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THE NOVEL "IGBAL, MY SECRET" BY YAGODA MIHAILOVSKA-GEORGIEVA, OR ABOUT FLYING THROUGH ADOLESCENCE

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Abstract. The novel "Igbal, my secret" by Jagoda Mihajlovska-Georgieva was published in 2019 (Tri, Skopje) and is a kind of a logical and chronological continuation of the novel "I, the Lightning Boy". In the novel "I, the Lightning Boy", the author Mihajlovska-Georgieva introduced the young readers to the family of Vedan and Breza, showed us the growth of Vedan through the narration and the point of view of Vedan as the main narrator, and beside him his little sister, then four years old - Breza.

Key words: novel for young people, fairy tale, Jagoda Mihajlovska Georgieva..

1. Introduction

In the novel "Igbal, my secret" the author¹ focuses precisely on Breza and her growth. Hence, the novel is also compositionally divided into two parts. The first part covers the period when Breza is ten and a half years old, and the second part begins when she is already fourteen years old and is about to graduate. It is the same Breza from her previous novel "I, the Lightning Boy", in which Breza's brother Vedan was the main character, so here she takes the main role.

The main character Breza talks about herself in the period from the tenth to the fourteenth year of her life, covering all the significant, big and small things that happen to girls and boys of that age. Her joys, sorrows, dilemmas, unanswered questions, first love, jealousies, sufferings, facing the death of a loved one, separations, relationships in the family, relationships with peers, travels, dreams... She shares all this most sincerely with Igbal, the boy from Goa in India. A deep loving friendship develops between them. He is Breza's biggest secret and although he only exists in her fantasy, he is more real to her than anyone in real life.

¹ Jagoda Mihajlovska-Georgieva was born in Skopje on March 3, 1953. She graduated from the Faculty of Philology "Blaze Koneski" of UKIM. She worked as a journalist in the weekly "Puls" and as an editor in "Telma" television. She has been a member of the Society of Writers of Macedonia since 1990 and has published several books - short stories and novels for children and adults, including: "My skin", "I, the lightning boy", "Mirrors", "Igbal, my secret", "Indigo Bombay", "Sassy Red Lipstick" and others. For some of them, she was honored with prestigious awards, such as the "Racinov recognition" for the novel "The Stone of Your Day"; the "Novel of the Year" award for "Indigo Bombay", and for the novel "Fuenterabia Monastery" she was also awarded the "Stale Popov" award, for the best prose work for 2017 from the Association of Writers of Macedonia.

"Igbal My Secret" is an authentic story with authentic real-life heroes. No names have been changed, except for the four of Breza's immediate family. Even Igbal, with all his Indian surroundings, is "extracted" from real life and "placed" in Breza's mind and heart, where he becomes her constant companion, enlivened by her wild imagination. This novel is intended equally for children who understand adults and for adults who understand children and know how to read children's books.

The story begins with the introduction of the main character Breza, who is angry with her parents for several reasons. First, she is angry with them for giving her the same name as a tree, because of which she was ridiculed by her peers: "Nasty things happened to me when I met my peers here. What banter fell on my account, what insults sometimes! I once even burst into tears of grief when, as I passed a group of eighth graders, I heard one of them say: „Hey, there's the one with the wooden name! I could have collapsed to the ground from shame, and even more from despair, because the person who said that was my main crush at that time. I immediately crossed it off my list" (16). Teasing can be innocent fun. We all tease each other, and it can strengthen friendships. But, when teasing turns into mockery, it's no longer fun. In fact, teasing is a type of bullying behavior. Both physical and psychological violence occur in many forms, and one of them is mockery (Brendtro, 2001: 47). On the other hand, Breza experienced the teasing more strongly, because it came from a peer she liked. The term "crush" or "first love" refers to a specific liking directed towards another person, characterized by one-sided physical or romantic attraction or sexual feelings and fantasies (Bowker and et., 2012: 629).

Young adolescents are attracted to physically and relationally aggressive peers, possibly because such aggressive behaviors are seen as appropriate ways to demonstrate dominance in the peer group and to challenge the authority of adults at a time when many young adolescents are seeking increased independence. The existing literature suggests that not only are such first crushes distinct from other peer relationships during early adolescence, but also that they are very common peer experiences. Research has shown that because individuals only occasionally interact with their crushes, it is also plausible that some young adolescents are unaware of who has a crush on them and, thus, are unable to reciprocate the affection. This study also investigated whether having one or more crushes may be associated with adolescent loneliness, however, it is unclear whether there are associations with loneliness. However, being able to be liked may offer unique feelings of emotional security and social satisfaction and thus lead to reduced loneliness during early adolescence, perhaps due to positive attention from opposite-sex peers at a time when acceptance from other peers of the opposite sex is of great importance (Bowker, 2012: 629).

It is loneliness that causes anger and rage in little Breza, directed at the parents because of their one-month absence from home: "Maybe adults think that children can't be unhappy until death, but if they think so, I'm sure that they haven't learned anything in life and they wasted the years they had and the experience they gained. Being unhappy to death means feeling sick all day long. And at night, when you go to bed, wish you didn't wake up the next day" (16); "They said it will pass quickly, we will only be apart for a month, it will pass in the blink of an eye. It wasn't like that. They lied to us. It was the longest, saddest, and most unhappy month... " (17) (Михајловска-Георгиева, 2019). When finally, after a "long time", the parents arrived, they brought many gifts, including a rug that they didn't want to unpack until morning. Despite the efforts and curiosity of Breza to open it, her mother did not allow it. In those moments, while Breza is falling asleep, suddenly a blue light begins to enter through her window and a soft, colorful, and shining carpet is spread in front of her, on which Igbal is sitting and looking at her. The miraculous appearance of Igbal from India does not surprise Breza at all, and their communication (in English!) begins: "I have not told this to anyone.

How can I say it when I know no one would believe me? I wouldn't believe in such a thing either, so how can I expect that from others? Most of all, it would make me angry if someone told me: come on, you dreamed it, your dream followed your mother's story, so now it seems true to you. Or: you, Breza, have always had a vivid imagination, you will make a good writer" (19).

The friendship of Breza and Igbal begins, the adventure of flying all the way to India begins, with the help of the flying carpet, woven by the weak children's hands of the girl Miru, with which the author condemns the exploitation of child labor in underdeveloped countries: "The door creaked when she opened it and a beam of light entered the half-dark room... Children's voices. Then I saw clearly: the room had a low ceiling, very small windows, and an earthen floor... We stopped by one of the wooden machines: we stood and watched. A girl, certainly not older than me, maybe younger, was doing something with the threads. She worked carefully, slowly, but skillfully. At her feet I noticed a piece of carpet, very similar to the one we came on... The girl knew that we were standing behind her and that we were watching her, but she neither turned nor stopped working... Inside, where the children were working, it was very stuffy and hot... I fainted a little" (28-29).

It is clear that Igbal is a product of Breza's pre-adolescent loneliness, when young adolescents are confused by many things happening in their lives and beyond. It is no coincidence that, according to the mentioned portrait, he is also a young man: "I noticed that his face was covered with small and rare hairs, just like my brother's, that his eyes were so dark I had never seen before, that they could be, he had very thick and long eyelashes that made shadows on the upper part of his cheeks, and the skin on his face and hands was almost chocolate... He was slim and tall, I reached his shoulders, and his arms were muscular, his fingers and the palms elongated... Later I realized what he said, that he was fifteen years old" (26).

The reasons for Igbal's appearance can also be found in Breza's relationship with her older brother Vedan. Siblings are an integral part of children's social world. Emotional bonds between siblings are second in order of intensity, after those between parents and children. Siblings can be a source of frequent companionship, help or emotional support. Older brothers/sisters can take care of younger ones, teach them, or serve as role models, and sometimes they can even replace the absent parent (Furman, Buhrmester, 1985: 448). Vedan is fifteen years old (like Igbal!), a high school student who is dedicated to learning, but is also an adolescent with problems typical of adolescence. It is for these reasons that the biggest quarrels and conflicts between him and Breza occur: "For several days my brother and I have been in bad relations. Sometimes we get along great: he's good to me, I'm good to him. But sometimes, one horror! My father says, the devil has entered you, what's the matter with you, calm down, otherwise it will be bad for you. I know only one thing: there is no justice for the younger ones in this world. Whoever is older is always in a better situation. It is not at all clear to me why I am also accused of being possessed by the devil, when in fact the devil himself is my brother" (42-43). Their quarrels are mostly due to Breza's curiosity and fascination when searching his room, and Vedan feels that intrusion as a violation of his private space. Numerous studies have been devoted to researching the relationship between brothers and sisters within the framework of a family, as well as why some of them get along well, and between some there are constant conflicts. Some researchers believe that it depends on their temperaments, gender, age, interests, the desire to control the older over the younger child, etc. (Stoneman, Brody, 1993: 1786). When such a conflict arises, their father (not very successfully) tries to resolve the disagreements at his "five o'clock meetings", but still, the children quickly resolve the misunderstandings on their own, realizing how much they love each other. Breza will feel it especially when her brother goes to London for a one-month

stay to study English: "After he left, those wonderful, peaceful and only my days appeared. I started spending more time with my mother, there was no one to interrupt us, she had no one to share her free time with, I had her all to myself... I could watch whatever I wanted on TV, no one changed my program and argued with me about what we were going to watch at that moment. I could search through his room as much as I wanted, (...), I could even listen to his tapes... And the computer was at my disposal. I say, wonderful days!" (86). In those moments, it seems to Breza that there is nothing more beautiful in the world than being an only child, but after a certain period of time, she changes her mind, she begins to miss her brother: "Who knows what he is doing there away from me. There is no one to take care of him, there is no one to cover him if he unexpectedly falls asleep, as sometimes at home he reads in bed and falls asleep. (...) Eh, brother, brother, I sighed, my dear brother. Where are you now? I started kissing his photo and started crying. I missed him a lot. I suddenly felt infinitely lonely without him. I wish he could enter the room now, let him be angry that I sit here without asking, let him shout at me and threaten me, I will endure everything just for him to be here." (88-89).

Despite frequent arguments and conflicts, the brother, Vedan, has a protective attitude towards his younger sister, as in the case when, at night in the park, Breza and her best friends Mila and Ivana lose their bicycles, naively falling into a dangerous situation, he, after first (out of great concern) scolds her, then gives her support: "You're not normal. I say, they let you out of control. I don't come home so late, and I'm five years older than you, not you! You little brat! – and he tapped me on the head as I passed by him in the corridor" (71); "I will gather my friends and we will go to those in the park, we will crush them... No one can go against my people, you should just see them!" They also have knives, the small, sharp ones that are worn in socks... I won't say a word about the bike in front of mom and dad, but I'll bring it home to you in the evening" (78).

Friendships represent an important context for the social development of adolescents. A review of the existing literature reveals that adolescent friendships differ in several respects from the friendships of younger children. During adolescence, three dimensions of friendship influence the course of individual development: having friends, who are the friends, and the quality of friendship (Hartup, 1993: 3). A number of studies support the fact that this type of friendship in early adolescence is especially strong between friends of the same sex, because they have similar or same attitudes towards school or their culture (music, fashion, etc.) (Berndt, 1982: 1447). As previously mentioned, Breza's best friends are Ivana and Mila, but at the end of the school year, several things happen that will shake her world. First of all, Ivana, with whom they were together every day, went to school together, sat in the same desk and lived in the same building, moved to Kazakhstan with her family. This parting was very difficult for Breza, and in those moments she remembered Igbal: "But where is he, why is he not there?" Eh, if I knew how to fly on a rug, I would surely find him!" (57) and in those moments, another wonderful quality of Igbal, apart from flying, is revealed, and that is telepathy. During the meeting, Breza discovers Igbal's ability to fly, the meaning of which is of a symbolic-metaphorical nature for the desire to explore the unseen, to discover new horizons, not to reconcile with the current situation: "Only those who learn to fly succeed in making their life as they would like it to be. The others remain in the same place where they found themselves" (31).

Hence, through several carefully scattered informants throughout the text by the writer Mihajlovska-Georgieva (the current situation and the existence of the war raging somewhere in the former spaces of the joint state, the closure of the borders, etc.), she exposes to the reader Breza's great desire for travels and new experiences, and this is exactly the reason for the appearance of Igbal with his miraculous power of flying. Apart from being Breza's

faithful companion through growing up, he is a symbol of the journeys that Breza longs for: "This is for you to burst out of trouble! Ivana travels the world and has even been to Disneyland, and here we are from home to Mlechen, from Mlechen to "Plava" from "Plava" to the stairs in front of the entrance. Here's what we do. I really envy her!" (124). In fact, Ivana's emigration to Kazakhstan, from where Breza will receive letters in which she will read about Ivana's travels, will be in the context of the metaphor of Igbal's flights. Therefore, together with their friend Mila, they will find a way to travel with the help of the geographical atlas: "Then we traveled for a long time with the help of the red lines that we drew from place to place, from city to city, over mountains, seas and oceans. Where have we all been? I used to tell her about Igbal's village and all that I saw and experienced when I was with him on the carpet, but she thought that it was part of our imaginary journey and it never occurred to her that I had actually been there." (126).

Apart from losing Ivana from her life, Breza soon faces another, even bigger and more tragic loss – Mila's death, or rather her suffering in a car accident. Death is a sensitive and difficult issue for almost everyone, or "last taboo" as it is sometimes called. Children today are protected from it and prepared for it in a way that would have been impossible a century ago, but they cannot be completely isolated from it: pets die, grandparents die, and sometimes even parents or siblings or friends die.² Most often, adolescent literature is optimistic, or at least hopeful (England and et., 1983: 123). However, many adolescent novels talk about the unpleasant, brutal, and unhappy reality of life. As a result, the characters in this literature face such difficulties. From those experiences, they can mature and establish new values and a deeper understanding of themselves through the difficult circumstances they are faced with (Owen, 2003: 13). At the moments when Mila is in a coma, many different feelings change in Breza: disbelief, refusal to believe, anger towards everything living around her, despair, sadness, hopelessness, and all that is completely normal. But that is why Igbal, parents, her loved ones are by her side. When it was most difficult for her, as always in such moments, Igbal appeared to comfort her with words about the Eastern belief in the existence of reincarnation: "Mila has already started a long and distant journey. She will never stop traveling and she will never come back... She will live only that you will no longer be able to see her and be with her, but that does not mean that she will cease to exist" (154). Research has shown that adolescents experience the death of a close friend as strongly, tragically, and traumatically as the death of a close family member. Of course, there is a difference in the cause of death, but since it is a matter of young people, whose death is sudden, the adolescent often has a feeling of anger and rage (Corr and et., 2004: 203), as is the case with Breza who is angry even with nature: "Stupid streams, stupid water, and forest, and stupid birds, why do you rejoice, why are you so cheerful, do you know what is happening to my Mila?" My dear, you must not leave me - I begged her over and over again" (153).

The death of a friend can be particularly distressing for adolescents because they feel as if they were immortal – that death is not real. There are many theoretical reasons why losing a friend during adolescence can cause difficulties. One of them is the fact that it is a period when the identity of the adolescent is separated from that of the parents and the family and it is formed in accordance with the peer culture, so in that period when his/her identity is unformed, it is extremely important that the environment (professors, parents) help the adolescent to overcome crises (O'Brien and et., 1991: 431). There are books for children and young people that show death in a mild form, like falling asleep, etc (Pajnić, 2015: 45). But there are also books such as "Igbal, my secret" in which the truth is not hidden from Breza.

² <https://humanism.org.uk/education/parents/books-for-bereaved-children/>, пристапено на 20.10.2016

Only Igbal mitigates the finality and tragedy of death with his comforting words about reincarnation.

In the stage of late childhood or early adolescence, the attachment of adolescents to peers is noticeable, but the attachment to parents prevails, in contrast to the stage of adolescence, when the adolescents strive for greater autonomy in developing awareness of themselves and their identities, so in that period they "distance" themselves from their parents and become attached to their peers (Berndt, 1982: 1447). That is why, during that period, Breza is still close to her mother, who asks her about the existence of Igbal, but her mother claims that she barely knew him. At one point, Breza asked her if she believed that you could fly on a rug, to which her mother replied that after the trip to India, she believed in everything, because people in India thought in a completely different way and did not ask for an explanation for everything. In this way, the author introduces the fantastic into the novel, because the mother does not give her a satisfactory and final answer, but as if she herself is aware that Igbal exists somewhere in the veils of the probable-improbable, the possible-impossible. But the fact that they are not at all surprised by his appearance, his flying on the carpet, his ability to read minds, all this speaks in favor of the novel's wonder/fiction (Todorov, 1987:35).

Breza is also in a dilemma whether to share the secret of Igbal's existence with her best friends. In conversations with her mother on this subject, she would receive the best-intentioned advice: "What would a man be like if he were left with none of his secrets?" It's like having nothing of your own, everything you have in common with someone else. Come to think of it, could you share everything with someone, just everything?... You need to know what to tell, what to confide and what not. Not even to the closest ones." (56). It has been proven that the type of parental interaction has an impact on children's social competence, namely that children whose mothers interact positively with them are more accepted by their peers. The advice that parents give to children in the period of early adolescence is aimed at acquiring abilities that are necessary for social adaptation with peers (McDowell and et., 2003: 55). But at the same time, it is important that parents do not impose their views on young adolescents, that they do not behave too controlling towards them and always leave them the opportunity to choose - to accept a certain advice or not (Poulin, 2012: 437). In the words of Breza's mother, the open communication between daughter-mother/child-parent is visible, but also the mother's understanding of the child's needs and her individuality: "Those mothers who believe that it is so (that mothers are told everything! - are wrong!). They forgot how they treated their mothers when they were children. So let them be the best in the world, anyway, many things are kept quiet in front of mothers, and that is natural. Of course - there are some things that are only entrusted to mothers, some others only to friends and so a selection is made" (56). At the same time, through the example of Breza's brother, an adolescent who is in the process of building his own style and attitudes, the mother has a positive influence on Breza and helps her resolve certain dilemmas: "He wants to be different from others and that is natural at his age. Be different at any cost. In that way, you also like to wear "brand" clothes - she remarked, as if hitting me in the heart. That was one of my big dilemmas. Should I give in and buy Nikes, because I and my friends like them, and the ad is great for them, or should I do like my brother, claim that I don't even want to hear about them and others like them" (102). Gavin and Furman's research showed that often when an adolescent - daughter encounters a problem or dilemma, before resorting to solving it, they consult with their parents more often than with their peers. This may be due to their greater daily communication, their temperaments, etc. (Gavin, Furman, 1996: 375). That means, no

matter how close the adolescent's relationship with peers/friends is, that relationship can never overshadow the adolescent's relationship with parents, i.e., parents remain a strong agent for socialization throughout adolescence (Youniss, Haynie, 1992:59).

The episode with the ring that Breza bought for her mother when she was on vacation in Ohrid is also very important for the mother-daughter relationship. Like all children, she also wanted to bring her mother a souvenir, namely a ring, because her mother wore many rings on her hands: "I could have bought a hundred hair ties with the money I spent on the ring, or barrettes and even a ring and bracelet set for me. But I decided to save, I missed buying ice cream for two days, because the money I received for pocket money was counted down to the penny, just to be able to buy it..." (108). The author gives us an extremely suggestive picture of the child who is full of joy because of the ring she bought, which she keeps under her pillow until she gets home: "Maybe she will take out one of the other rings, not exactly the green stone, but of course she will manage and of course mine will be the most beautiful" (108). Therefore, her disappointment is even more suggestive when she sees that her mother is not wearing the ring, which will hurt her a lot: "You liar, you're just lying to me, you don't like the ring at all, that's why you hid it in the box... I feel I could cry in agony. I don't know if it was more because I caught her lying to me, or because she didn't want to wear my so beautiful ring" (110). Although the mother's explanation is that the ring is precious to her and because of that she kept it for special occasions, in a box where she keeps her most precious things, Breza is not old enough to understand that. She wants to take revenge on her, she wants to make her feel bad too. Then Breza opens her soul and pours out all her pain because of the separations and business trips of her mother: "Whatever happens, let it happen, but I will not leave them alone. Either I'll take them with me, or I won't go either... I'm not small, I understand that this is your job related to going to foreign film festivals, and I'm not complaining, I'm patient, I'm waiting for you to come back, it's hard for me Well, what can I do when I have a mother like that, she has to travel so often on business... Do you know how much that means to me? The other mothers were never away from home for a single day, they are constantly with their children. They are so blessed". (115) Breza said a lot of hard words and in the end she too felt guilty. At the same moment, Igbal interrupted her - he heard everything and tried to explain to Breza that her parents missed them too, which is why he asked her to apologize to her mother. But this argument between mother and daughter led to a change in their mutual relationship on the mother's side: "You don't talk to a mother in this way and in that tone. I allow you a lot, so I am surprised. You should know that there is a difference between a friend and a friend, and a mother and a daughter. And not you, you address me as if you were with your friends, peers. I have to get things right, it can't be like this, I've crossed the line and that's why you're exaggerating" (116).

In some narrative sequences, we see Breza openly criticizing her mother, and both of her parents in general. That criticism will be noticed in several other places in the text, like when she wants to convince her mother not to smoke: "And you, mom, should think twice, take a look at how other mothers behave. They forbid, punish if necessary, control where the children go, who they are with, what they do, and you: "Breza knows herself, she can best decide what is good and what is not for her!" – she imitated her. Well, that is sometimes very difficult for me, you know. – Are you saying that you lack parental strictness, if I understood you correctly?! - Something like that. All my friends complain to their parents from time to time, but I don't. Come on, is that normal? " (149-150).

But Breza does not spare her father from her criticism either. He is less present in the text, and readers know about him from the previous novel "I, the Lightning Boy" that he is a urologist doctor. His presence in the novel "Igbal, my secret" is less, because Breza's interactions with her mother are more frequent: "My mother is always to blame for

everything, especially when one of us children does something wrong. In such cases, my father behaves as if he is a passer-by in the house, or as a disinterested guest who wonders what is happening, because, right, he is not from our family and has no part in the events and relationships in our house. I do not understand why and how it is possible that my mother is guilty of all bad things and my father is innocent. When I was younger, I tortured my head a lot with those thoughts and tried to understand my mother's guilt, but now I understand something else. That my father wants to relieve himself in this way" (72).

Although the appearance of Igbal itself is miraculous, there is another miracle in the novel related to the flying of the magic carpet. Namely, during a family trip with her mother to the "Manaki Brothers" film festival in Bitola, with the help of Igbal, Breza will have an extraordinary experience, thanks to Igbal's magic carpet - she will travel to the past, to her mother's childhood, who was born in Bitola. The trip follows after her mother showed her her native house and they went to the festival with her father, and her brother Vedan fell asleep. Through this journey of Breza in the past, the author captures the image of a different childhood from today's: "The first impression - unfavorable... Everything thin and elongated...blouse and pants for nowhere. Plus, she seems to me somehow "rolled up", as if "lost in space"... I measure her from head to toe and think to myself, by God, I would hardly be friends with you, look what you are like... " (138) (Вуковић. 1979:87).

In the second part of the book, Breza is already a fourteen-year-old girl and is a typical adolescent girl. With the entry into puberty, with the establishment of new company and friends, the more pronounced formation of Breza's identity begins, the approach to peers and their culture. This means spending more time with them, because of which Mavrovo's family weekends are no longer as attractive and interesting as they were when she was younger. Dissatisfaction with one's own appearance is common during puberty, and studies show that both boys and girls are concerned about it, although girls show it more openly. At the same time, they strive for an idealized appearance, so they often look at magazines or read on social media about beauty, clothes, cosmetics, diets, corrective plastic surgeries, etc. Appearance greatly affects their self-esteem (Smolak, 2012). As such, she is completely dissatisfied with her appearance, and the mirror is her worst enemy: "My hair annoys me the most. It's not hair, it's a clearing, thick and wild like a rainforest. If an animal got into it, it would be lost, let alone the teeth of my comb. (...) Lately, the mirror has been my biggest enemy... I stand in front of it for hours, and it, evil and bad, mercilessly slaps me in the face. It's like it enjoys showing me all my flaws... Even if I don't want to, it makes me discover the details I don't like. For example, the legs! " (161-162). Breza is not at all satisfied with her overall appearance (her hair is too lush, her legs are crooked, her ears are flappy), she discovers every day that her body is changing, that her clothes do not fit as well as before, but the most shocking thing is when she notices the pimple: "The first thing I saw in the mirror was an ugly pimple sticking out on my nose. Let's not talk about moles. Every day I discover new and new moles on my face and body. I don't know where they have been so far... " (163).

Breza becomes oversensitive in relations with family members, especially about intimate questions such as: "Do you have a boyfriend?"; "And I have a lot of problems. And they all stem from the same reason: no one alive understands me and doesn't understand me...My father doesn't understand me either. There is no way he understands that he should increase my pocket money, because not only do I no longer manage to save anything as before, but I spend it all by half of the month. I can't explain how it happens, but I know that I'm a living misery.... And my brother, oh, he's another story! It's as if he forgot how annoyed he was when I was younger and I rummaged through his room and drawers, now he's doing the same to me." (164-165).

Breza, for example, thinks that she does not have nice clothes, although she is aware that her friends admire the one she has: "It doesn't matter to me that they are all from abroad, that my friends like them and would like to have them, that they ask me where I bought them, and when I tell them from which city and which country my mother or father brought them, they are delighted" (164); and the fact that teenagers want to look older than they are should not be overlooked, so Breza is also fascinated by her mother's clothes: "When I wear my mother's clothes, well, it's already something quite different. I just need to grow a little more to get them right" (164). Adolescents experience dramatic physiological, psychological, and social changes. Gender attractiveness, individual identity development and social acceptance among peers are of great importance. For adolescents, clothing and physical appearance are closely related to personal development and social acceptance (Littrell and et., 1990: 77). During that period, new friendships appear among adolescents, which are not permanent by their nature, but the already existing ones are also strengthened. Otherwise, for adolescents, their company represents a true sanctity, a group in which they seek confirmation of their own identity, and an assimilation occurs in which adolescents accept the rules, norms, values and language of the company, even if they are contrary to their own. They are constantly comparing themselves to their peers and trying to fit in with others in order to be accepted (Fuček): "The evening was a "madhouse"! We have never had such a good time and we have never met so many new faces.... Sometime after 11 pm I announced that I would be leaving. Macka, Vesna and Tanya joined me, and all the others convinced us to stay longer and that only the kids left so early" (187-189). However, Mihajlovska-Georgieva's heroine remains on her stand and preserves her individuality from the influence of others in the company. In another case, she shows how self-aware she is, when making the decision whether to spend the hot summer in Skopje or in the summer house in Mavrovo: "I wouldn't have thought for a moment about leaving if those evening outings weren't so challenging. Full of laughter, with friendships and conversations, and on top of all that, those eyes of Martin, whom I hardly knew, and who has already entered my mind, those eyes, exactly like the blue eyes of my idol, the artist Leonardo Di Caprio!" (199). It is the older and more experienced brother who will help her solve the dilemma: "My brother helped me without even knowing it. He said to me: You know what the coolest thing is right now? To leave town and let everyone in your company realize how much they will miss you" (199).

The first interest in boys is also manifested, because according to adolescents, the "scariest" thing is not having a boyfriend: "There are other things that eat me up, and one of the most important is the dilemma: should I have a "boyfriend" or not, is it too early or I'll be late if I don't start it soon. Many of my peers have" (175). It is also typical for all adolescents to think about themselves and their place in the world: "I actually often feel confused: am I big or small, what am I, who am I?" I asked myself these questions all the time, and now they bother me more and more" (175).

The newly manifested feelings for the boy Martin will cause Breza to have a guilty conscience: "I felt somehow divided in two: as soon as I thought of Martin's blue eyes and his bright, gentle and slightly baby-like face, with a small feather of blond hair carelessly falling on the forehead, the other Self would immediately see Igbal's dark eyes, deep as night... I was confused and disturbed"; but Igbal's words calm her down: "It's time to stand on the ground for a while. Flying will not escape you. That Martin is a good boy, he just seems shy. You will have to encourage him.... You just need to let your heart speak. If you listen to him a little, you don't need to be afraid of anything. Your heart will just tell you. Listen to him. ...You have to trust me; I will never be far from you... I will be happy because of your happiness, and sad if you are sad and if I fail to comfort you. I am You, Breza, we are One. Remember, remember!" (192-193)

Conclusion

This novel is an exciting adventure for both children and adults. Through the surreal story of Breza and Igbal, intertwined with realistic elements, we learn about fantasies, flying and teenage problems of every young person. Every child dreams of growing up. Every child has its own dreams in which it believes. And the way to achieve them is so simple. Just to believe. Igbal changes Breza's life, even though he is so unrealistic. Igbal represents the girls' first love, excitement, happiness and butterflies in the stomach, innocence in expressing feelings and sharing secrets. Igbal is the best friend, counselor, healer, fulfiller of wishes, a unique secret and no one else, in a period that all adolescents go through, in the most beautiful and trembling stage of their lives, their first love...

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