

Salma finds herself under the rubble alone.

She then hears her brother's voice, and they both have a short conversation for one last time.





If I must go, you must stay

Written and illustrated by

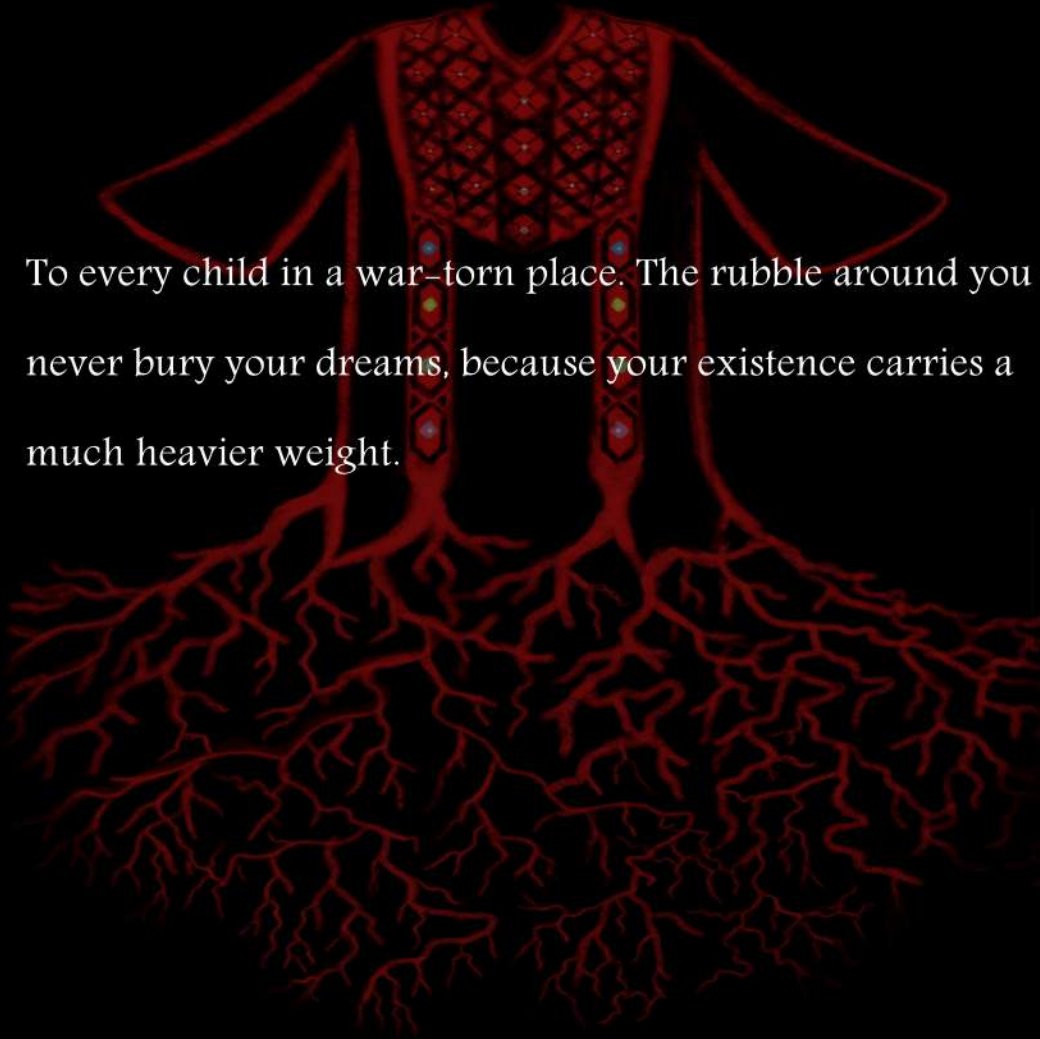
Hazem Nassar

Edited by

Umm Marwan Ibrahim

Dedication

To every child in a war-torn place. The rubble around you can never bury your dreams, because your existence carries a much heavier weight.



"Mama! Baba! Ahmad!

Beisan! Deema!"

Salma's voice echoed

under the rubble.

They were all here a

moment ago.

But now she could no longer

see or hear any of them.



Until . . .

"There you are, Salma!"

"Ahmad! Is that you? I can't see you!

Where's everyone else?"



DrHBooks

DrHBooks

"They're on their way up...so am I."

"Up? Where to? Please don't leave
me behind!"



DrHBooks

"That's why I'm here.

Where are your wings, Salma?"

"Wings? What do you mean?"



...

"Ahmad! What's going on?"



"Salma, it's time for me to go."

"Wait! I want wings, too!!

I want to go with you!"



"That's not for you and me to decide, Salma.

Looks like you're meant to stay."

"But what will I do without you?"



"If I must go,
you must stay.

To tell my story,

come what may."

Salma's voice changed as her tears started flowing.

"I will see you later, dear brother.

Tell everyone I love them."

"We love you too. And we will see you

later, little sister."



Salma sobbed for a while, before she suddenly felt much lighter.

She was levitating.

She didn't think she would get wings so soon.



But she had no wings.

She had roots.



And so did many others.



The Beginning.



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 his 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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Contact@DrHbooks.com

[Instagram.com/DrHBooks](https://www.instagram.com/DrHBooks)

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ISBN: 978-1-953190-23-9

Other books by the author:

The Peeking Chick

Dr. Adam and the Virus

The Diversity Cube and the Cloud Wizard

Flick and his Mouth

Till we meet again, Ramadan

Cookie Drifts Away

