

"Why? Why do I have to  
keep waking up?"

Naji narrates his own story of being constantly awoken from his dreams by the sound of explosions, jolting him back to the reality of war and its horrors.

But it's time to wake up now.

It's time to move on.

# Diary of my DREAMS

Hazem Nassar

# Diary of my DREAMS

Written and illustrated by Hazem Nassar

Edited by Leila Boukarim

# Dedication

To all children  
affected by war.

It's a beautiful day...





Of course, it was  
Samir.

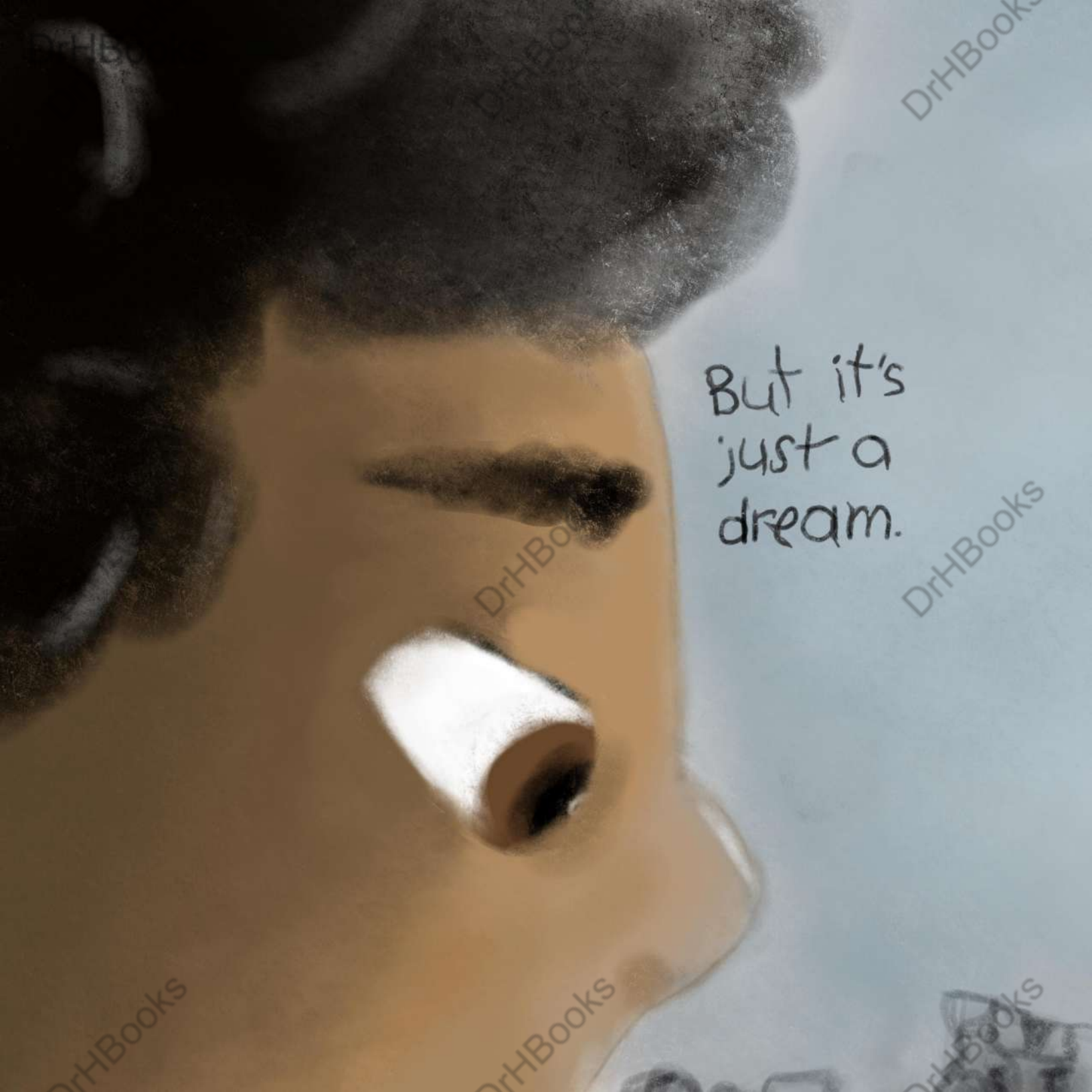
He always thought  
it was funny throwing  
things at me.

BOO



My frightened  
Eyes open.





But it's  
just a  
dream.

Samir doesn't laugh  
anymore.



Beep! Beep!



Oh, God. Can I sleep for five more minutes?

I guess not.

Noji! You'll  
be late for  
school!



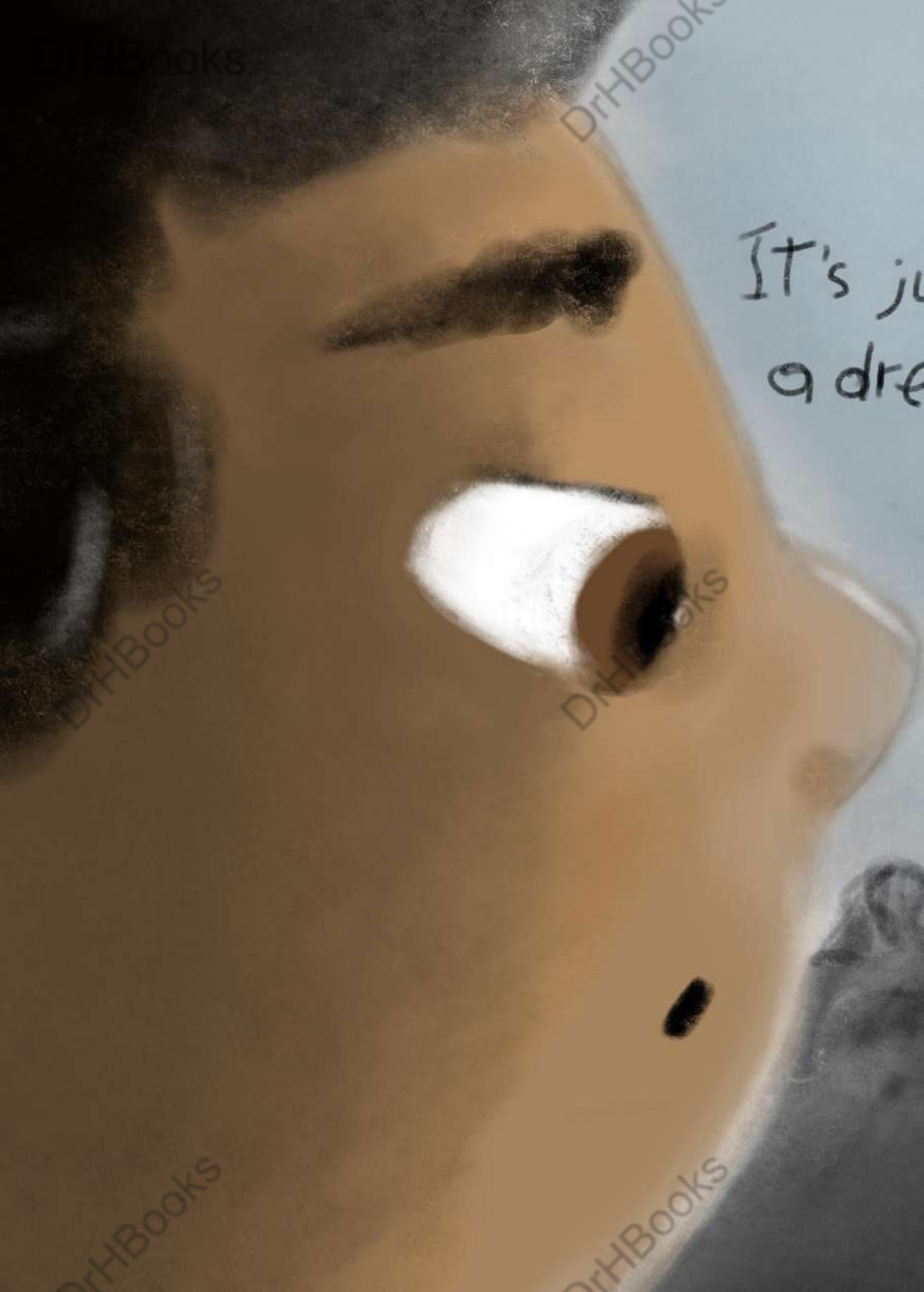
As always!



BOO!



My frightened  
eyes open.



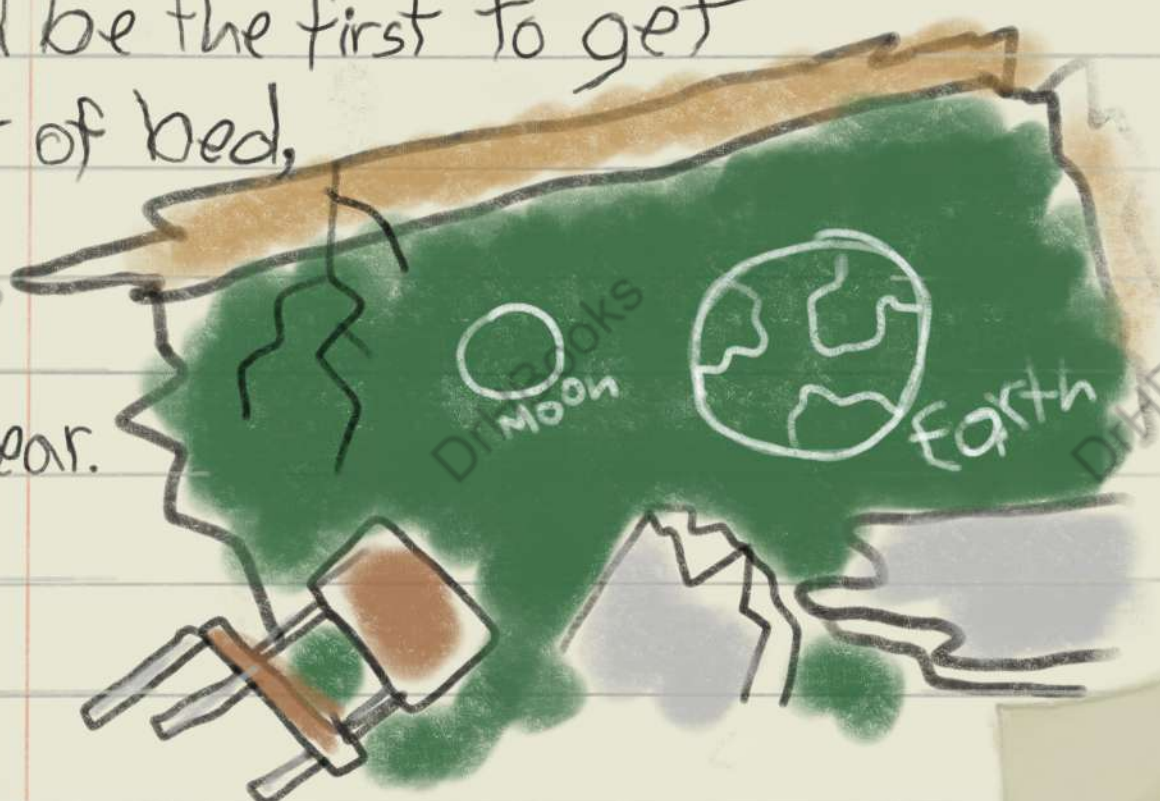
It's just  
a dream.



There's nothing left  
of our school but rubble.

I'd be the first to get  
out of bed,

I  
swear.



I just want my school  
back.

Not again, Mom!  
We've been eating  
leftovers for days!





Fine, but  
tomorrow  
we're eating  
out.

BOO!

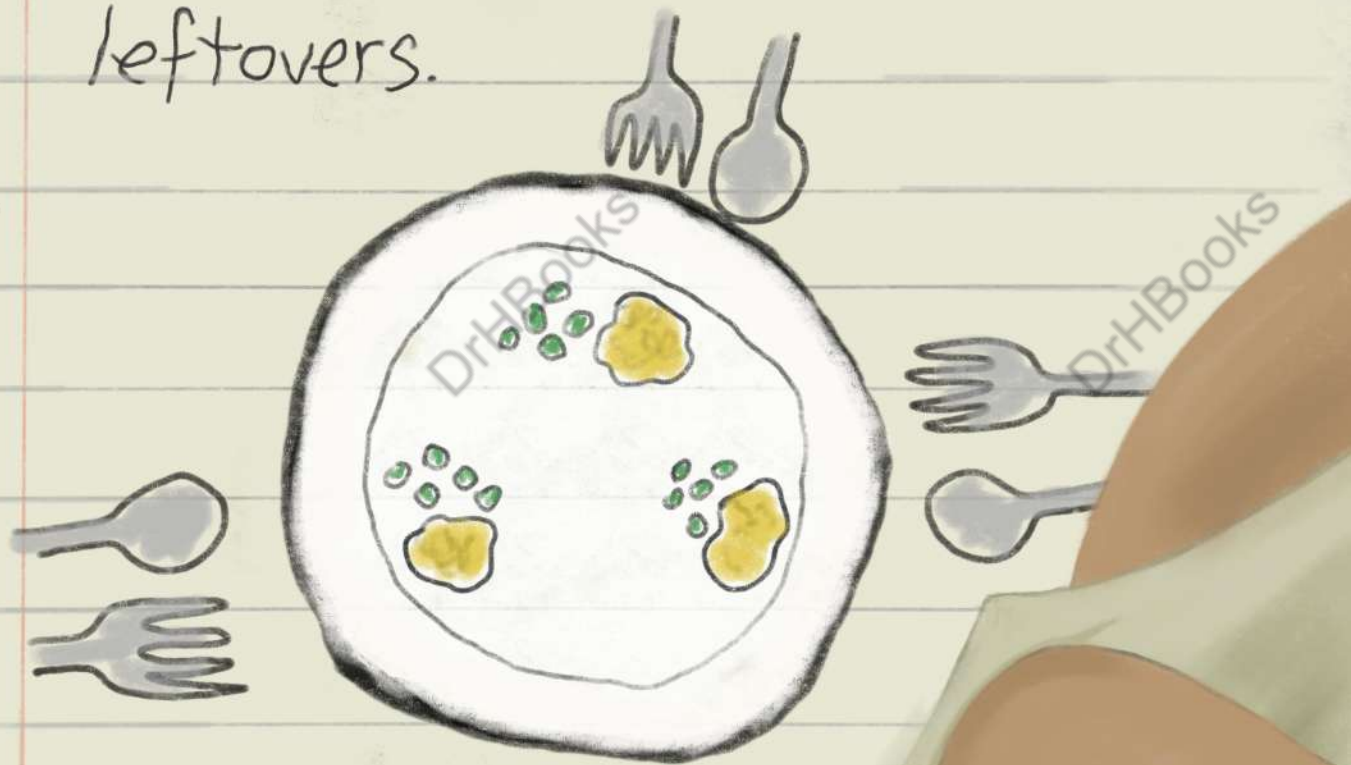
Oh, another  
explosion.





Another  
dream.

I wish it lasted longer  
so I could eat all the  
leftovers.



Dad asks me to  
pause my game and  
help him bring the  
groceries in.

Najil!


One day I'll be  
too old and weak  
to carry anything!



BOO



I open  
one eye.

A close-up photograph of a person's face wearing a tan, textured mask. The mask has two horizontal black slits for eyes and a small opening for the mouth. A single tear is visible falling from the bottom of the mouth slit. The background is a light blue wall. The text "Because it's just a dream." is written in black cursive on the right side of the image. There are several faint "DrHBooks" watermarks scattered across the image.

Because  
it's just a  
dream.

Now, I have to carry  
the groceries all by myself.

In fact, I have to buy  
them myself.



I just want to sleep  
and dream.





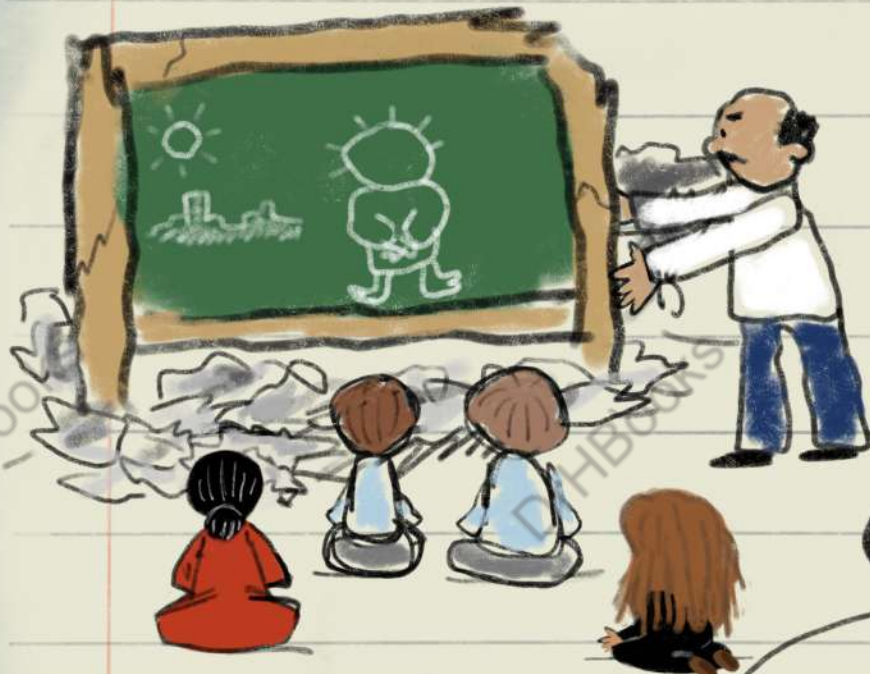
But  
then...



Ouch!

You thought  
I'd give up?





Good work, Samir! It's  
the only way to wake  
Naji up for school.



He barely has time  
for breakfast even.



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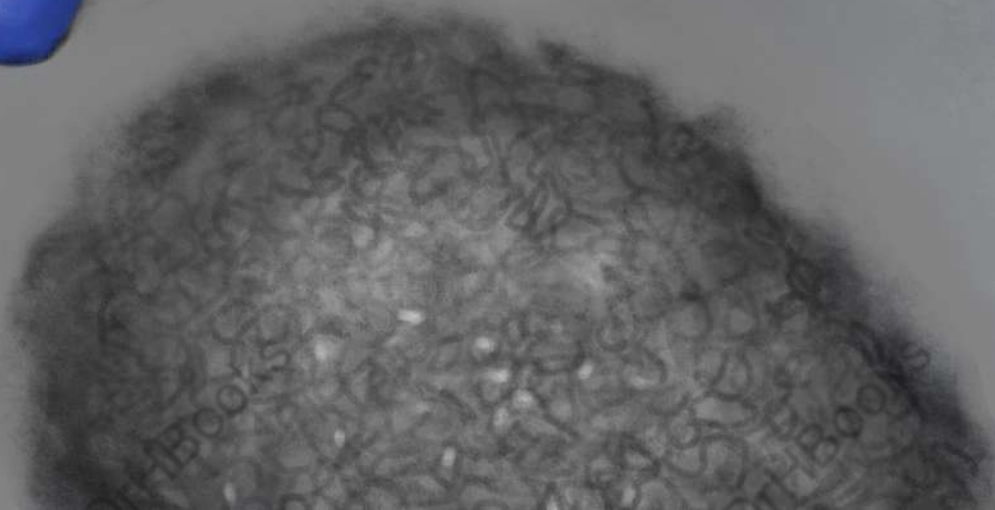
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Why do I  
have to keep  
waking up?



But that dream  
was so real.

No, that was  
not just a dream.



A close-up illustration of a man's face. He has dark, curly hair, a prominent dark mustache, and a large, expressive brown eye. He is wearing a white shirt with a dark tie. His right hand is raised to his lips, with his index finger pointing upwards, suggesting a gesture of secrecy or silence. The background is a soft, light blue with faint silhouettes of trees at the bottom.

I am awake.

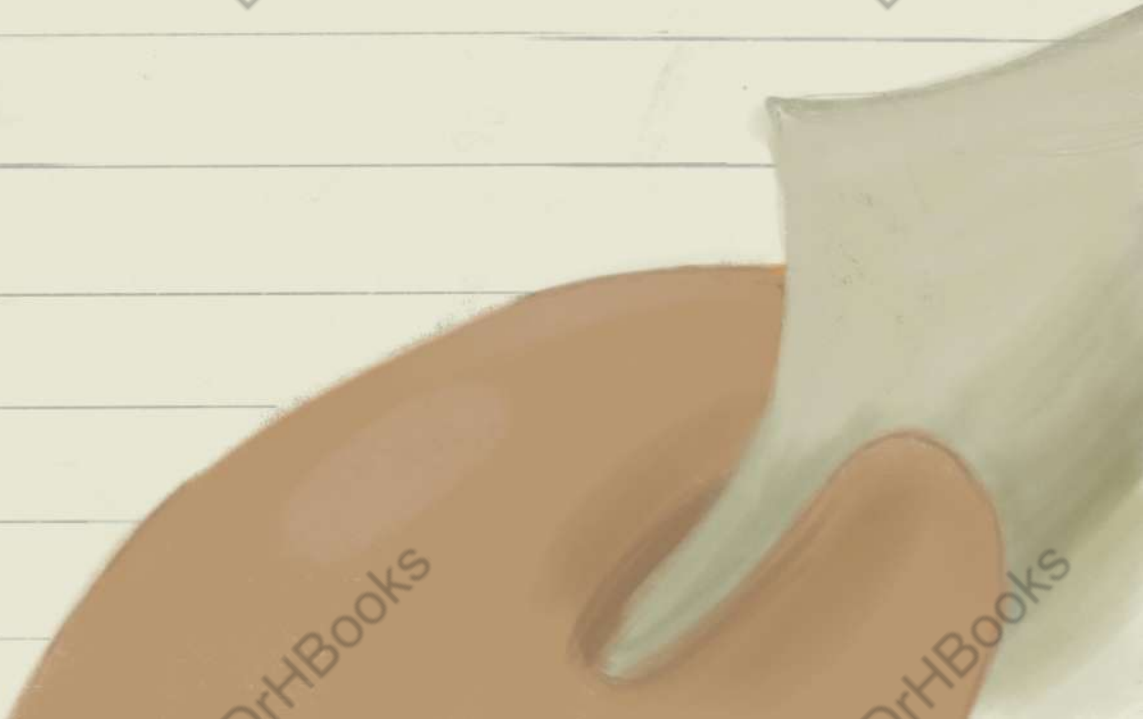
And I shall  
stay awake.

I now know that

some dreams  
come true.



And the ones that  
don't





remain  
in our  
hearts.



MM

## About the author

Dr. Hazem Nassar was born in late 1979 to Palestinian parents in Kuwait, where he also grew up and completed his undergraduate education. He then graduated from medical school in Karachi, Pakistan, before moving to the United States later on to work as an internal medicine physician.

Ever since childhood, Hazem has had a passion for cartooning and storytelling, which he eventually managed to dedicate more time to after completing medical residency, leading to the selection of many of his works for several international theme-based exhibitions in different countries around the world.

Growing up an immigrant with Palestinian roots in an extremely diverse neighborhood, along with life in a once-war-torn Kuwait, heavily influenced his ideas and subsequently, his works.

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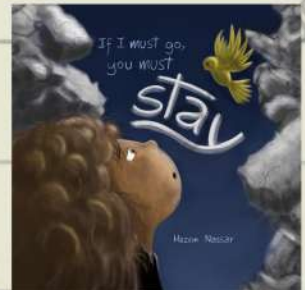
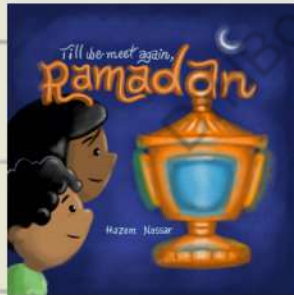
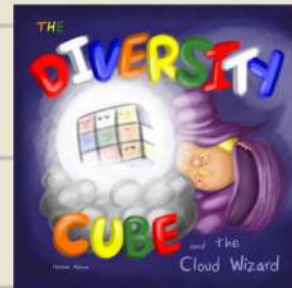
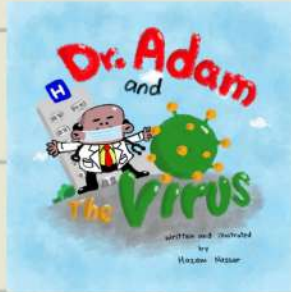
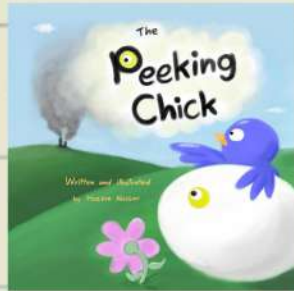
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Contact the author:

Contact@DrHBooks.com  
www.DrHBooks.com  
Instagram.com/DrHBooks

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