiseh Riahi. My recreations of *Shahnameh* for children and young adults were born in *Sunflower*. It was Bahram Beyzai in his who in his scriptwriting

classes suggested everybody in the capacities he saw. He suggested me to recreate *Shahnameh* for young adults. When I discussed the idea with Gheisar Aminpour, he encouraged me. I wrote many versions and tore them up. Did not know how to write. Every time, Mr. Aminpour read my pieces and asked me to work more. He brought me about 30 books and asked me to read all of them before writing. I had read any available book on epic, mythology and *Shahnameh*, from *Epic Poetry in Iran* by Zabiullah Safa to *Iranian Mythology* and *A Research on Iranian Mythology* by Mehrdad Bahar and others. I found a xeroxed copy of Gilgamesh translated by Davood Monshizadeh, that was out of print and he explained some ideas about recreation and adaptation in a few meetings.

I had decided to use contemporary storytelling techniques and searched to find a special language and prose. I wanted my language to be Persian without being obsolete. As for the characters, I wanted to make them more colorful and avoid showing them as either black or white. I searched a lot to find characters that are more peripheral and I searched in different references to find an empty space within *Shahnameh*. The stories that are narrated very briefly in the original text. This opened more rooms for my storytelling and imagination. Beyzai emphasized a lot on characterization in his classes. I liked to write stories with strong central characters who would create the story through their dialogues or monologues. Also, I liked to introduce the *Shahnameh* and ancient Persian mythology to contemporary children and young adults. I did not narrate something that is far away from our life. I liked them to find their identity in the stories of *Shahnameh*.

I had read different adaptations of the classic works and I have learned through Beyzai how Shakespeare had

adapted the stories of Hamlet, Macbeth, and King Lear from earlier versions. Then he told me how the story of Rostam and Sohrab itself is a recreation and how Ferdowsi had changed a story with a happy ending into a tragedy, then he explained how different mythologies of the world have the same source and talked about some examples. I was drowned in the marvelous world of mythology and all these fed my enthusiasm for writing stories based on *Shahnameh*, the great Persian epic.

As I was in direct contact with adolescents for several years, wanted to write for them initially so as to see their reaction and response. At first, I decided to check any story with the audience and to change the course of writing if necessary. The story of Zakhak was the first in a series that was published every other day in *Sunflower daily*. Niloofar Mohammadi, the graphist whose thesis was on the characters of *Shahnameh* illustrated the stories. I was surrounded by many calls to the office who wanted to know what happens next. After finishing the story of Zakhak, the children select it as the most fascinating story in *Sunflower*. They wanted more stories to be narrated and this encouraged me to continue.

After finishing three stories, they asked me to publish the collection as a book and before the books were published, the Festival on Journalism (a biannual festival for journalistic works in Iran) granted me the gold medal for the stories in *Sunflower*. In a setting when only translations found bestselling positions, nobody could believe that an original book could win the publishing market and this made my publisher suggest for more works. Possibly it was these recreations that distanced me from the world of journalism and I focused more on writing stories.

My books made a way to travel to different cities in the country.

poems but was so fascinating to hear them reading my recreations of *Shahnameh* with such enthusiasm. The parents told me they found the stories interesting for themselves and the books encouraged them to arrange special meetings for reading *Shahnameh* in their cities.

In all these years I worked with Soroush for Adolescents monthly. After *Sunflower* was shut down, together with Mojgan I went to state TV to write film scripts. We wrote several scripts for TV serials and programs until the Great Ice-creams project was introduced. It was a serial with more than 300 episodes. I, Mojgan and Naghmeh Samini (screenwriter) started writing it.



The project made we three writers to rent a separate apartment for writing and we started writing for 6 months day and night. We named the new apartment Akhtar's Mother, after the name of the owner. Every time, we bought a dozen of paper packages and everybody wrote her share of the episodes and shared it with others for comments and editing. We wrote and edited day and night and the column of paper grew longer and longer. We started with the general plan of the work then divided the work and everybody wrote her share, then we read it and edit it collectively. With the money we earned by this project we could buy an apartment in Tehran but we were adventurous and desired for a travel to enrich our sense of life. A different journey started leading us to Brazil. My brother was living there then.

Before departing we said goodbye to Soroush for Adolescents editorial staff. Mr. Aminpour was very sad and the friends told us that is less likely for us to return. The journey to did not finish to Brazil and Amazon jungle, and we visited Venezuela and Guyana as we and found several friends.

We returned six months later, in May 2000. We had to start again. I decided to write more books and communicate more effectively with my audience. To this end, the top floor in a film maker's office who was instrumental. We settled in a room at that office and read and wrote novels during the day. Also, the office became a place to meet friends in the afternoons.

In 2003 when Ofogh publications suggested me to accept the position of the book reviewer, I had already married and had my working space at home where I was working on recreations of *Shahnameh*. Every two months I submitted a work to the publisher. I had my works on TV too.

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months I submitted a work to the publisher. I had my works on TV too. Collaboration with Ofogh (an Iranian publisher of children's and adolescents' books) began by choosing names for collections and writing books excerpts for covers and also reviewing novels and translations.

I designed various covers and wrote book reviews for catalogs. Then one day, the idea book club was introduced. There was a long time since my direct contact with adolescents in *Soroush for Adolescents* and *Sunflower*, and it was so pleasing to see the



teenagers who were motivated by and interested in reading. Each month we read a book together and invited the translator or the author and in open meetings, the children talked to them. I saw the adolescents for whom reading a book was a serious task gradually the meetings became so populated that we had no room for the club to continue.

Then it was suggested to me manage the same reading clubs in the Monthly Magazine for Children and Young Adults. Those sessions were more complicated, every time fifty to sixty teenagers gathered who discussed the books they have read with the author or an expert in the field.

At the same time, I continued my editing's and translations. I learned to edit from Qaisar Aminpour, by sitting next to him and watching him editing. He mentioned important editing points that are not mentioned in any book. Also, I became a member of the Board of Theoretical Issues of the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. As of March 2003, my first son, Arshia was born and I did not accept three years of work outside the house because I did not want to give him to a kindergarten before three. My husband was at home only on Thursdays so as I could attend at Ofogh Publishing office. My second son was born on April 2009, I did not work for two or three months until one day I received a box of flowers and sweets from Ofogh, the box was full of works remaining to be done during this period, and since then, doing works at home became a habit.

I started writing with poetry, but since some years ago, I would rather not publish my poems because I feel that publishers do not have that serious outlook to poetry. I have published three poetry collections. *With the Permission of Spring* and *A Melody for Rain* were released in the very first years of my work. For the last book of my poem, *I Miss You*, I thought that there should be different images that are more in line with the teenage spirit. I demanded my friend, Hoda Haddadi (an illustrator and winner of some international awards), to provide illustrations that look like a real picture, and she did beautiful a task. At that time, the critics told me and my friends in *Sorush*: "Your poems have an adult virus, but



I thought, and I still believe that they would overlook adolescents, that their own lyrics are contaminated to a childish virus.” If we are to compose a new poem that is close to the experience of teenagers, it is not necessary for the poem to be white or new, we can still compose new rhyming classics because what is important is to be innovative. In this book I wanted the poems to be narrative, to make

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each poem like a short story, as a slice of life. A poem in which the events of today are happening.

I think that even in commercial and custom works, one can keep the fresh look and write the story creatively. *Like All but Like Nobody* was a custom book and it was about to be about blood transfusion and donation, but I insisted on writing about the children who have thalassemia and I talked with the publisher about how it is important to write indirectly about the subject. It was fascinating for me too, I was officially recommended by my publisher, the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults to the hospitals introducing me to talk to children with thalassemia. This is the way I wanted to write a story very close to the actual life of these kids.

Also, for writing the other novel, *Just One Minute Is Enough* I did a lot of research and tried to find a close position to the lives of the children I wrote about. The novel is about a teenage girl surviving an earthquake. She has many questions in mind, such as the questions that any teenagers may have but the main issue is identity, a fundamental question for every teenager. For a long time, I pondered on this question until the idea of writing for adolescents was introduced by the Center for Intellectual Development and I decided to write it. In my dream and awakening, I found myself thinking about the characters and the story. After Bam earthquake (in December 2003, it devastated parts of Bam city in Kerman province) several friends of mine were settled and worked there, they knew a group of children who 6 to 7 years later were spending their summer vacations in a camp near Tehran. With the help of my friends, I repeatedly visited the children to read a story for them and found prototypes of the characters in the same meetings. I was thinking about the novel during the week and devoted Wednesdays to writing. I usually left my little son, Sharziz, to my mother in these days and devoted all day to writing. At that time, on Thursdays, I was managing Kherad publishing house and had regular meetings at Ofogh publications. From early May to late in December, I wrote the novel and finished writing in Yalda night (the longest night of the year, the last night of autumn that is celebrated in Iran), and on the way to Center for Intellectual Development, I wrote the title of the novel on printed sheets.

After this book, I went to different cities and saw teenagers who believed the story to be true. Many of them, like Raha, the main character in my story, were searching for their identification



documents and they wanted to know if they are the real children of their parents. On these trips, I saw how much children and their parents are different and even alien to each other.

In this book, the earthquake was more of a theme to write about the relationship between teenagers and their families. I saw at the reading club that they are talking about the subject and I saw many successful parents who had a lot of problems with their children. Now it's a long time since I dedicate most of my time to writing for children of early ages and am the senior editor of Ofogh

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publications. At a workshop for writing that I run at Ofogh publications, where other writers are present, I have written a collection of novels, *Nima the Genius* which I will publish soon. This time, my book is more comic and it is about the incidents to a boy named Nima at school. Many of his adventures are the adventures of my first son at school. My first son likes painting more than writing. He was too small when among his classmates, he found customers and received orders for his paintings. My second son wants to be a writer, and he often asks me to accompany me in meetings on books. He has created a small library in his classroom. Both of them know *Shahnameh* very well, especially my little boy, Sharzain. This is not because of my books, actually, it is their father who knows *Shahnameh*

very well and he has always narrated stories for children from an early age.

Before I became a mother, writing for teenagers was more interesting but now I prefer to write for smaller children. Therefore, together with Mojgan, we have started writing a collection of books for children below three. However, the lack of facilities for publication made the books not as good as we expected. Nargol Adventures is the title of yet another collection I have written for children.

In this collection, I tried to use recreation to write stories about the subjects of environment and life skills.

Even though I have two boys myself, I still like some nights somebody to read a story for me. Sometimes I think with myself, possibly my love to write stories and to listen to stories has started much longer before. From the very nights, my grandmother was narrating the tales of *Orange and Bergamot* or *Moonlit Forehead*.

I still have that old habit of childhood and wake up early in the morning, but I cannot sleep early as those old nights. Just after sleeping my boys, I find a time to open a book and pour a cup of hot tea for myself.

Resume

Poetry

With the Permission of the Spring, Illustrator: Mahnoosh Moshiri, Teen Poetry Collection, Noghteh Publications, 1996.

A Melody for Rain, Illustrator: Farshid Shafiee, Teen Poetry Collection, Soroush Publications, 1998.

I Miss You, Illustrator: Hoda Haddadi, Teen Poetry Collection, Genesis Publications, 2007; Third edition: 2016.

Walnut Eyes, Illustration: A group of illustrators, Teen Poetry Collection, Fruit Rose (Germany), 2018; (along with other poets).

Stories

Even One Minute Is Enough, Teenage Novel, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2010; Seventh edition: 1396
Dear Darya, Teaching Poetry in Plain Language, Cheshmeh publishing, 2007; reprinted: 2011.

Like All but Like No One, Illustrator: Mitra Abdullahi, Teenage story, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2006; Third edition: 2015.

Lettuce My Beautiful Car, Illustrator: Marzieh Sarmashghi, Children's Story, Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2008.

Jirak and Jorak Collection in 4 Volumes, Illustrator: Bijan Mirbagheri, Children's Story, Markaz Publications, 1999 (together with Mojgan Kalhor) Diary, Illustrator: Roodabeh Khayef, Ofogh Publishing, 2005 (with Mojgan Kalhor); Eighth Edition: 2018.

Collection of 12 Tales from of *Shahnameh*, Illustrator: Saeed Razzagh, Tarbiat Publications, 2005; 7th reprint: 2017.

Has Anybody Seen the Little Monkey in Dream?, Illustrator: Haleh Darabi, Children's Story, Scientific and Cultural Publications, 2006.

12 volume collection of recreations of *Shahnameh* Tales, Illustrator: Niloofar Mirmohammadi, Tales of *Shahnameh*, Ofogh Publications from 1996 to 2014; Nineteenth reprint: 2018.

Parrot and Merchant, Illustrator: Nayereh Taghavi, Children's Story, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2007.

Siavash, Illustrator: Attieh Markazi, Children's Story, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2007.

Once Upon a Time, Illustrator: Sahar Khorasani, Collection of Stories for Teens, Peidayesh Publications, 2013.



Akh and Ding Collection, 5 Volumes Set, Illustrator: Shiva Ziaee, Shahr Ghalam Publications/ 2014 (together with Mojgan Kalhor)
Nargol Adventures, 4 volume set, Illustrator: Mahboubeh Yazdani, Children's Story, Nardeban Publications, 2017.

Translations

Boa's Worst Birthday Party, Jane Willis, Children's Story, 2017

A Very Strange Creature, Ronda Armitage, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2013.

Screenplays

Ice Creams, One-Hundred Episode Puppet Show/ Child and Adolescent TV Network (1999) (with Mojgan Kalhor and Naghmeh Samini).

Mr. Raya, Live and Animation compilation, 13 Episodes, Child and Adolescent TV Network, 2001, with Mojgan Kalhor.

Uncle Norouz, Collection of Animation Clips, 13 Episodes, Saba Institute, 2011

Jirak and Jorak, Animation Serial, 26 episodes, Saba Institute -, 2012, with Mojgan Kalhor

Awards

Golden Diploma of Honor of the First Press Festival of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 1996 (Episode 1 to 3 of *Shahnameh*).

The Golden Diploma of the Seventh Press Festival the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Poetry Section, November 1996, for *Velvet Clouds* collection of poems



Nominated by Fifth Press Festival of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in the Poetry Section, August 1998.

Nominated writer of Hello Kids Book Festival, Collections 1 to 3 of *Shahnameh Tales*

Nominated book in Hello Kids Book Festival, *Dear Darya*

The Golden Diploma of 9th Book Festival of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults - March 1999 for *Dear Darya*

First Grade Honorary Medal and Golden Pen of the Eleventh Press Festival of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, August 2004

First Grade Golden Medal and Diploma of Honor from the Seventh Press Festival of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in the Poetry - November 2005

Nominated by Festival for Children and *Shahnameh* – for Collection of *Shahnameh Tales*, Summer 2005.

Diploma of Appreciation from the Second Conference on the Celebration of *Shahnameh*, the National Olympic Academy of Iran – April 2006 (for Collection of *Shahnameh Tales*)

Nominated book for the First Premier Book Festival on Festival - Summer 2007 (for *Like All but like Nobody*)

Nominated Book of the 11th Festival of Hello Book – 2007, (for *Like All but like Nobody*)

The Prime Prize of teenage story section Second Festival of Women's Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran, January 2008,

(for Like All but like Nobody)

Nominated book of the Second Premier Book Festival - Summer 2008 (Collection 7 to 9 *Shahnameh* Tales)

Statue and Diploma of Honor, 6th Book of the Season Festival in the Children's Story - Summer 2008 (for My Beautiful Lettuce, My Car)

Statue and honorary medal of the third round of Parvin Etesami Literary Prize - March 2008 (for I miss you)

Honorary diploma of the best poetry book from the Children's and Adolescent Contemplation Center Book Fair - March 2008 (for I miss you)

Special Introduction by Children's Book Council - March 2009, (for Parrot and the Merchant)

Statue Diploma of Appreciation for Jafar Pivar Literary Prize – February 2010, (for Parrot and the Merchant)

Diploma of Appreciation from National Book of the Year - November 2009 (for I Miss You)

Special Introduction by Children's Book Council - March 2010, (for I Miss You)

Nominated by White Ravens, The Munich Library, 2010, (for I Miss You)

Award of Shahid Habib Ghanipour Book of the Year – March 2012, (for *Even One Minute Is Enough*)

Nominated by Second Mehra Book Award - March 2012 (for Collection of Works)

Golden Medal and Diploma of Honor,
15th Festival of Center for Intellectual
Development of Children and Young
Adults, Teenage Novel
Section, 2012, (for *Even
One Minute Is Enough*)

Golden Medal and Diploma
of Honor, 17th Festival
of Center for Intellectual
Development of Children
and Young Adults, Teenage
Novel Section, 2012, (for
Siavash)

Nominated Book by Council
of Children's Book - 2014
(for *Siavash*)

Appreciated at Shaheed Beheshti University
for Collection of Recreation Books - 2014

Nominated by Mehdi Azari Yazdi Literary
Prize, Winter 2015, (for *Siavash*)



Activities

Editor in the Soroush Magazine – 1990 -
2000

Editor in chief of “Forty Years with Press”
and “Streetlines” Columns, Hamshahri
Newspaper, 1991 – 1992.

Editor of “poetry” and “stars” columns in
Sunflower Newspaper – 1994 – 1997.

Organizer of Horizons Reading Club for
Teens – 2004 – 2006.

Member of the Council for Theoretical
Debates, Center for Intellectual



Development of Children and Young Adults – 2006 – 2010.

Member of Council for Novel, Center for Intellectual Development

of Children and Young Adults – 2012 – 2012.

The editor of the teenage section, Peidayesh Publications, 2011 – 2013.

Literary Expert, Ofogh Publications, 2003 – 2014.

Director of Mahak Publishing (Child and Adolescent Department of Kherad Publications) – 2010 – 2017.

Member of the story council of the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – 2013 to date.

Editor in Chief, Children and Adolescents Section, Ofogh Publications, 2014 to date.

Translated Works

Walnussaugen - Lyrik für Jugendliche, Aus dem Persischen von Ayeda Alavie, Illustration for Martin pflanzer, Hagebutte verlag, Munich 2017.

Has anyone seen the little monkey's dream? Translated by: Shaqayq Qandhari, Editor by Sofia A Koutlaki, Elmi Farhangi Publications, 2008.

Lettuce My Nice Car, Translated by Sofia A. Koutlaki, Elmi Farhangi Publications, 2008.

Papers

A special audience-oriented criticism, an overview of the work by Afsaneh Shaban-Nejad, Children and Adolescent

Literature Research Magazine, Vol. 38 (Autumn 2004): pp. 128-139.
Literacy and Creativity, Children and Adolescent Literature Research Magazine, Vol. 32, (2003): pp. 153 – 156.
Something between reality and imagination, dream and awakening and myth and reality, Review *Dream Seller* book, Children and Adolescent Literature Research Journal, No. 15, Winter 1998 (4 pages from 94 to 97).

Conferences and Presentations

Roundtable: Multidimensional Charter of Stein (Report of a Roundtable), Research Journal for Children and Adolescent Literature, Spring 2001.
Too Much Theory in Criticism (Report on Pathology of Child and Adolescent Poetry), Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, 2003, - Issue 66 (8 pages – from 46 to 53).
Roundtable on Contemporary Poetry Translation, Society for Child and Adolescent Writers, June 2010.
Special Meeting of the Writers, National House of Book, Reviewing a Novel by Abbas Tarabbon, July 2011.
Meeting with teenagers, Center for Artistic Creation in Gilan, 2011.
Meeting with teenagers at the Center for Artistic Creation of Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, Bandar Abbas, Spring 2012.
The Roundtable on Writers and the Challenges of Audience in Biennale for Literature of Childhood and Childhood Studies, November 2014.
Meeting teenagers, Library No. 10 of Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, November 2017.
Meeting the teenagers in Andisheh Cultural Library, November 2018.

Workshops

Creative Writing Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults - Iran and Europe - Autumn 2003.

Reading with Teens Workshop, Association for Children and Adolescent Writers, October 2010.

Workshop on the Features of Teen Poetry Today, Children's Literature Festival in Shiraz, June 2016.

Creative Writing Workshop, Kherad Educational Complex, Summer 2017.

Child Poetry Workshop, Children's Book Council, Spring 2018.

Translation for Children Workshop, Ofogh Publications, Summer 2018.

Referees and Judgments

Adolescent Poetry Section, 10th Children, and Adolescent Press Festival, 2011.

Poetry Section, National Book of the Year Festival, 2005.

Poetry Section, Awarding Committee of Children's Book Council, 2011.

Children's Literature Section, of the 7th Parvin Etesami Festival, 2016.

Eighth Premier Book Festival, 2015.

Sepidar Festival, 2015 and 2017.

The Book of the Year Festival, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

Children's Literature Festival of Shiraz, 2016.

Member of the poetry and prose evaluation group, Roshd Educational Books Festival, 2017.

articles, dissertations, reviews, and columns on author's works

Dissertation: Samaneh Naji Ebrahimi, Yazd (Imam Reza International University), The Effect of Gender on Character and point of view in Recreative Works of Atoosa Salehi from *Shahnameh* (based on stories published by the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults by 2015).

Survey and Analysis of the Elements of Story in Several Stories Rewritten from *Shahnameh* for Teenagers, *Literary Investigations Magazine*, Vol. 14, 2013, No. 27.

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Teenagers Monthly Book, No. 43, (May 2001): pp. 40-43.

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The Map of the Lost Land, Abbas Tarabbon, World of Book No. 224, February and March 2007, p. 89.

Once upon there was not two, Shohreh Kaedi, Children and Teenagers Monthly Book, No. 80, (June 2004), p. 89.

The presence of the incident in poetry (on Atoosa Salehi’s collection of poetry), Jamaloddin Akrami, Children and Teenagers Monthly Book, No. 61, November 2002, pp. 68 - 75.

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Criticism of the season: A forest full Raspberries, a jar full of songs of the river, reviewing With the

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the effect of rewriting on the relationship between people and literature, focusing on the works of Atoosa Salehi, Revisiting the Services and Betrayals of recreation, Marjan Fooladvand, Journal of Child and Adolescent Literature, Winter 2013, No. 60 (7 pages from 96 to 102).

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Dissertation: The study and analysis of child and adolescent poetry, based on the works of Mehri Mahoudi, Erfan Nazar Ahari and Atoosa Salehi, by Madinah Sardari, supervised by Sima Mansour, guided by professor Nasrallah Emami, Dezful Azad University, 2013.

Dissertation: The Effect of Gender in Personality and point of view in rewritings of Atoosa Salehi of *Shahnameh*, by Samaneh Naji Ebrahimi Yazd, Imam Reza International University.

Review of the works by Atoosa Salehi in the Special Edition of the Journal of Children and Adolescent Literature, No. 9, Vol. 15, Winter 2013, pp. 94-119.

Poetry on the sidewalk, Jamaloddin Akrami, Children's and Teenager's Monthly Book, April 2003, No. 55 (6 pages - 56 to 61).

From Imaginative Lines, Mahdieh Nazari, Reviewing A Melody for Rain Collection, Entekhab Daily, October 2000, p. 7.

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Pahlavan, dot com: report of the twenty-sixth meeting of audience reviews, Children and Teenagers Monthly Book, No. 93, July 2005, pp. 55 – 62.

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Permission of Spring, Review of Children and Adolescent's Literature, Summer 1998, No. 13 (8 pages - from 143 to 150).

Ancient Literature in the Last; Report by the Reviewing Panel, Children's Book Council, Criticism of Children and Adolescence Book, Winter 2015, No. 12 (14 pages - from 207 to 220).

We are the smiling flowers, children of Iran, A survey on child poetry in Iran, Goharan Magazine, Winter 2004, No. 6, (18 pages - from 125 to 142).

Reviewing literature of the children and adolescent of Iran after the revolution (1979 – 1999 - part II, 1989 to 1999), Children and Adolescent Literature Research Book, Summer 2000, No. 21 (23 pages - from 25 to 47).

Too much Theory in Criticism (Pathology of Child and Adolescent Poetry), Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, March 2004 - Issue 66 (8 pages - 46 to 53).

Characterization in adaptations of Rumi's Masnavi for children and adolescents, Children Literary Studies, Spring and Summer 2013, Issue 7, (23 pages - from 137 to 159).

Experiences on the Blackboard, Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting with Audiences, Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, May 2005 - Issue 91 (7 pages - 81 to 87).

Roundtable: Referees of the Book of the Year, Poetry Section, Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, March 2000 and April 2001, No. 41 and 42 (8 pages - 40 to 47).

The ups and downs of children and adolescent poetry of Iran in the three decades after the revolution, Persian Literature, Spring and summer of 2015, No. 15 (20 pages - from 81 to 100).

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of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, February 2002, No. 52, (8 pages - 36 to 43).

A note on the collection of *Jirak and Jorak*; Walking with seasons, Chapters; Child and Adolescent Literature Research, Winter 2013, Issue 60, (6 pages - 107 to 112).

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Allegorical Tales and Narratives of Our Time; an overview of Once Upon the Time with allegorical and morality approach, Criticism Children and Adolescent Books, Spring & Summer 2014 - Issue 1 & 2 (6 pages - 45 to 50).

Surveying the Illustrated *Shahnameh* for Children, Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, December 2011, Issue 170, (17 pages - from 104 to 120).

the literary challenge in the field of poetry for children and adolescence: mature or immature? Children and Adolescent Literature Research, Spring 2012 - No. 53 (7 pages - from 29 to 35).

Article: Reviewing Contemporary Recreations of Ancient Literature: 1 - *Shahnameh*, Literature of Children and Adolescents Monthly Review, December 2000, Issue 38 (9 pages - from 14 to 22).

Overview of Work

Atoosa Salehi began writing from the late teens. She was among the first generation to grow in the late '80s in Soroush's magazine for teenagers, which was then one of the most important magazines for child and adolescent literature. Also, she inherited the post-war (Iran – Iraq War 1980 – 1988) outlook that regarded adolescent life as a serious period of building that requires new literary productions. Although Salehi started practicing the literature through poetry, her creative rewritings and recreations became made her name a title in literary circles. Today, though she is still one of the most important Iranian poets for teenagers, she is more likely to rewrite an old story from *Shahnameh*, or to write a novel for teenagers or a story for children and she has her special words about all these.

Salehi in her works struggles to show her voice as different with contemporary writers; therefore, in every genre, she has written for children and young adults, she has presented mature, progressive, and creative works. As she is familiar with ancient literature, she has been able to create a link between ancient texts and the contemporary young readers' mind, a skill that few writers in Iran have achieved. In particular, this can be seen in her recreations of tales of *Shahnameh* by Ferdowsi. Inspired by the ancient works, she recreates stories for a new audience. Part of her success in rewritings and recreations is because of her acquaintance with Bahram Beyzai (an important contemporary director and dramatist in Iran) and attending his classes. Salehi knows adaptation skillfully and can recreate an old story for contemporary children and young adults. In the story of Siavash (an important character in *Shahnameh*), she shows her creativity even at the level of the point of view and narration and narrates every section of the

story through four elements of water, air, earth, and fire according to their special role within the story. In the different structure she chooses, Siavash is no longer a dynamic character, but it is the narrators who are the protagonist of the story are searching to change his ominous destiny. This endeavor of dynamic narrators who are overlooked even in the original story makes the new narrative interesting even to those who are not familiar with the original story. (Moradpour Dezfuli, 2017: 87)

But the important point in Salehi's recreation is not just in her creativity and ability to link the old text and the modern story. Salehi has found a convenient language for the recreation of ancient literature for contemporary teens. Before her, the major stories written on the basis of ancient texts were only the translation of difficult words in the plain language and they did not provide an opportunity for the adolescents to experience the text more directly. But Salehi, having worked with such a significant poet and editor as Gheisar Aminpour and with her own endeavor and study, had managed to find a language to reproduce the old story so as both to preserve the spirit of the ancient text and to keep it in communication with teens of today.

Atoosa shows her creativity in her selection of classic works. She tries to move on the more unknown passages of *Shahnameh*, so as to avoid repeating the myths and to recreate them from a new point of view without leaving the main events of the story. Her rewriting style and attention to the language and form of narration made many rewards for her collection of *Shahnameh* tales. Because of her continuous activity as the editor magazines for children and teenagers and the special sections for publication the works by readers, she had always a direct and strong relationship with teenagers, and she kept these relations permanent through

reading clubs. In her own words, these contacts and relations made its effect on the recreation of *Shahnameh* tales and their warm reception by the audience.

Having worked on the recreation of classic and ancient texts for children and young adults, she is often regarded as a prominent figure in different dissertations and analytic reviews.

All of the rewritings and recreations that Salehi has done are often considered and introduced as creative reconstructions with a different structure and an appropriate language. But what distinguishes her work from other writers is not only creativity in narration or structure of language, or even the selection of tales. The world that is created in her works is a very human world based on values that are consistent with peace. As an important sign of such a world, one can refer to the highlighted role of women in her texts. In this respect, both *Shahnameh* tales and other stories, are clearly different from other contemporary works. Salehi has compiled a collection of characters based on *Shahnameh* women. In her novels and stories, women have a strong, social influence and inspirational role. Also, she never neglects the reality of social events.

Thus, the 2003 Bam earthquake becomes an event that inspires Salehi to write *Just One Minute is Enough*. This is a teenage novel about adolescent identity and family relationships set in the Bam earthquake. A teenage girl learns one day that she is not the person she has always thought; in fact, she is a girl with a different name and different parents. The novel is one of the few Persian novels with women or mothers finding their independent and social image and identity. The presence of a woman is not limited to indoor or the kitchen, and besides mothering her own child – who is not actually hers – she is a mother to many other children.

Salehi does not limit her attention to *Shahnameh* to find

ancient tales. In *Once Upon a Time* collection of stories, she finds yet different outlooks toward ancient tales. The destiny of the characters in these stories changes through events. In this collection, Salehi makes myth and reality as well as past and present to continually run into each other, while she uses a very simple and narrative language.

Salehi does not avoid experimentation. She searches for new directions constantly and every time she finds new paths. Even as for form and for the audience she does not limit her work to one group. She can even create artistic work out of a contracted project. For a few years writing about environmental issues was a hot topic but the writers became redundant gradually. Salehi who was silent at the beginning published her collection on the subject in 2018. In *Nargol* collection of stories, she experimented the idea of bridging between environment and such ancient Eastern stories as *Kelileh and Demneh* (a 5th-century Persian translation of the Hindu *Panchatantra*, a collection of animal allegorical tales). In this work, she has created a different family. It is the story of a conservationist who is taking care of her daughter. It is a family with an absent mother and it is the father who plays the role of the mother. The events of the story do not simply happen, rather, they are the effects of mind that in both form and content is free from reigning clichés. In more recent years, Salehi has experimented on writing for different age groups. Earlier, she had written some scripts for TV programs but in the 2010s she has committed herself on writing for children of early ages. The two *Akh and Ding* and *Nargol* collections are the most prominent ones in this category.

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Salehi is a writer who fits very well with group projects. Wherever it is required, she works with a group of writers and often this leads to a different and unexpected result. Most of her group works





are in collaboration with Mojgan Kalhor. In their experience of Jorak and Jorak collection, which is one of the first and most successful Iranian experiences for the creation of featured stories for early age children, they narrate the story of two animals whose contradictions creates the story. Simple language, simple point of view and proximity to the mentality of the children, empower the writers to create a new collection of stories.. (Besharat, 2013: 112)

Another part of Salehi's literary career has produced three volumes of poetry. In poetry, she did not limit herself to classic styles, neither she embraced

market or customer-oriented poetry. At times, she has created unique opportunities for the imagination of the reader for freedom and flying. In *With Permission of Spring*,

her first collection of poetry, an incident occurs in

thought and a poetry is created with a poet who tries to remain loyal to the people around herself. Salehi pursues the same outlook in the dramatic poem collection *A Melody for Rain*. Poems with the theme nature of nature, that in fact encourage the adolescents to pay attention to the ontological and mystical messages of the elements of nature. Most of the metaphors of this book refer to such images as flight, liberation, and dreaming. The most prominent feature of Salehi's poems is in its attention to the variety of inner music in free verse. Atoosa Salehi is one of the few original and authoritative figures of Iranian po-

etry for children. She has worked extensively for several years. This unconventional and free presence has won for Salehi and her poetry special self-esteem and recognition. So far, Atoosa Salehi has published only three sets of poetry; she has never sought to repeat her name in vain, to show herself at every occasion or to compose for every sensation. If the poetry of Atoosa Salehi has a certain mark of originality, it is the result of such self-discipline and restraints. In her other work, *Dear Darya*, which is about poetry, Salehi shows her different approach to writing. The book is often described as poetry in simple language, it does not follow the conventional methods of teaching poetry and introduces it together with the story and provokes the participation of the adolescent through different topics for discussion. This is the result of long periods of active communication with children and adolescents. She is a poet and narrator of the concerns and aspirations of children and adolescents; the momentous or sometimes sustained dreams; Salehi in her mentality and mindset is very close to her audience. She can feel the inner life of her audience clearly and is aware of their concerns. This is because the poetic and subjective concerns of the poet are very close to each other.

Salehi has been writing for teenagers, children and young adult for nearly thirty years, and throughout all these years her writing has been growing and gaining new experiences. Today, when an occasional piece of her poetic work is published, it reveals a fresh approach to poetry for teenagers and despite repetitive rewriting and recreation of ancient texts, she can still win because of her creative and verifiable recreation of an old subject. The works of Salehi and the professional path she had led has won her prestigious prizes and it has been the subject of numerous researches and dissertations. The Journal for Research into Children's Literature

published a special issue on her works and in 2014, Department of Persian Language of University of Shahid Beheshti invited her on the occasion of commemoration day of Ferdowsi to discuss her recreations of old stories. Salehi's poetic experiences have equipped her stories with a poetic outlook and her works on ancient texts has provided her with a robust and vigorous language and style.

Currently, while Salehi is the editor in chief of a leading publishing office in the field of Iranian children's literature she pursues her experiences in fiction at new frontiers. The latest collection of her poetry is described as a collection about friendship and she is called as a poet of friendship: "Her poetry both finds sustenance in friendship and it mutually expands friendship. And, in truth, in a world full of war and violence, what purpose is better than friendship for poetry?" (Abbas Tarabbon, 2014: 5); and this is not limited to poetry but to writing in general.

Review of important works

Nargol Adventures:

A New Narrative for today and yesterday

Nelly Mahjub (translator and journalist)

Nargol Adventures is published in four volumes set, illustrated by Mahboubeh Yazdani, it is for the age group of children.

In the introduction of each volume, the author clarifies what is the original story and the source. Initially, a brief narration of the original story is presented and then the story narrates in summary, and then the new story is presented.

In this collection, Salehi recreates the ancient literature through children's outlook and creating heroes as ideal type models; she creates a setting for children to act. She makes the children acquainted with social responsibilities and ethical skills.

Based on the point of view of Nargol to her environment, the author tries to explain such concepts as the sacrifice, companionship, freedom, and respect for the rights of others to the audience. Through Nargol, the author creates a model who is both active and real and who can see and feel and tries to become the best.

In *Nargol Adventures*, Salehi creates the atmosphere of the story through a recreation of the ancient story, using a humorous style and adding environmentalist ideas and emphasizing on personal participation and social responsibility.

The reader can easily identify with Nargol to accompany her and participate in her experiences. The reader can stay with Nargol in defending the woods and in saving the life of caged birds. Together with Nargol, the reader learns how loving an animal does not mean enslaving it and how preservation of the environment can benefit the animals.

The author does not leave Nargol alone in the story. When it is necessary, the father who is an environmental activist himself is there. Father has already taught Nargol all the necessary concepts and skills for environment preservation and now is the time to apply all those lessons.

Nargol has a twin sister. A tree-sister that is planted when she was born and is an observer of the events.

In each episode of the story, Nargol and the father plant a new pot, in one, geranium, in another narcissus, and in the other, tulip. In *Nargol Adventures*, some minor species of plants, animals, birds and many living creatures are introduced and the reader can easily find complementary information within the book. This is the way the author instigates the full participation of the active reader and the challenging listener.

Salehi has used two original stories from *Masnavi of Rumi* and two other stories from *Kelileh and Demneh* for recreation.



The stories are familiar to everybody, but in her rewriting, she has been able to narrate the same story with a new and attractive narrative so as to both remain faithful to the original story and change the course of the events and characters to create a feasible story for the contemporary audience. Even the raven who picks up Nargol's scarf to lead them to the tree cutting scene, like the original story the raven does not only care about her own chickens alone but saving the life of the woods and trees are also important concerns. The relations between Nargol and the mynah bird is based on the original story of the parrot and the merchant. Despite her love of mynah, Nargol never allows herself to captivate the bird. Nargol frees the mynah and it is the mynah who returns voluntarily and remains with Nargol to accompany her in the rest of the story.

It can be said that the author has succeeded in recreating these stories, with her new narrative, she has even won the accompany of the adult audiences, those who are familiar with the original narrative.

Shahnameh Collection, the first three volumes, Ofogh Publications

Forugh-Alzaman Jamali, Ketabak website on Foroud and Jarireh

Siavash is an Iranian peace-loving prince who is a victim of selfishness and misconduct of his father and various conspiracies. He is unjustly killed by Afrasiab, the king of the country of Turan. In Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, he has two sons from two Tournai wives.

Kaykhosrow is the name of the first son who is from Farangis, Afrasiyab's daughter, and Foroud is the second son is from Jarireh, from a Turani noble family. Kaykhosrow is a famous king of Iran whose adventures are narrated in numerous stories but Foroud is one of the most unknown and unnamed heroes of *Shahnameh*.

Foroud and Jarireh is a creative rewriting of the story of these two heroes of the original *Shahnameh*. The recreator draws these two heroes from the forgotten chambers of history and *Shahnameh*



and demonstrates how the mistakes of the grandfathers of Foroud, namely Kaykavos and Afrasiab, fall upon Foroud, very much like Siavash. This literary and emotional recreation of the internal state of Foroud in his loneliness and his grief for his father describes his courage in the battlefield, and eventually narrates his tragic assassination. The story also reveals about Jarireh and her love of Siavash and the land of Iran and her love for her child and of her sorrows that represent the sorrows of every woman in the region. The narrative show how the story of Siavash is repeated all through history.

Siavash

Excerpt from "Pleasure and Adaptation" a paper by Neda Moradpour Dezfuli

Journal of Children's Literature Studies in Shiraz

This story is a creative adaptation of the original story of Siavash in *Shahnameh*. In the new version, the story of Siavash is narrated from the point of view of four elements of air, fire, water, and earth. In the story of Salehi, every part of the story is narrated by one of these four elements of nature and of course, the author finds incongruity between the narrator and the tale. The air narrates those parts when Siavash and Rostam are riding in the planes, fire narrates the story of Siavash passing through him and creates the most fascinating narratives of all, water (Jayhoon river) narrates the story of Siavash passing through the border river to reach the Turan and earth narrates the tragic death of the hero.

The different structure that the author has chosen is pleasurable for the adolescent audience. Here it is this very different structure that gives the audience a new pleasure every time.



The pleasure of experiencing the narrative through the language of things that cannot talk in reality; the pleasure of mixing the possible and the impossible that is only available in the world of the story. However, the question is what sort of pleasure this text as an adaptation can give the reader; after all, any other original text can be narrated with the same style. Of course, for a reader who is familiar with the original story, the new story can offer a defamiliarizing pleasure. The double layer of the ancient text and

the modern text is visible here and the contemporary audience will enjoy the different layers of narrative. There are audiences who have repeatedly heard the story of Siavash and his passage through the fire, but representing the ideas of fire at the moment of Siavash passaging through itself, is a new point of view that is available only to the modern reader. Therefore, the new story can create a setting for a new understanding of the events. Here, Siavash is no longer a dynamic character and it is his narrators who are the heroes of the story and try to change his ominous destiny. The struggles of these dynamic narrators whom the ancient hero is unaware of them make the story interesting to even the audience unfamiliar to the ancient text.

Even One Minute is Enough: The Hand that picks the events together

Fariba Dindar - Hello Kids Magazine

One minute is enough for life to change its face thoroughly. One minute is enough for it to get into your way, in a way you have never ever expected it. Sometimes it takes a minute for the creation of small things and sometimes one minute creates

great things. If you were one minute earlier, you would not miss the bus; if you had five minutes more, could answer another question in the exam; if you waited a few seconds more and did not rush to pass the big gutter, you would not fall in the middle of the street.

“It is as if none of the incidents that the people are imagining is going to happen. It is as if there is a hand that manipulates and rearranges every event and every minute and second; it distances certain people and closes some others. Makes the light red to close a path for one and shows the light green to the other, making the moment of the incident possible.

A hand that out of curiosity, stupidity or evil intentions, changes the repetitive habit of the day and the people who suddenly – with an intention or not – appear on a new stage, sometimes by accident, sometimes by a simple mistake in a call, watching a few pictures on the TV, or even simpler, by dragging a drawer to the end.”

Yes, sometimes it's even as simple as dragging a drawer to the end... the story starts right from here. It is right at this moment when life finds another color. Raha who felt happy up to now and all her concern was about winning the chess contest and finalizing a project for her geography course, now the world has collapsed on her head. Everything starts from the moment Raha is alone at home, and Mino, her mother, returns home too late. Raha searches for geology atlas to do her project on geography when suddenly drags the drawer to the end and pulls it out to find a box.

Everything starts with finding this box. Raha finds another identification document that represents her with a different surname: Raha Sarvestani! While all her friends and in the school know her as “Raha Moghadam”. Now a question occupies Raha's mind and she asks why her parent had hidden such a fact from her.



Throughout the story, Raha is trying her best to discover this great secret of her life. She does things that she has never experienced before and meets with people who have played a very significant role in her life, without knowing about these people. In general, this is a story about the problem of identity in adolescents' lives, which is often considered to be the main concern of contemporary adolescents.

Dear Darya

Abbas Tarabbon, World Book Magazine, Winter 2007

To date, I have come across a number of different books on poetry techniques and how to compose poetry. There are books that regard poetry as food and teach it to the interested audience like a certain recipe. Also,

I found rare examples such as a book that collects rhymes in Persian and introduces rhyming words. I can clearly confirm that the writers of this sort of books do not know anything about poetry and that they are writing for selling and to gain profit, very much like advertisements and announcements that introduce short paths to high-income and prosperity in exchange for a small payment.

It was about eight years ago when I encountered another book on poetry. On the first look, it showed its difference with what I had seen until that day. The title of the book was *Dear Darya* and there was no news of a “100 percent guaranteed path to composing poetry” on its cover. In the first place, perhaps it was the format and the language of

the book that fascinated me. Atoosa Salehi, the author of the book, has attempted to teach those aspects of poetry that can be taught through the exchange of letters between a teenager who is interested in poetry (Darya) and a professor poetry (Nasr).

One of the fascinating facts about this book is that the author does not express her own ideas about poetry. Atoosa Salehi, who is one of



the most famous contemporary poets of the youth, tries to talk through words and quotations from great poets and critics of Iran and the world. Quoting masters of literature and poetry has at least two benefits: one, if someone is to comment on poetry, it should be someone who we are more likely to accept; the other, the novice audience who accidentally finds such a book will be acquainted with a valuable guiding reference for further study. This second reason points to a valuable treasure map that the *Dear Darya* offers to an audience unfamiliar with poetry. The other interesting fact about this book is in its quotations from successful poets of Iran and the world within the letters between Darya and Nasr: I trust *Dear Darya* more than all those books on “How to compose poetry”. Perhaps because I feel that someone does not claim to know the poetry’s exact location does not guarantee me to become a poet. If you look at the cover, you will encounter the subtitle “Poetry in Plain Language”, this can correct the improper image of poetry in the mind of a typical audience and fulfill its promise.

As said, *Dear Darya* is honest enough to give us the news of losing poetry from the very beginning:

“Poetry does not have a well-known definition. You cannot guess its age. Its root cannot be recognized. No one knows where and with what passport it travels.” p. 44.

The writer of *Dear Darya* has tried to express her ideas through intimate and adventurous letters between Darya, Razieh (friend of Darya) and Nasr. This should be one of the strengths of the book in its evasion from slogans and portrayal of an artificial image of poetry. If there’s something called poetry or poetry tips and tricks, it should certainly to be found in the heart of life, in natural spaces and settings. Finally, it is noteworthy to mention the article “what is good poetry” by Peter Mink that is quoted by Nasr in a letter to Darya.

The book ends with a descriptive glossary that provides readers with definitions, forms, and devices for poetry.

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