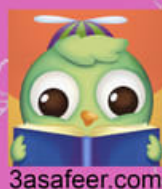


Author : Merif Al-Baltaji
Illustrator : Yousef Zidan



Among the Roots



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Ronny, Ronny! Why don't you go and see what's going on in your garden?



Ronny, it looks serious. Why don't you go and see for yourself?



Didn't I tell you it was serious? Are these tiny snakes? They're eating all the vegetables. They'll destroy your garden. Don't just stare at me. You've got to do something about it. Are you scared?



Catch them and take them out of the garden immediately! Oops, poor thing. You fell right in the mud.



Look at them, they're laughing at you.
Do you want these little creatures to
win? I thought you were a super hero.



Great! Well done! What are they?
They look like tiny snakes.



Hmm...so, they're actually earthworms. Ok, what else?



Watch out, the worm got away.



Catch, it! Don't let it go. Faster!
Faster! It stopped over there at the
pomegranate tree.



Oh! It got away! Do you really want to find it? Ok, then do as she did. She tapped the pomegranate tree three times. Give it try. What do you have to lose?

Wow! Where did you go? What is
this place? Watch your head! Careful!
Careful!



What does this worm want from you?
I think it's trying to tell you
something.



Wait! Well, it doesn't seem to be dangerous. I think she is asking you to ride on her back. Are you scared? Why don't you try? What do you have to lose? Haha ha....well, it is wobbly and sticky. But it's an adventure! Come hop on her back! She insists.



This is where she lives? It's such a strange place. What do you think is in the big cavern ahead?



It looks like a place to store food, but the vegetables and fruits here are rotten. How can it eat this?



Aha! She doesn't have any teeth. She sucks out the juice from the food instead of having to chew it. Ronny! Are you thinking of what I'm thinking?



What is that? Where is she taking you now? Will she eat the roots of the plants? This is terrible. No, she won't eat it. What is she trying to do then?



She's asking you for help. She wants you to dig some tunnels around the roots so that they won't become rotten. Ronny! Are you thinking what I'm thinking?



I'm sorry, Ronny. I shouldn't have made such a quick judgement about the earthworm. She's actually cleaning up the rotten vegetables and fruits from the garden. She also tunnels around the roots to create more air flow and to prevent the roots from rotting too.



You can go back home, Ronny, and watch TV. Ronny, where are you? Where are you guys going?



Wow! What a beautiful room! On the left, there is a cocoon moving and it looks like the young are about to come out. But just what is coming out of it?



Oh! A soft little baby worm!



Ronny, I think it's time to go. Look!
I'm big again! Come home, Ronny,
before your favorite program ends.



Ronny! Why aren't you answering me? Where did you go, Ronny?!

The End