Secret of the Color Box



مدارج



Yusuf, Mazin and the other boys were seven. The sea in Yusuf's picture was completely white. He had coloured the sand, the boat, the sun—even the little stone on the beach. But his blue pencil was so short that he couldn't hold it properly any more. “Your sea hasn't arrived yet!” said his friend Mazin. Yusuf laughed and closed his pencil case. During the last lesson, the boys went to the library with their male teacher, aged thirty-five. A little later, he let Yusuf go back for his notebook. Their classroom was right next door.



On the supplies table, he found an open box. Long pencils. Thick pencils. Three blue pencils! He stopped. One was exactly the blue he wanted for his sea. He picked it up and tried a small line on a used scrap of paper. The colour went on smoothly and clearly. He moved the pencil towards his case. If he put it inside, he could finish his picture at home. “They don't need three blue pencils,” he told himself. He looked towards the door. Nobody was standing there.



Then he noticed the label on the side of the box: CLASS SUPPLIES. He remembered searching for his ruler one day. He'd finally found it in another boy's bag. The boy had taken it without asking. Yusuf hadn't liked that at all. He turned the pencil between his fingers. He knew it wasn't his. And he knew Allah knew what he was doing, even when nobody else saw. He opened his pencil case and looked at the empty space. Then he closed it. He put the pencil back in the box, picked up his notebook and the scrap of paper, and returned to the library.



He waited until his teacher had finished speaking. Then he showed him the scrap. “I tried a pencil from the class box without asking. I've put it back. May I borrow it until tomorrow?” “Ask before using the class supplies, Yusuf,” his teacher said. “And those pencils need to stay here. We'll need them in the morning.” Yusuf looked down at the little blue line. He'd hoped he would say yes. But he said, “All right.”



At home, he took out his picture again. He almost put it away in a drawer. Then he noticed an unfinished edge on his boat. He picked up his brown pencil and finished it. He added a rope and drew two small circles in the sand. The sea was still white. He put the picture in his folder, ready to take to school.

His thirty-three-year-old mother came past the table. Yusuf showed her his tiny pencil. “That's all that's left!” “Let's put a blue pencil on our list of supplies to buy,” she said. He took the list and wrote: BLUE PENCIL. His picture hadn't changed. But he stopped searching through his pencil case every minute. He took out his notebook and started his other work. He left the folder by the door so he wouldn't forget it in the morning.



The next day, three boys were standing at the supplies table. One was drawing a window. Another was colouring a bowl. The third needed a colour for the sky. Yusuf stepped back and waited his turn. They all needed blue too. When it was time for art, he asked permission and sat down to finish his sea. The pencil travelled across the paper, line after line, until blue surrounded the boat. “The sea's arrived!” said Mazin. Yusuf smiled. Before he held up his picture to look at it, he returned the pencil to the box. He moved the pencils a little to make room. There was the label again. CLASS SUPPLIES. He closed his own pencil case and held his finished picture in both hands.

Source and limits

This is contemporary fiction. Its characters, ages, dialogue and pencil incident are invented, not historical reports from the source.

Meaning drawn from Madarej, Kaannaka Tarahu: al-Muraqabah, physical PDF pages13,16,35: Allah knows and sees actions, without imagining an image of Him.

All three pages were visually compared. The old v2 card named page17; that page was not verified or substituted for16. The narrative contains no direct Quran or hadith quotation.

madarej.org/books/kaannaka-tarahu-muraqabah/