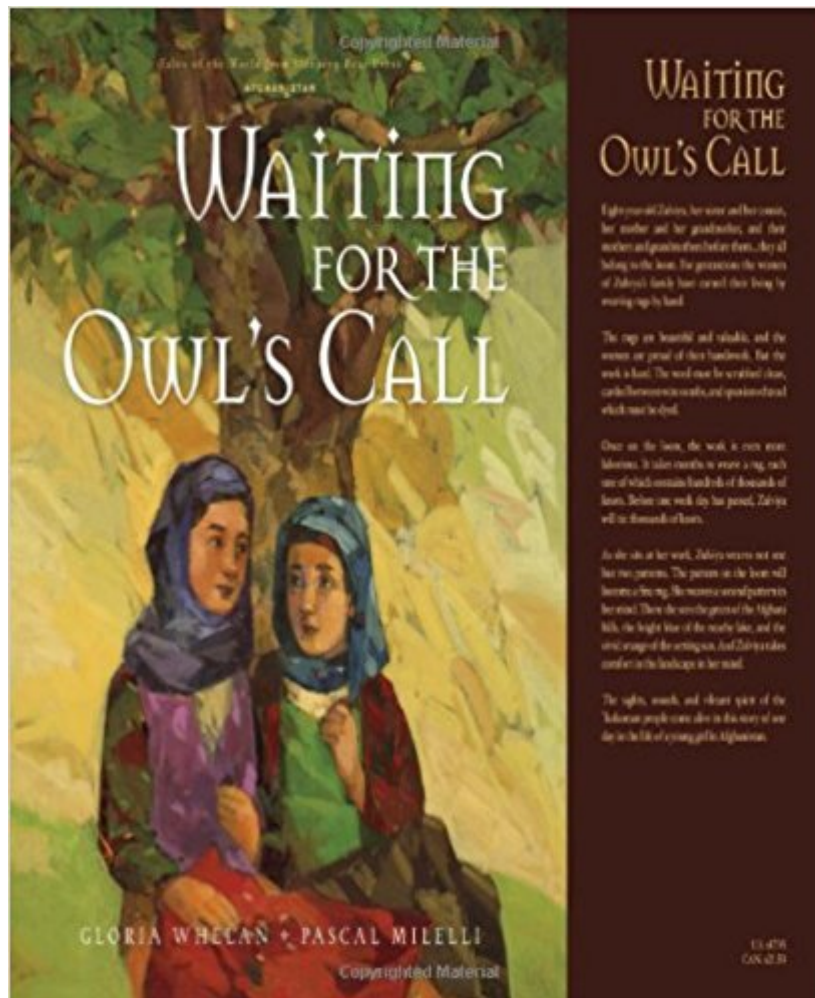


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# Waiting For The Owl's Call (Tales Of The World)



## Synopsis

Eight-year-old Zulviya, her sister and her cousin, her mother and her grandmother... they all belong to the loom. For generations the women of Zulviya's family have earned their living by weaving rugs by hand. The rugs are valuable and the women are proud of their beautiful handiwork. But the work is hard. It takes months to weave a rug; each one contains hundreds of thousands of knots. Before one work day has passed, Zulviya will tie thousands of knots. As she sits at her work, Zulviya weaves not one but two patterns. The pattern on the loom will become a fine rug. She weaves a second pattern in her mind. There she sees the green of the Afghani hills, the bright blue of the nearby lake, and the vivid orange of the setting sun. And Zulviya takes comfort in the landscape in her mind. To find recipes, games, interactives maps and much more for this title visit

[www.discovertheworldbooks.com](http://www.discovertheworldbooks.com)! Gloria Whelan's other picture books in the Tales of the World series are Yuki and the One Thousand Carriers (2008 Society of Illustrators Gold Medal winner) and Yatandou (a Junior Library Guild selection). Ms. Whelan lives in Michigan. Pascal Milelli's illustration clients include Harper's, The Atlantic, and Scribner Books. His picture book, The Art Room, by Susan Vande Griek, received the Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustrator's Award from the Canadian Library Association in 2003. Pascal lives in Vancouver, Canada.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 6 - 9 years

## Customer Reviews

Grade 2 – Eight-year-old Zulviya lives in Afghanistan. She, her sister, and her cousin all join the women and girls of the village in weaving rugs all day. The work is hard on their hands, on their eyes, and on their legs and feet as they tie knots, stare at the loom, and sit for hours working with rough wool. Zulviya weaves her mother's and grandmother's pattern, but "the second pattern I weave in my head. It is all my own." In her daydreams, her patterns are filled with the sights, sounds, and things she likes, such as mulberries, "which would take away our thirst, but we are not allowed to eat them. The juice would stain our fingers." In reality, when her fingers bleed, her mother binds them so the blood does not get on the rug. At lunch, Zulviya and her sister speak of school, but school is a two-day walk from her village. By story's end, Zulviya's back aches, her fingers stumble, and the pattern in her mind is gone. She waits to hear the owl, because its call means that she is finished for that day. This sad, poignant story, accompanied by Milelli's large, evocative paintings, portrays the stolen childhoods of youngsters involved in illegal child labor. An author's note informs readers that many of the beautifully woven rugs sold today are made by child workers like Zulviya. – Mary N. Oluonye, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gloria Whelan is a poet and the award-winning author of many books including *Homeless Bird*, for which she received the National Book Award. She lives with her husband, Joe, in the woods of Northern Michigan. Pascal Milelli's illustration clients include Harper's, The Atlantic, and Scribner books. His picture book, *The Art Room*, by Susan Vande Griek, received the Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustrator's Award from the Canadian Library Association in 200. Pascal lives in Vancouver, Canada.

It's an eye opening book about the life situation of others in other parts of the world. Good illustrations too.

I've read this to my fifth graders each year as we study the unit Freedom. They (and I) love learning about this people group who labor so hard, producing such beauty, but at a great price. The illustrations are lovely, but, even more than that, the characterizations and descriptions capture the lifestyles of these girls and the women in their lives. I thank Gloria Whelan for writing this book and

the entire series of books to instruct all of us on information most of us do not know. A terrific book to own and share!

The previous reviewer gave a good overview of this story. The series would seem to be a wonderful idea: tell about the daily life of a child in a particular culture as expressed by the child's feelings. As mentioned, the author notes an organization which seeks to "end illegal child labor...and offer educational opportunities to the children of South Asia. The child's voice makes clear that she sees and appreciates all the care and beauty of her family and community. The illustrations are lovely: bright colors that are softly rendered. Who is the best audience for this story, one of longing for the freedoms of childhood, and the promise of school? I believe older children (perhaps especially girls) who have become aware of the inequities of experience for children in the world. This is a book to be read with or by an adult who is ready with a both an appreciation of the child's life and an explanation of why this delightful young girl has such a difficult daily life with little hope for her future. She says, "...the shadow of the loom is the largest shadow of all. It hovers over us like a dark ghost..." and, "...my fingers bleed after making many knots..... I don't cry but my mother does..." I could imagine a 10 year-old reader wanting to do something to help such children and an adult ready to help with a plan would be the best reader. I give it 4 stars, but it is a book for adult responsibility.

Zulviya, a young Turkoman child living in Afghanistan, works all day long with her sister and cousin at the loom, weaving rugs by hand. They begin early in the morning, shortly after the muezzin's call to prayer, and do not finish until dusk when they hear the call of the owl. The work, which involves tying thousands of knots in a single day, is tedious and hard; it causes Zulviya's back to ache and her fingers to bleed. To keep her mind occupied, Zulviya imagines creating her own pattern full of the colors and symbols of her homeland. She also allows for the sliver of hope of attending school. This book uses poetic text and vibrant illustrations to communicate the very real problem of child labor in Asia's rug making industry. The afterword informs the reader of a nongovernmental organization named RugMark that inspects rug production sites, issues certification labels for rugs made without child labor, and helps to rehabilitate child workers and send them to school. Readers will gain a deeper appreciation of Afghanistan's culture and the importance of education in meeting the needs of its children.

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