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Stoforos

Tale in  
Orange



Illustrations by  
Stefany Veldemiry



KOSTAS STOFOROS

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Translated from Greek by  
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Kostas Stoforos, Tale in orange  
ISBN: 978-618-5040-19-2  
August 2013

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to Styliana Galiniki

## She saw a dream...

She was in an orange car...with her dad and mom. A strange music was all around them. You could say it was purple...

With tales in red and yellow swimming inside her, tears of joy ran down her cheeks. When she wiped them, they had become orange...

"Where are we going?" she asked her mom.

"On the Orange trip you wanted"





The path they followed connected the Orange State of the Moon with the Purple Night. It was made out of silk, knit by a bird that long before had ran away from the seamstress of the palace...



What a confusing dream! She could not understand it. Usually, she was the one grownups could not understand. Everyone thought her love for orange was bizarre. *Obsession*, they called it.

As a baby, her mom said, she got hold of an orange rattle and would not let go. She only wore orange clothing. She ate only orange food.

She almost drove her parents crazy. They simply could not understand her. But what else could she do?

Tiptoeing in the dark and quiet house, she went in the kitchen, opened the refrigerator and looked at the shelves before pulling out a carrot. Then she filled a glass of orange juice and stepped out onto the balcony.

An orange half-moon leaned into the sky's background...Tomorrow they were going on a trip.

The suitcases waited with patience in the hallway for dawn. Hers was orange-what else?

For the first time in her life she would fly on a plane. For the first time she would be leaving the country. They were flying to Spain—her dad showed her on the map and told her stories about poets, painters and bullfighters. They would rent a car (she picked it out herself on the Internet and it was a fantastic and shiny orange Volkswagen) and they would go to magical cities, her mom said. Of course, they would also be going to Portugal—or “Portokalia<sup>\*</sup>” as she insisted on calling it.

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\* “Portokali” in Greek is orange. We have the same word for orange color. So the name of the country “Portokalia” is something like Orangeland. Also it reminds of Portugal (in Greek “Portogalia”)

She believed this Lorca -mom's favorite poet- with the most beautiful gaze she had ever seen, was definitely "Portokalian". For who else could write such a beautiful song about an orange tree?

*"Underneath the orange tree she washes the cottons  
Green are her eyes and her voice purple"*

Why did her mother's eyes cloud over when she heard the song, and why did her dad always squeeze her hand?

Marianna drank her last drop, looked at the moon one more time and went to sleep...

..I am going on a plane to see the world from high above!

Inside the airplane, Marianna could not stop gazing and asking questions. As the plane rose to the air, the earth grew smaller and smaller. He pointed to a rock down below, "Hump" as they called it because of the way it was shaped like a hump on top of the mountain. Under its shadow people were diving from the rocks only to resurface from the ladder to do it all over again...

Marianna found herself fascinated with the tray table that was popping up and down. She was also fascinated with the orange juice, that the stewardess had given her. She was really pretty and spoke with a funny accent, like her friend Jason. Then she gave her a toy-an airplane with yellow and red colors: "the flag of Spain", mom told her. If you mix red with yellow you get orange!

"Spanish women are beautiful", said dad, looking at the stewardess. Her mom blushed and did not say anything. Marianna played dumb. She did not say anything either but she agreed with her dad!

She liked everything: even the unbelievable food. The paella was orange and delicious. Maybe Spain is a part of Portokalia? Somewhere in Gibraltar Hercules had discovered "golden apples from the Garden of the Hesperides", namely the oranges! Orange is her second favorite fruit – first is tangerine.



She pulled out of her orange bag her coloring pencils and created her drawing of Portokalia. A country that you could drink with a straw and it would rain tangerines and oranges. And the white boats that would take off from her harbor and come back loaded with clams and sea urchins. They had the smell of the sea when opened on the plate, an orange explosion...

Besides, everyone knows it: the more orange the eggs of a sea urchin are, the tastier it will be!

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