

A Horse Tale

The Book of Antara

By Lubna Dairanieh

An elaborate idea by a Kuwaiti/Palestinian novelist Huda Al-Shawa was the creation of her book Anbar. The book which targets young audiences is about a horse character whose name is Anbar.

When I interviewed Huda about the book she said “it is an artistic homage to the warrior poet Antara bin Shadad whose relationship with his horse Al-Abjar is quite legendary. I think Antara really sums up what a “Faris” or an Arabian Knight is; bravery, chivalry, and a deep compassion for his horse.”

The book written in eloquent style using simple Arabic words, takes our children back to the time when poetry was the way of speech. Anbar the horse gives vivid descriptions of the desert sights, sounds, and smells and as Mrs. Al-Shawa explains, this makes it a delightful read for adults and children alike.

I also asked Mrs. Al-Shawa what was behind the creation of the book and she said “I intended the book to be used as an introduction to a study in schools of early poetry.” She continues “the added value of his unrequited love for the noble Abla only adds to the drama of the story of the tragic warrior who finds solace to his suffering by pouring out his heart to his only faithful friend, his horse Abjar!”

The launch of the book took place at the Kuwait Riding Centre. And to portray some of the characters to the children during the launch, a short play featuring Antara and Abla performing a scene with music, poetry, and dancing took place. **HT**

