

Peppe Öhman Rana Kadry

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# Adnan's Secret



Swedish Red Cross

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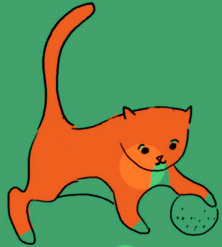
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The book is created in co-operation with the Red Cross treatment center in Sweden, Malmö.

The book is also available in Ukrainian and Arabic.





# *Adnan's Secret*



Peppe Öhman Rana Kadry



Adnan



Shams



Dad



Mom



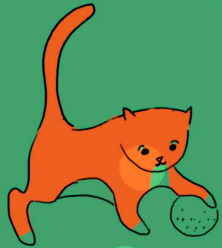
Ines



Ilse



Ella



## CHAPTER 1

The sunlight was pouring in through the window. Adnan was lying in bed and lifted his arm to look at his watch. It was a lovely watch. He had got it for his birthday from Uncle Aziz, who lived in London. The big hand pointed at twelve and the little hand at eight. The summer vacation had begun, and today, his dad and he would go swimming. Adnan had longed for this for weeks.

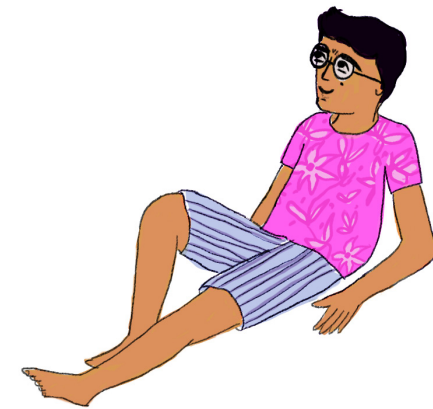
They were supposed to leave at nine o'clock, so Adnan stayed in bed for a bit longer. The sun was shining on his watch and a reflection appeared on the wall: a circle made of light that jumped around just like a cat when Adnan moved his arm. Adnan

would love to have a cat that would chase the glittery circle on his wall. That's what cats do: chase around, sleep and snuggle up in someone's lap. He could just imagine having a kitten of his own. That would make him feel much less lonely, especially now that everyone else had gone on vacation.

His mom had told him she would work less during the summer. They would do stuff together when she wasn't so tired after work. But that hadn't happened as Mom was still tired even when she wasn't working.

But today, Adnan felt an excited flutter inside. He thought of the beach and the lovely water. They would bring a picnic and a big air mattress that he and Dad would inflate together.

Adnan sneaked out of his room. The door to Mom and Dad's room was closed. He



knocked gently three times, then opened the door as quietly as he could.

“Dad, are you awake?” whispered Adnan.

Dad mumbled in his sleep. Adnan walked over and prodded him a little. “Dad, wake up! We’re going swimming.”

“Not today, Habibi. You’ll have to come up with something, yourself,” Dad murmured and turned his back to Adnan.

“But you promised!” Adnan stomped his feet. “Dad?”

“We’ll have to do that another day, Adnan,” Dad sighed, pulling the blanket over his head.

Adnan felt the tingling sensation disappear and instead, his heart began pounding hard in his chest. He had waited so long for this day to come, but now all the fun was gone.



## CHAPTER 2

Adnan’s new bike, which he had been given for his birthday, was parked in the hallway. It was second-hand, but his mom had done it up, so it was as good as new. The bike had cost a lot of money, so Adnan had to leave it indoors at night to prevent it from being stolen. He felt it was hard work to drag his bike up and down the stairs every day, but it was the nicest thing he owned. It was definitely worth the effort.

Adnan put his shoes on, led the bike out and let it bounce down the stairs while he held on tightly to the handlebars.

Outside, there was no one around. Adnan imagined that all the people in the city had

suffered a strange illness and slept as much as Mom and Dad. He was the only one who could find the medicine. Everyone would congratulate him and talk about how brave he had been. Everyone would want to be buddies with him.



Adnan pedalled out onto the road. The sun was shining, and the air was already balmy. Now he knew what he was going to do: he was going to ride his bike to the beach. All by himself.

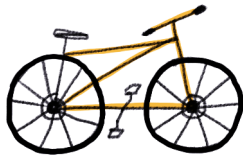
Adnan loved to be in the water. Last summer, they had gone to the beach with a picnic basket and an air mattress. Mom had plunged straight in and had taught Adnan to swim. Dad had stayed on the beach to keep an eye on their stuff. It was totally unnecessary. Surely, no one wanted to pinch a picnic basket full of hummus and raspberry juice, but Dad wanted to make sure it was kept safe.

The rest of the summer, Mom and Dad had mostly stayed indoors. They had watched the news, rested in front of their big fan, and talked to relatives from the country where they were born.



Dad had forbidden Adnan from going to the beach alone. Dad said it could be dangerous. But today, Adnan didn't care what Dad had said. If it was really that bad, Dad should have come along.

Adnan felt sadness niggling in his chest. Why couldn't his dad be like Alicia's dad? Her dad had the energy to bake, play games and go for picnics. Why did his dad have to be so tired all the time?



## CHAPTER 3

Adnan had only got as far as the ice cream parlor when he heard a muffled sound. The sky had grown dark and murky, and a rumble could be heard in the distance. Typical!

Adnan veered abruptly and headed the other way. He really didn't like thunderstorms. Mom had once told him about a person who had died on the beach when Mom was a little girl. She had always told him that thunder and water shouldn't be mixed.

What should he do now? Adnan didn't want to go home. Maybe he could go to the horses instead? He pretended his bike was a black horse. It galloped faster than any other horse, and when his horse galloped into

författare

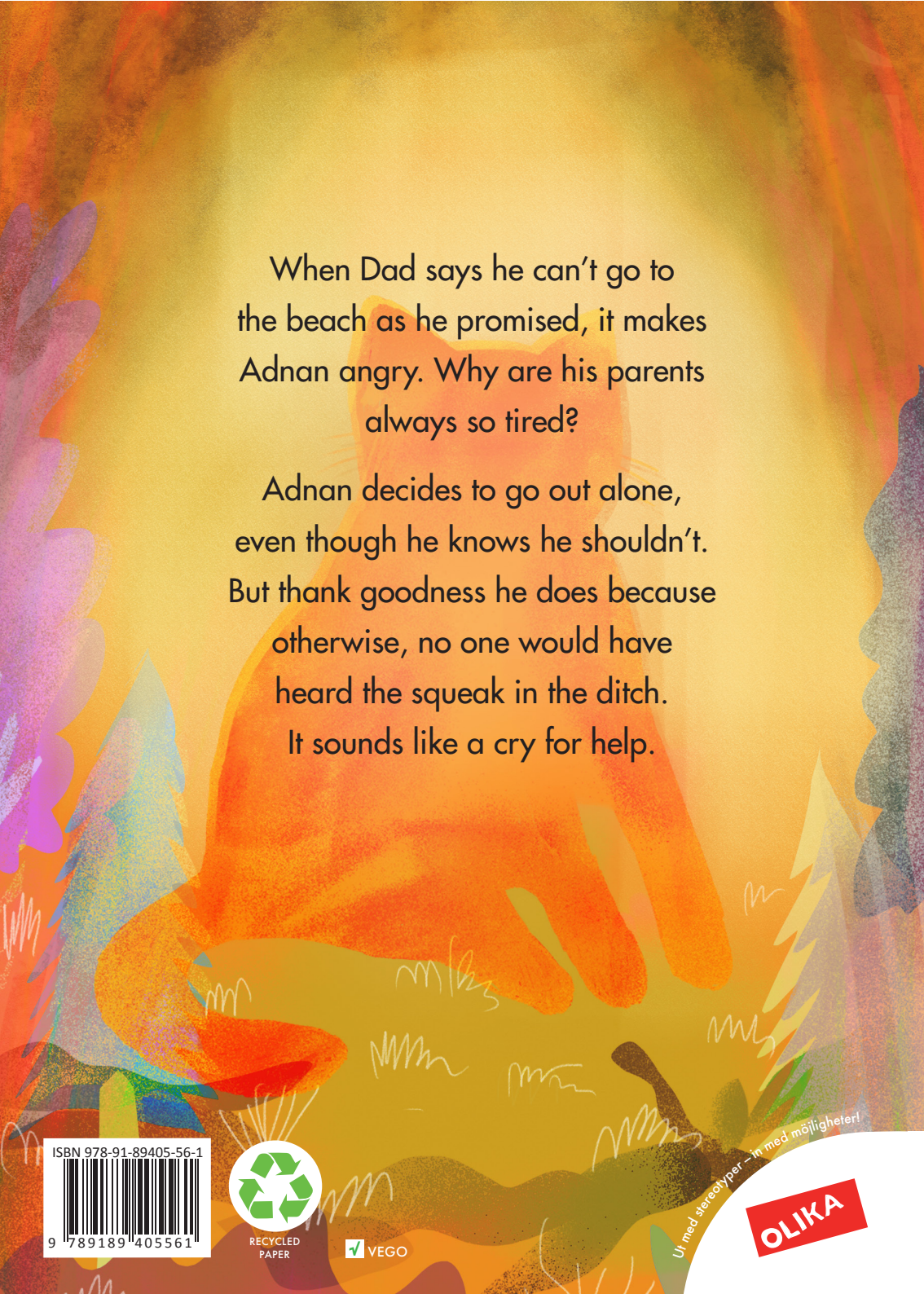


Peppe Öhman is a journalist and an author who grew up in Helsinki. Today, she lives in America and has written several books for children and young adults. "The book about Adnan was both enjoyable and challenging to write. To understand what they are going through, I interviewed children who had experience with adults suffering from PTSD. Then, together with the Red Cross, I dramatized a story like any other exciting book. Because the best books are ones you never want to put down."

illustratör



Rana Kadry was born in Cairo, Egypt and grew up in Montréal, Canada. Since 2016, she has lived in Stockholm, where she has completed her studies in visual communication at the University of Arts, Crafts and Design. She also does stop motion, animation and murals. "It was so much fun to be in Adnan's world and imagination and to try to understand his feelings and desires. I hope those who read and feel like Adnan will feel less lonely and hopefully sense that it is possible to find joy in unexpected ways."



When Dad says he can't go to the beach as he promised, it makes Adnan angry. Why are his parents always so tired?

Adnan decides to go out alone, even though he knows he shouldn't. But thank goodness he does because otherwise, no one would have heard the squeak in the ditch. It sounds like a cry for help.

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