



By: Ayaan Sheikh & Hafsa Naz Mahmood



Mom and Son bedtime story follows boy's dream and evolves into children's book to educate the world about self-identity, diversity, individuality and eating healthy.



Our vision and ideas began as multiple bedtime stories we made up together. One day Ayaan insisted he wanted to read our stories at his library—even after I told him they're just in our heads. So we decided to bring our visions to life and officially kicked off the Little Birdie Project.

We wrote down all our stories, then picked our favorite one: *Little Birdies Lose their Colors*. We had such a fun time finalizing all the details. We spent our entire fall and winter breaks hand-making 3D artwork for each page.

Next we shipped everything off to graphic and Web designers and planned our launch. It was incredible to read the first printed copy together. We hope the story and book will be as educational, inspiring and rewarding for you as the creative publishing process has been for us.



Synopsis

Little Birdies Lose their Colors is about a bunch of different colored birds who are the greatest of friends. They all fly into a cloud to play and lose their colors!

At first the birds all love being identical. They forget about their differences and go back to the roots of existence. At the core, they're all the same.

Eventually, they begin to miss being different and unique. It's just not as fun for them when they're all exactly the same.

So Green birdie Ayaan has a great idea—eat a fruit and vegetable of your color and you'll get your color back. It works!

By eating healthy, and a little bit of creativity, they all get their beautiful colors back. They never want to lose their awesome colors, uniqueness and individuality again.



Foreword

In every culture and society, hope shines most brightly through our youth. They teach us with their genuine acceptance of all. Ayaan Sheikh and his mother Hafsa Naz Mahmood cherish each day as an opportunity to accept, embrace, and cherish all living beings. Their colorful words provide us with a proactive example of how we can honor and celebrate equally what we have in common and what makes us unique.

Teresa Mastin, PhD

*Chairperson and Professor at Michigan State University
College of Communications and Arts & Sciences
Department of Advertising & Public Relations*

Little Birdies Lose their Colors is a story that encourages self-identity, diversity, individuality and eating healthy. These topics can be difficult to approach and discuss. By joining the little birdies on their journey, everyone can talk about important issues openly and honestly. This children's book simplifies complicated topics and brings everyone back to the basics of peacefully embracing and appreciating each other.



About the Authors

Ayaan Sheikh

Ayaan was born in Chicago and spent the majority of his childhood in Chicago's South Loop neighborhood. He loves school, journaling, math (especially fraction multiplication) and all sports—mostly basketball and soccer. He loves the NBA and watching his favorite players play basketball. Ayaan enjoys simply being a super creative kid, making cool projects and hanging out with his friends. He is blessed with supporting and loving parents, an awesome younger brother and amazing grandparents.



Hafsa Naz Mahmood

Hafsa, a Chicago-area native, started her career as a journalist then moved over to the world of Marketing & Communications leading global companies. She always had a natural talent and love for writing. Hafsa, nicknamed Huffy by her dad, enjoys creative outlets including interior and floral designing, playing the piano, photography, spending time in Chicago and traveling the world—especially visiting big cities—with her family. She is blessed with a loving husband, two beautiful boys—Ayaan and Azeem—and incredibly supportive family and friends. Hafsa was born in Downers Grove, Illinois and her parents are from Pakistan.

Dedicated to:

Ayaan, Azeem and our Angel

*Nothing is impossible. Reach for the stars.
Make your dreams happen. Always.*



All the children in the world

May we all live in a world that's accepting of everyone's identities, colors, ethnicities, cultures, religions and beliefs in unity and in peace—and may we all rise above any barriers together.

