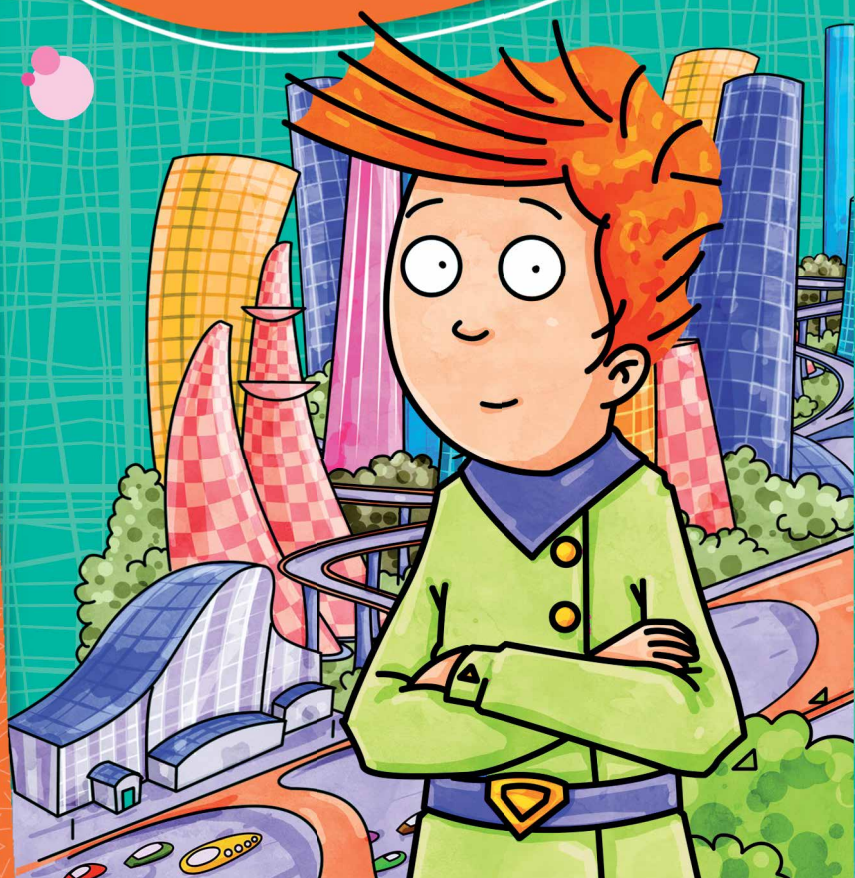


SELIM

and a World
Without School



My Dad's Surprise

My dad has been acting strange lately. When he comes home after work, he immediately sits down at the computer and doesn't get up at all until dinner. I don't know what he is doing, but I don't get a chance to use the computer.



One day, when I came home after school, I sat in front of the computer. I don't remember how long it was. My dad came home. As soon as he came in, he said,

“Excuse me Selim. I need to use the computer.”

I stood up. My father sat in the chair at once and went on the internet. He was tuning out the outside world. It was weird to see him act that way. I couldn't satisfy my curiosity and asked,

“It's a surprise.”



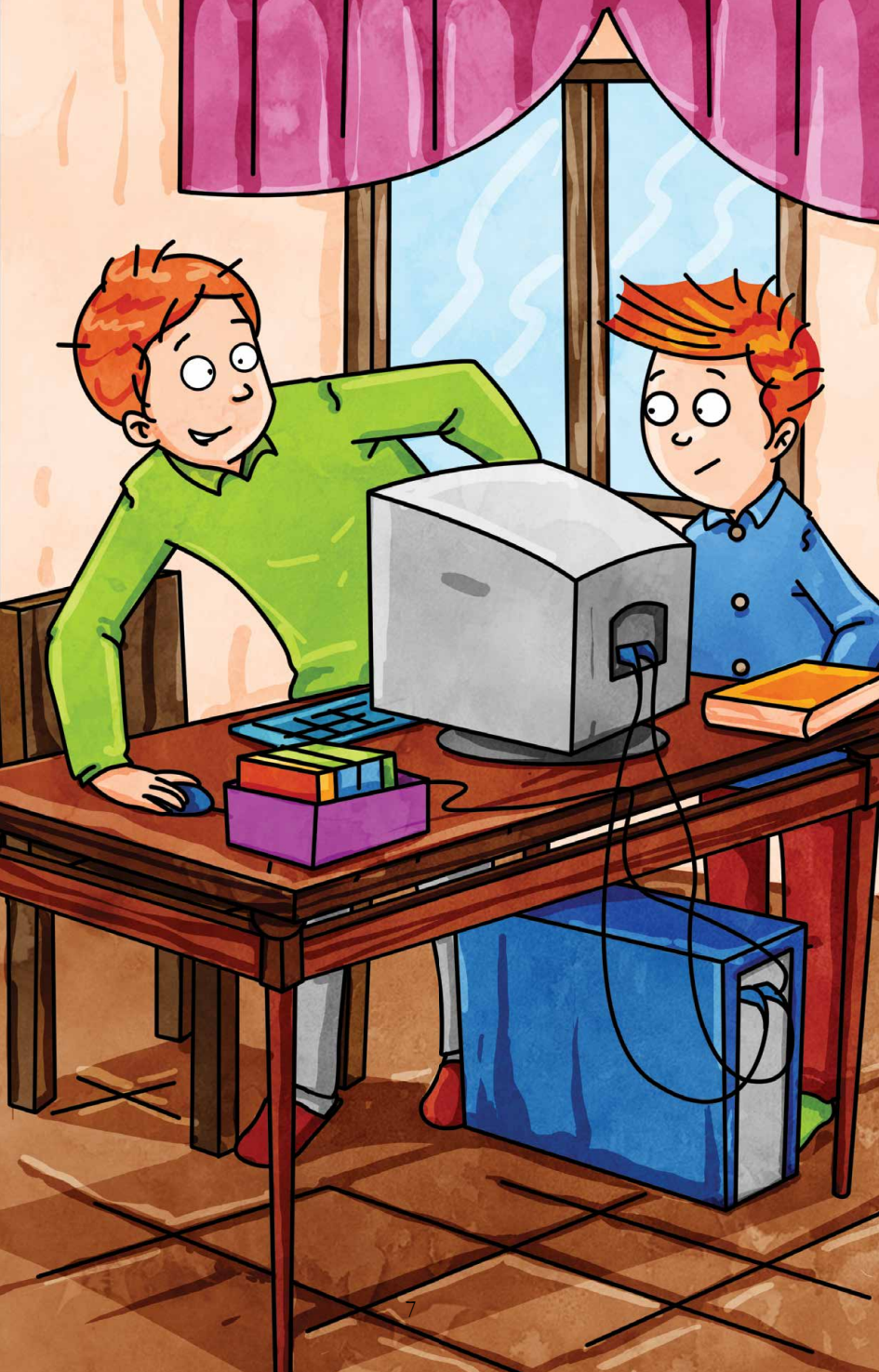
“What are you doing, dad?”

“What's the surprise, dad?”

“If I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise then, would it?”

I said “okay,” but I was still very curious.

And I asked my mom,



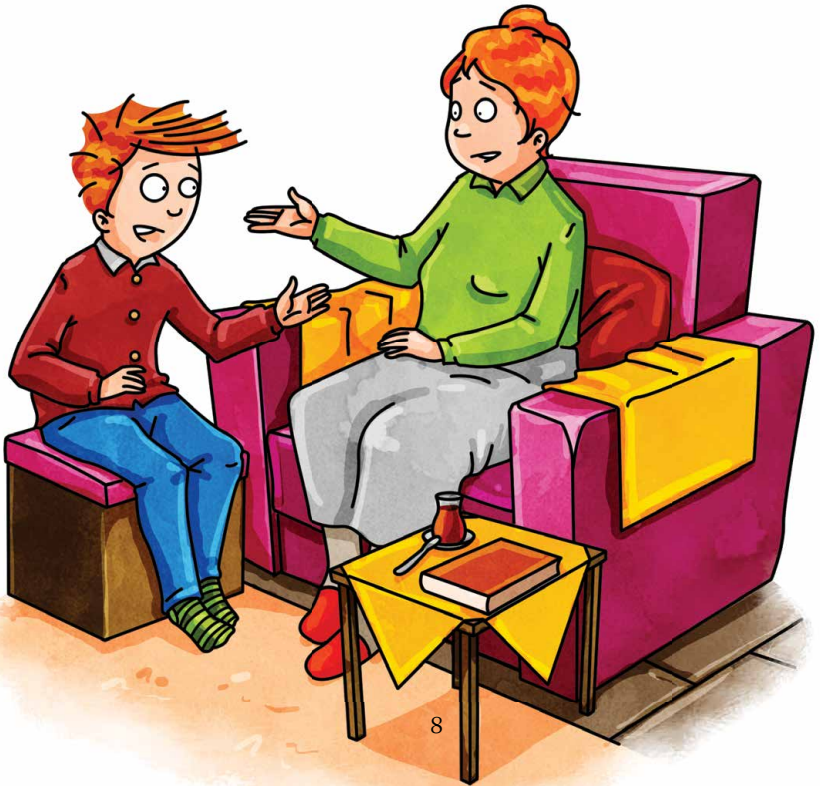
“Mom, what is dad doing in front of the computer so much?”

“I don’t know, why don’t you ask him.”

“I did but he wouldn’t tell me.”

“I don’t know, Selim.”

But it helped to ask my mom. She grew curious too. While I was going to my room, I heard my mom and dad talking.



My mom was saying,
"You're joking! Really?"

"It's about time now,
isn't it?"

"Right, it's
time but—"



When they saw me, both stopped talking. I said,

“Why did you stop talking? Won’t you tell me what happened?”

But as if they had made a deal, they said together,

“We won’t say. It’s a surprise.”

I couldn’t wrangle a single word out of them. My curiosity was piqued. I started to brood on how I would learn the surprise.



One day, I got caught up playing football after school and came home late. I again found my dad in front of the computer. Since he didn't notice me coming, he hadn't changed the page on the screen. But what was that! There on the screen was a photo of Healthy. Healthy is our car.

“Oh! Dad, did Healthy become famous? Why is its picture on the internet?” I asked innocently.



My dad smiled when he noticed me. He said,

“Selim, now you can learn the surprise that you are so curious about. You know our Healthy has grown old. We need to change it. I put an ad on the web. We will sell our car and buy a new one.”

I was stunned. I could only say,

“Dad, you can’t sell it.”

“But Selim, if we don’t sell it now, we won’t ever be able to sell it again.”

“But dad, it isn’t an ordinary car! It’s even got a name, **Healthy!**”

“We can give the name ‘Healthy’ to our new car, too.”

“No, we can’t. Healthy is like family. Remember when Adam cried when he was a baby and you would take him for a drive with Healthy to make him quiet?”





“But Adam doesn’t cry anymore.”

“Dad, don’t sell Healthy.”



"I don't want to sell it either but it acts up. What can I do? We can buy a new car with the money we get for it."

My dad had a response to everything I said. It was obvious that he had made up his mind to sell Healthy. I think my mom agreed with my dad. I was alone in this situation. As I went to my room, my dad called me,

"Selim, you should know someone is coming to see Healthy this weekend!"

When I entered my room, I thought of the trips we had gone on with Healthy. I decided to do my best to not let it be sold, but I needed backup. Adam! I went to his room and cut to the chase.

“Adam, do you love our Healthy?”

*“Of course,
I love it.”*



“All right, do you want it to be sold?”

“No, why are you asking these things?”

“Because dad put an ad on the web to sell Healthy.”

“What? Really?”

“Yes really. Someone is going to come to see it this weekend. Help me so that our car won’t be sold.”

“Okay, tell me. What will we do?”

“Come on, let me tell you.”

Now, I wasn’t alone; we were together,

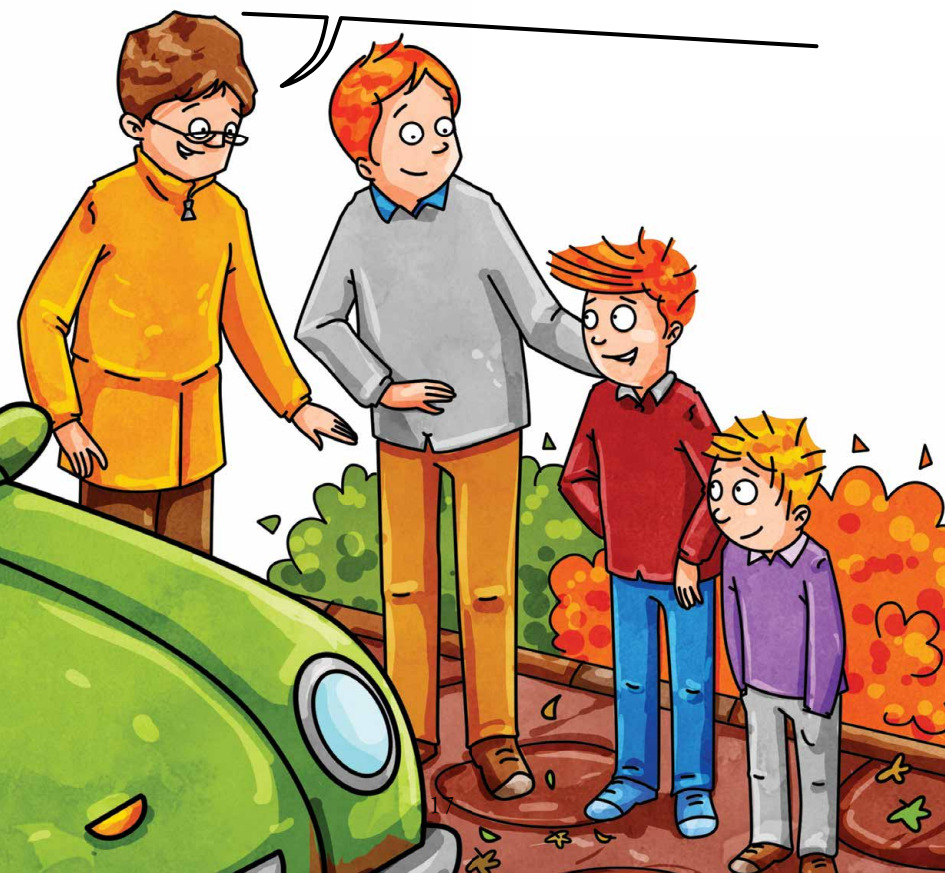
Adam and I.

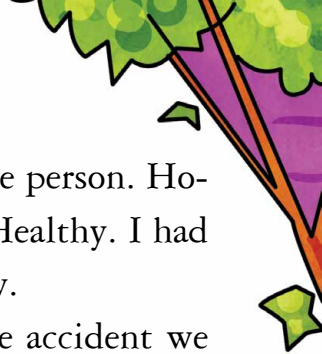


That weekend, the man that my dad was waiting for came in the afternoon. While my dad and the man were talking, we went to them. My dad said,

“Our car is in great shape for its age. We’ve driven it carefully over the years, but now it has grown old.”

“Yeah it’s a bit old, but I like this kind of car. It is a very nice car.”





The man seemed like a nice person. However, he couldn't take our Healthy. I had to dissuade the man somehow.

"Dad, did you tell him the accident we had?"

The man was surprised.

"Did you have an accident? You told me the car hadn't been in any accidents."

My dad said,

"It hasn't. My son is just telling stories."

"But dad, don't you remember that time we had an accident?"

My dad said,

"It wasn't an accident Selim. The axle caps had just come loose." But he realized what we were trying to do. He tried to send us away.

"Kids, don't you have homework?"

"We did, but we finished it all."

Really we had done all of our homework just in case my dad asked this.



My dad turned back to the man and went on talking about the car. While I was thinking about what we could do Adam got in car. He was shouting at me from the front seat,

“Hey Selim, you tore up the back seat when you were little, didn’t you?”

Since Adam’s question attracted the man’s attention, he started to examine the seats carefully. Then Adam got in the back. He stuck his finger through a hole in the roof of the car.

“Hey mister, can you see my finger?”



The man was getting a series of surprises. So was my dad. He had just started to explain when the man said,

"I'm sorry sir. I can't buy your car in these circumstances. The repairs I would have to make would go beyond the price of the car. Thank you very much."

Then he left.

