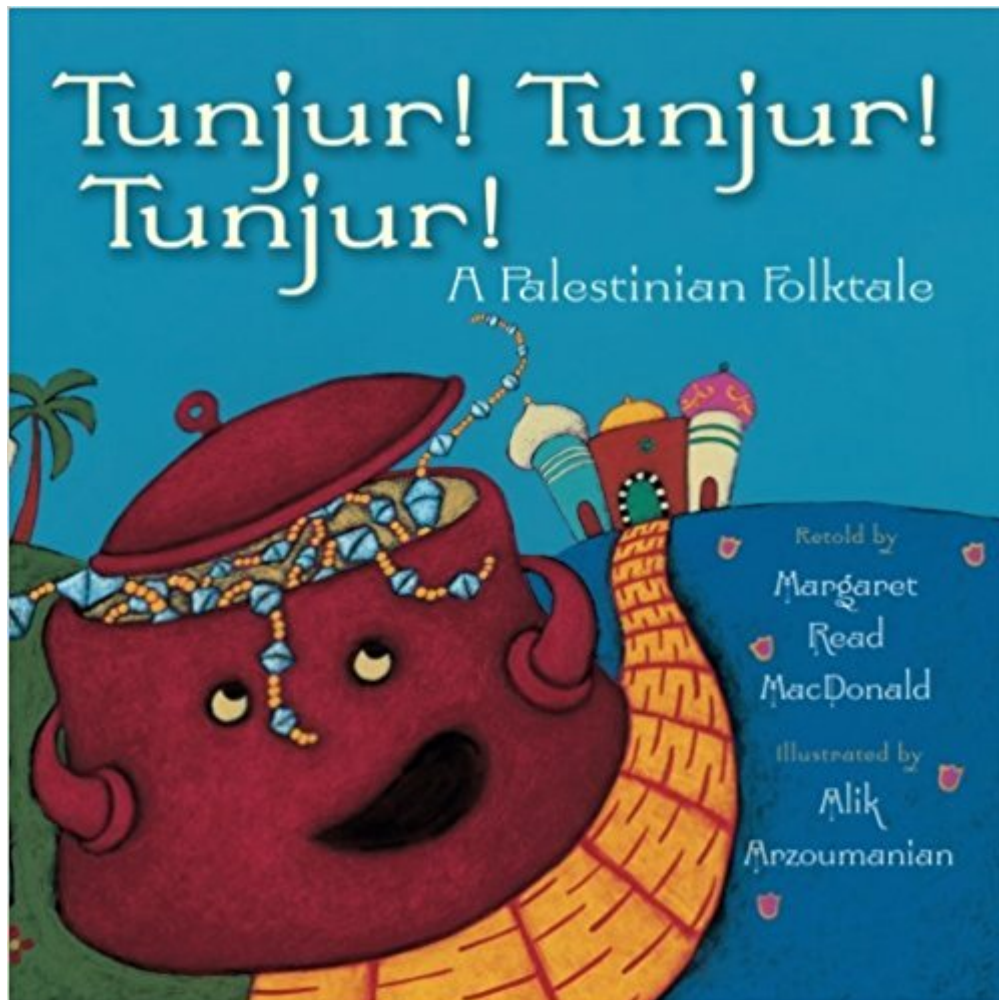




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# Tunjur! Tunjur! Tunjur!: A Palestinian Tale



## Synopsis

There was once a woman who had a little pot for a child. Tunjur! Tunjur! Tunjur! – that was the sound the pot made as it rolled everywhere. Unfortunately the pot wasn't old enough to know the difference between right and wrong. That naughty pot ran off with things that did not belong to her until she learned her lesson . . . the hard way! In this retelling of a Palestinian folktale, children will discover that there are consequences for taking things that don't belong to them.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2nd

## Customer Reviews

PreSchool-Grade 2-A childless woman prays to Allah for progeny and is rewarded with a mischievous little cooking pot with human attributes. Soon the little pot tires of rattling around the house (Tunjur! Tunjur! Tunjur!) and insists on rolling off to market, where she tricks a rich man into filling her up with honey and rolls home again. The second time the pot leaves home she encounters a king who fills her with jewels. When Little Pot rolls home with this treasure, her mother realizes that she has been absconding with other people's property and tells her child that she will have to return everything. In the morning, the unrepentant pot escapes before her mother awakes, but she meets the rich man again, who takes her to the king. The men conspire to fill the pot with

goat dung, which convinces her to stay home until she is old enough to have learned right from wrong. MacDonald's telling is filled with repetition to encourage children to join in. Arzoumanian's bright, acrylic illustrations of sloe-eyed humans and the sly-eyed red pot are set against backgrounds with suggestions of Arabic decorative arts, which reinforce the story nicely.-Miriam Lang Budin, Chappaqua Public Library, NY Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

PreS-Gr. 2. In this lively Palestinian tale, a woman wishes for a child to love, "even if it is nothing more than a cooking pot." Voila! Her wish comes true, and red Little Pot appears. The two spend cozy days indoors, but restless Little Pot begs to explore the wider world. Reluctantly, the mother lets her pot outdoors, and its adventures include meetings with a merchant and even the royal family. Little Pot manages to roll away from each encounter with valuable stolen goods tucked inside her lid, but after her petty thefts are discovered, she receives a stinky comeuppance that is sure to please read-aloud crowds. Folklorist MacDonald's briskly paced text brims with repetitive phrases that evoke the sounds and rhythm of Little Pot's tumbling, rolling movement, and Arzoumanian's richly hued, stylized acrylics, bordered with Islamic motifs, add subtle cultural detail and help leaven the heavy messages about right and wrong behavior. Match this with the tale about the gingerbread man for a multicultural story hour about mischievous runaways. Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ms. Read has done a great job of making a moralistic tale accessible and inviting. The moral still goes over my preschooler's heads, but the illustrations are engaging.

Purchased for my granddaughter who loves to read. She has yet agreed to sit through it. I believe children's Kindle books are a waste in so many ways. There's something to be said for cozying up to a real book, life size, turning pages together. The actual story has been told many different ways and could be enjoyable, but the Electronic version just smashes the fun of reading.

It's important to remember that Folktales are not necessarily intended for children, any more so than Fairy Tales originally were. The traditional narrative style of folktales may present a crisis in thinking, a conflicting moral, which may be more suited to an older child who is more able to articulate his

feelings and thoughts. Luckily for me the beautiful, expressive, and colorful drawings distracted my little granddaughter from asking me to explain parts of the story. Tunjur! is one of those stories that may not promote the obvious moral because the little pot is obviously right and the little pot is obviously wrong. I would much more happily read this to high school students as a folktale, than I would want to read Tunjur to children. See [The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales](#).

I've always been a sucker for old folktales. There's usually a somewhat bizarre element which requires a suspension of disbelief, but if you can get past that (and the target audiences - children - have no problem doing so), then there are nuggets of ancient wisdom and simple common sense to uncover. The whimsical and repetitive nature of the story provides the "sugar" to help the "medicine" of the moral of the story go down. This Palestinian folktale - which I'd never heard before - is no exception. We have to suspend our disbelief right from the opening page of this story when we meet a woman who wants a child very badly, "even if it is nothing more than a cooking pot". And "Willa!" Allah grants her prayer, exactly as she prayed it. (So why didn't she just ask for an actual child?) Now perhaps I know the origin of why my father often called me a "little pot" when I was little and being difficult. The Little Pot loves her Momma and rolls around banging against the walls, making the title sound, "Tunjur! Tunjur! Tunjur!" Tunjur, we are told, comes from the Arabic word "tunjura" meaning cooking pot. Apparently a rolling little pot would make the sound of its name. As much as she loves her mother, however, Little Pot, like all children, wants to see the wider world and experience life on her own. She begs her mother to let her go to "Market! Market! Market!" Momma, however, is concerned that Little Pot does not know how to behave - she does not know right from wrong. But the precocious Little Pot assures her mother that she does, so Momma lets her go. At the market, Little Pot meets a merchant who thinks she would make a nice honey pot. Little Pot agrees - honey is yummy! So she seals her lid over her honey-filled pot and, when the angry merchant flings her away after he cannot get her lid off, she rolls back home to Momma, who, predictably blind, believes the honey to be a gift from the merchant. The next day, Little Pot rolls all the way to the king's palace where she becomes a storage vessel for the queen's jewels, and I bet you can guess what happens next. Momma isn't fooled this time and gives Little Pot a good talking to. Undeterred, however, Little Pot rolls off again before Momma wakes up the next morning, hoping for more goodies. Little Pot is soon recognized, however, and this time the goodies she gets are her just deserts. Now perhaps the Little Pot may finally learn the difference between right and wrong. This charming story is complemented by rich, colorful illustrations which, to my untrained and

unknowledgeable eyes, feel authentic. The colors, patterns and designs used evoke ancient Islamic scenes depicted in artwork. The illustrator, Alik Arzoumanian, hails from Lebanon, which provides some reassurance as to authenticity. There is a final Author's Note at the end of the book describing the collection of the folktale, some research, and some variations of the tale. Although the specific elements of this Palestinian folk tale may initially seem alien to Western readers, the universal themes of right and wrong and just punishment for transgressions appeal across cultures, and the repetition gives a further familiar, universal feel to the story. Readers of all ages and cultures can connect with and learn from this simple tale. My daughters (ages 4 and 6) enjoyed the story, although they found it rather odd and even funny at first.

This is a cute story that's fun to read aloud, has nice illustrations, and bright colors. The essence of the story is a little pot that wants to go to market by itself... is found by a person who fills it with honey & then the pot makes its lid stick tight, so the person throws it out... and the pot returns home with the honey. Day two is a repeat, except it goes to the castle and is filled with the queen's jewels. On day three it goes out and is spotted by the merchants, who decide to give the pot "what it deserves" for stealing things, then fill it with muck from the stables. Then she realizes that stealing things was a bad idea, and stays home until she's old enough to know right from wrong. As a parent, I like that the story has a moral, but I especially like that the overall story is fun and enjoyable to read. So the lesson is clear, but it's a fun message rather than a dry lecture.

This story of a little pot who thinks itself very clever to steal from others is perfect for the 5-and-older crowd. While his mischief starts innocently enough by trying to help out his mother, he soon learns that stealing is wrong and ends up full of dung. Though perhaps a little harsh by Disney Jr/My Little Pony standards, this classic Palestinian tale sits comfortably with Aesop in tone and lesson. An excellent read for the older picture book crowd.

My daughter absolutely loves this book! She is fascinated by the idea of somebody having a cooking pot as a child and she gets a kick out of hearing about this little pot and its less than honest antics. So, from a child's point of view, this book gets five stars for its overall enjoyability. From a mother's point of view, this book also deserves five stars, but for different reasons. This is a very nice story about honesty and what it means to leave things alone that don't belong to you. This provided a very valuable teaching moment for my daughter, as she asked intelligent questions about the consequences of dishonesty and why it is bad. Also, I thoroughly enjoyed the illustrations.

They are bright and cheerful and very cultural. This was just an entertaining book all around. I highly recommend it.

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