

## **TURKIA LOUCIF AND "THE LEGEND OF A SQUIRREL"**

*Translated by the Egyptian translator Ahmed Farouk Beydoun.*

*Edited and prepared for publication by Kujtim Hajdari.*

Turkiya Loucif is a distinguished writer, poet, and journalist for one of Algeria's most prominent newspapers, "Al Massar Al Arabi." She diligently advocates for the recognition and intercultural collaboration of creators, stimulating and promoting them through her articles and numerous interviews across various newspapers. In her articles and interviews, she has placed special emphasis on the literature of Albanian creators such as Kujtim Hajdari, Angela Kosta, Arben Iliazi, Theodhori Baba, Blerina Pellumbi, and others.

Additionally, she is a renowned poet and writer with a distinctive writing style. Recently, she introduced her short fantasy novel "The Legend of a Squirrel" to a global readership in its English version.

The novel is translated by Egyptian translator Ahmed Farouk Beydoun. It has been edited and prepared for publication by poet Kujtim Hajdari. Due to its high artistic quality and distinct characteristics, this book became a bestseller at exhibitions in Algeria, including the Golden House of Jerusalem, following its original language publication in 2016. Similarly, the English translation is making a significant impact on the literary and cultural scene in Algeria and other Arab countries.

The events in the novel unfold deep in the Tassili Mountains of Algeria, where reality intertwines with the country's unique myths. The king and the demonic forces, represented by Faustika, battle for power, leading to numerous crimes that ultimately result in the destruction of

the kingdom by the demonic forces. The squirrel, symbolizing the weaker forces, unexpectedly leads an uprising that vanquishes the demonic power, restoring both the kingdom and peace in the castle. This work explores human nature and the internal conflicts that shape societies. It is an engaging and emotional text, filled with interesting and unique content.

In this work, author Turkia Loucif takes readers on an emotional journey. Loucif's fantasy addresses social issues and the power struggles of monarchy, the brutality and consequences of a kingdom, and its destruction by demonic forces. This narrative is viewed not only through a critical lens but also with philosophical nuances, creating a work that explores human nature and the internal conflicts that shape societies.

By employing fantasy as an artistic guise and skillfully integrating various elements into the themes she explores, this novel is both captivating and valuable for the messages it conveys to the reader and the times.

This important translation provides an opportunity for English-speaking readers worldwide to understand Algeria and its spatial, symbolic, and cultural meanings.

#### A few words about her literary activity:

She is an Algerian writer, poet, and journalist currently working for the newspaper "Al Massar Al Arabi." Her fantasy novel, "The Legend of a Squirrel," was published in 2016 and presented to readers at the International Book Fair in 2017. She later released a romantic novel

titled "Virginia Park" and her collection of stories, "Abboud Does Not Bear the Whip."

The play "Dance of the Puppets" was adapted from her story "The Puppeteer Moussa and the Others." She achieved second place in the Arabic Story Competition organized by the club "Narrators Sing." Her story "The Legend of Squirrel" secured first place in the story competition "Tell, Scheherazade." On Press Day, she received honors from the Governor of the state of Médéa. Additionally, she was recognized in children's literature with a squirrel statue for her novel "The Legend of the Squirrel" in June 2024 by Dar Al-Quds Al-Dhahabiya.

This book was a bestseller at the Golden House of Jerusalem, which accompanied the author during nine years of participation in book fairs. This novel was selected in the youth literature category through a competition entered by the Ajlana Library. Regarding her collection of short stories, it garnered significant attention from critics in Algeria and the Arab world.

She has also contributed to several issues of the serial anthology "All Together," which features authors from various countries around the world and is published on Amazon by Kujtim Hajdari.

We wish the esteemed Ms. Turkia Loucif ongoing success in her creative endeavors.

By Kujtim Hajdari