



Have You Seen the Tick O'Click?



Author: Hijra AlSawi

Illustrator: Hosam Hasan



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The original work of this book was made possible through the generous support of the All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development (ACR GCD) Partners (the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Vision, and the Australian Government). It was prepared by Asafeer Education Technologies FZ LLC and does not necessarily reflect the views of the ACR GCD Partners. Any adaptation or translation of this work should not be considered an official ACR GCD translation and

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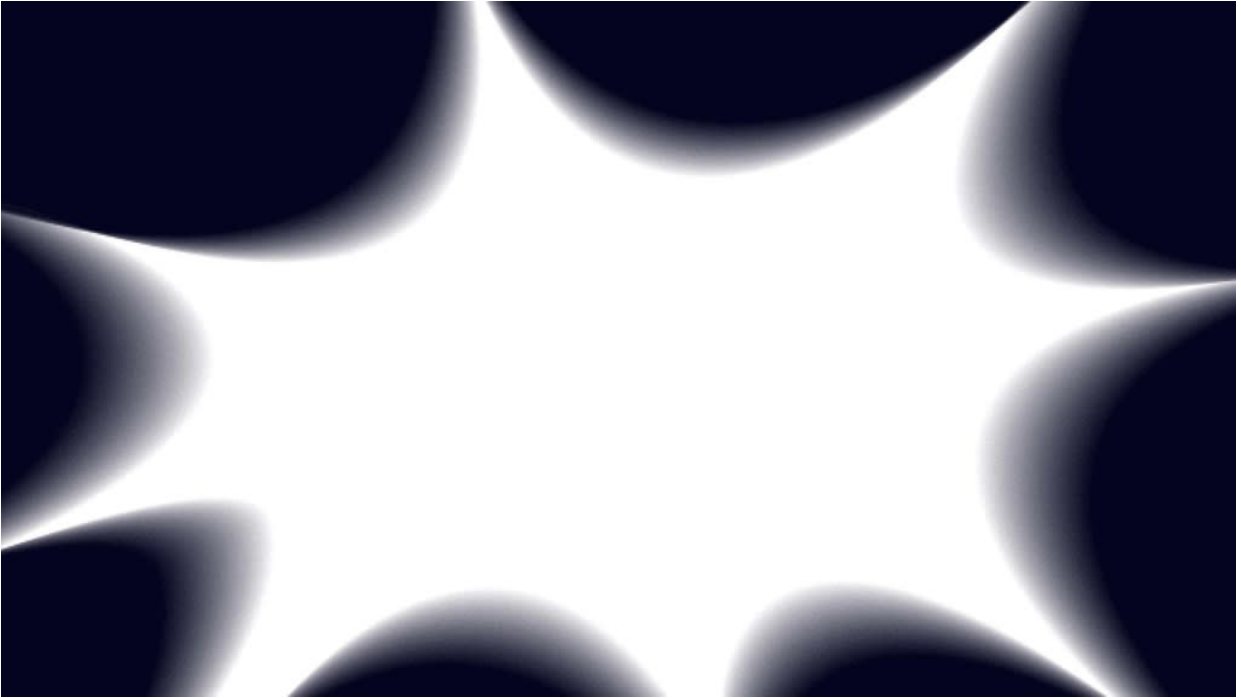




It was sunset at the calm lake. The birds went back to their nests to get ready for bed. The western swamphen yawned as she stretched her wings. “Yawn...I’ll finally get a good night’s sleep.”



“Where is that sound coming from?”



“Tick O’ Click”



What is going on? Where am I?
Where's my nest? Who are you?



Boooom!!



The next morning the swamp hen woke up looking for the Tick O'Click that interrupted her sleep last night.



She hurried towards the masked gnatcatcher and cautiously asked him, “Gnatcatcher, gnatcatcher, did you see the Tick O’Click yesterday?” The gnatcatcher replied, “No, but let me look closely.” The swamphen said, “It’s like a flashlight or a bolt of lightning. You can’t tell the difference.”



A little frog hopped out of the grass and said, “Excuse me, are you both talking about the Tick O ’Cl ick ? It disturbed me last night while I slept in the mud with my tadpoles. It flashed right in my eyes and I couldn ’t see for a minute.” The swamphen told the gnatcatcher, “Now do you believe

me? We have to find out what it is before it's too late."



The three of them set off to ask their neighbors across the lake. The swamphen looked at the mantis, but she ran away as soon as she saw them. The swamphen told her, “Don’t worry, we’re not here to eat you. We just want to know if you ’ve seen the Tick O’Click.”



The mantis replied from under a leaf,
“Yes, it surprised me while I was
putting my eggs in their sac. ” The
swamphen said, “Oh! How dare it
invade our privacy!”



The gnatcatcher was very annoyed and said, “It’s quite rude, actually. We need to have a meeting right now.”



The water birds and insects met in front of the lake. The crowned crane said, “I know every wetland in the world, from lake to swamp, well to oasis, river to coast, but I’ve never heard of anything called a Tick O’Click.” Then the crowned crane remembered and shouted, “Wait a

second, I know who you mean! We'll need to set a trap.”



They finally discovered just who the Tick O'Click was. It was the seagull taking pictures of them, and it was the camera's flash that had blinded them.



Now it's time to get him back. We 'll see how much he likes it!



The seagull, apologized saying, “I’m so sorry. Please forgive me. I didn’t mean to bother you. I wanted to enter your beautiful photos into a competition.” The swamphen said, “Next time, you should really first ask for our permission.”



But the birds, frogs and insects forgave him after he apologized and he made sure they all had copies of his winning photos.



The End