



Educational stories for children

# OUR COLORFUL SCHOOL PAGEANT



By

**Omar Elsway**

Translated by  
**Jennifer Peterson**

Illustrations by  
**Fayza Nawwar**

العبيكان  
Abëkan



“My dear sweethearts,” said the teacher, “the school year is coming to an end, and we need to think about what we’ll do in this year’s pageant. Think with me, what should we do?”



“We could do a play that expresses the love and friendship uniting us despite our coming from so many different countries,” said Youssef.



“We did that in last year’s pageant,” the teacher said. “We want something new that allows each of us to express ourselves and to represent our countries in a remarkable way that delights the audience.”



“I have an idea!” Thekra said. “Every country has its own special food. Students from each country can prepare their national specialties, and...”



The teacher cut her off. “We’ve also done that in previous years. Repetition is not a good thing; we want something new.” Thekra replied, “Allow me to finish explaining my idea.”



“I’m sorry I interrupted you,” the teacher said. Thekra continued, “It’s okay, Miss. I meant to say that each group could offer their food while wearing their national costume.”



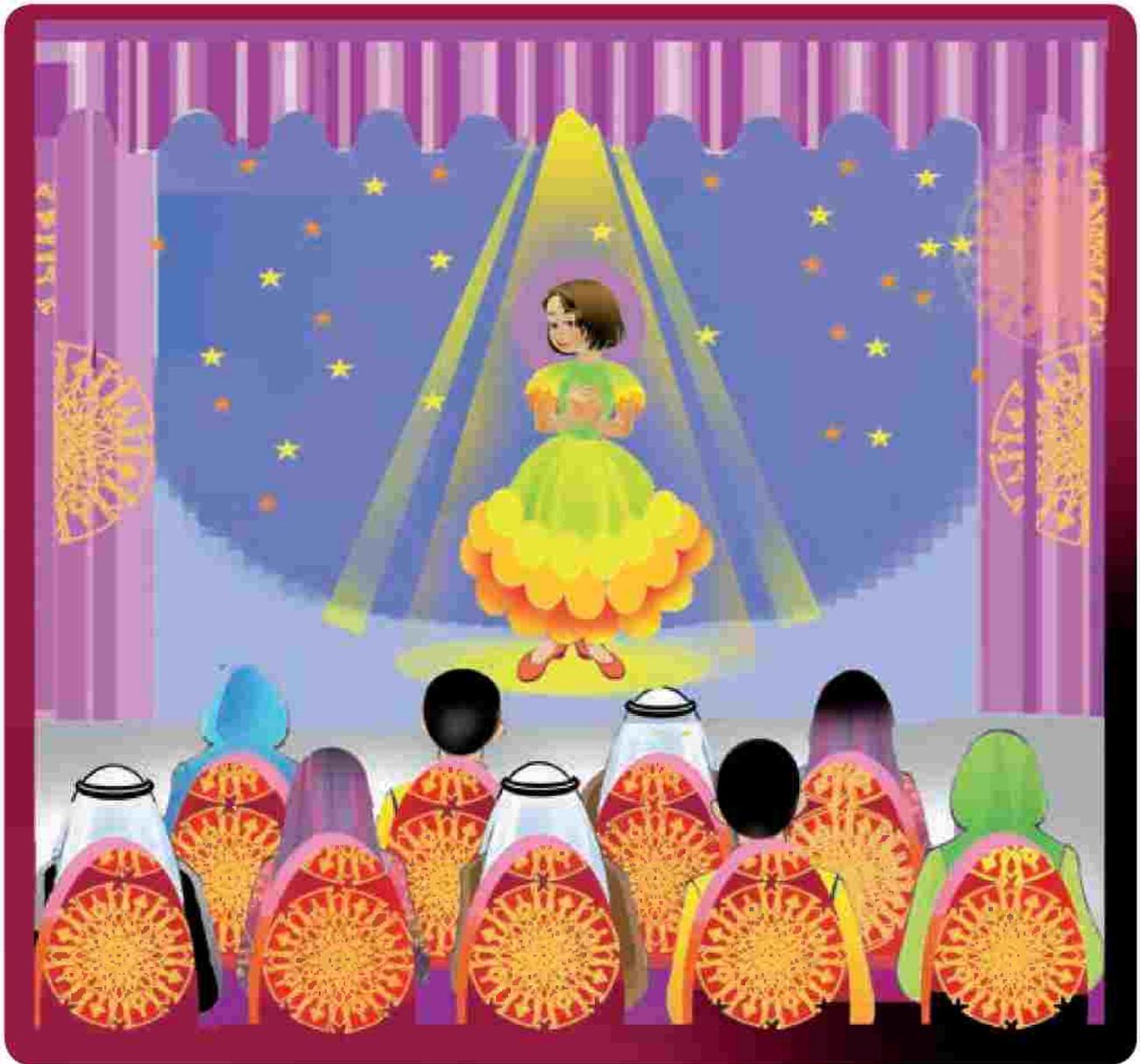
The teacher clapped her hands and cried, “Excellent, Thekra! National costume, that’s what’s new! We’ll put on a show of national costumes, and our pageant will be marvelous!”



The students were delighted with this lovely idea. Each of them began imagining themselves wearing their national costume, and returned home in mirthful moods to tell their families.



The day of the pageant, the school was decorated with flowers and pictures and festive ornamentation. The students' parents came and sat in the theatre waiting for the pageant to begin.



And suddenly, the lights dimmed. The curtain opened, and there stood Thekra all alone in the spotlight. She was wearing a colorful outfit that likened her to a butterfly.



Thekra smiled and said, “Parents, those dearest to us, the light of our lives, welcome to our school. Now let the show begin!” Everyone applauded enthusiastically.



Thekra left the stage, and on came Raja and Soti in beautiful Indian dress. Everyone applauded enthusiastically, especially when Raja saluted them with his turban.



They were followed by Isa and Kiro in Japanese costume with its distinctive colors and designs. They took short, rapid steps, to which everyone applauded.



Then the Chis took the stage in marvelous Chinese dress their people have been wearing for thousands of years. The audience was duly impressed.



They were followed by Khalid and Laila in traditional Egyptian garb their grandfathers and grandmothers wore, and which many in the countryside continue to wear to this day.



Then entered Elias and Fatima in stunning, colorful Sudanese dress that many still proudly wear today. The audience applauded in delight.



Then came Aisha and Habib in distinctive Moroccan garb with gold trim and colorful embroidery. Moroccans still wear this dress, especially on holidays and for special occasions.



They were followed by Amena and Ghassan in beautiful Palestinian dress that many still proudly wear today. The audience applauded with fervor.



Then came Sarah and John in distinctive, brightly colored Scottish costume. John wore the Scot's kilt, which Scottish men still wear on special occasions and holidays.



They were followed by Soledad and Pablo wearing Mexican garb in beautiful colors and with lovely ornamentation. Everyone was delighted and gave a hearty applause.



In the grand finale, Thekra came onto the stage with her brother Youssef wearing distinctive Gulf dress. They saluted the guests and then Thekra gestured to the rest of the students to return to the stage.



All the participating students returned to the stage and saluted the audience in their magnificent costumes. They were given a heartfelt standing ovation.



“Parents, our dear guests, the pageant has come to a close,” announced Thekra. “Thank you for your attendance; we hope that we have pleased you.”