



Educational stories for children

ME AND MY BROTHER YOUSEF



By

Omar Elsayy

Translated by
Jennifer Peterson

Illustrations by
Fayza Nawwar

أبيكان
Abëkan



How wonderful!

My mother gave birth.

My mother had a baby.

She brought me a little brother!



His fingers are tiny. His nose is tiny.

His two eyes are tiny. His mouth is tiny.



Everything about him is so so tiny.
Except for his crying and screaming.
That's so so so big!



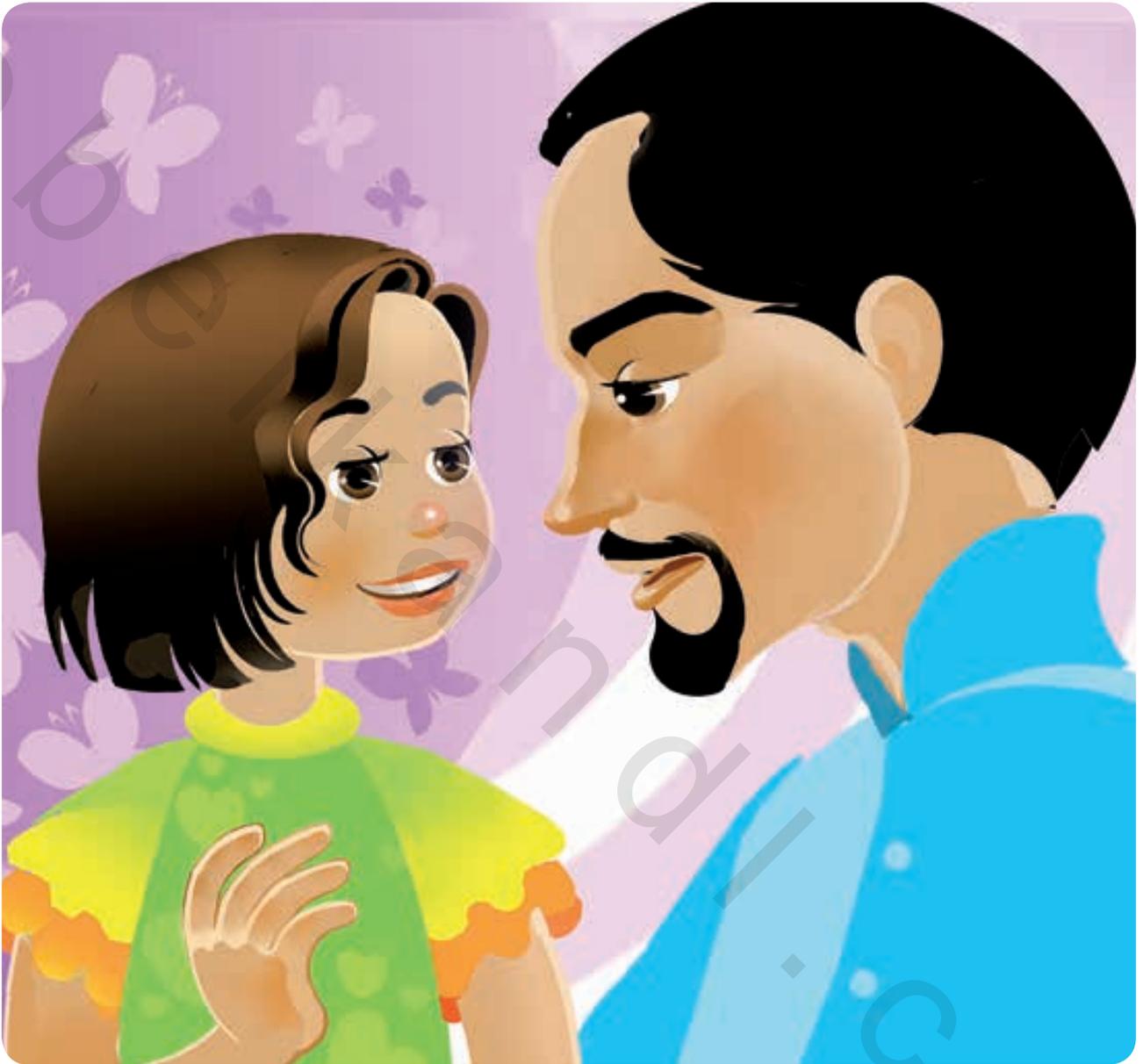
My mother gave birth to him in hospital.

When she brought him home, she also brought me wonderful gifts.



—Thank you, Mommy, for these gifts!

—Your brother, this beautiful little boy, chose them for you.



Oh my! I'm thrilled with my brother, for he loves me.

I'm thrilled with him, for he's a beautiful little boy.



—What should we name him, Thikra?

—Let's name him Yousef, Daddy.



—Why Yousef?

—Because he's beautiful, and the Prophet Yousef, peace be upon him, was the most beautiful person of all.



—Who told you that?

—The teacher told us, Daddy.



“He truly is a beautiful little boy, for he resembles you,” my father told me. “But you’re more beautiful than he is, Thikra.”

“No, Daddy, he’s more beautiful than I am,” I said.



My mother hugged me and kissed me and said, “No, you’re more beautiful, sweetheart, and you’re his big sister!”



“He’ll sleep in my room and I’ll take care of him and teach him,” I said.
My mother said, “And he’ll love you, and listen to everything you say.”



Oh my! I'm so happy! My brother Yousef is with me in my room. He's asleep in his tiny bed I chose for him, wearing the pink clothes I chose for him.



He looks at me and smiles. I stroke his palm and he grabs on to my finger with all his strength.



He won't let go; he wants me to stay beside him. But I want a little distance.



I want to play with the doll he chose for me when he was still in my mother's belly.



I started tugging my finger from Yousef's grasp. I sensed he was angry, but I was angry too. I kept tugging until I pulled it free.



At that very moment, Yousef screamed loudly as though he'd been hurt!
I gently rocked his bed, like my mother does, but he wouldn't quiet down.



I put his pacifier in his mouth, like my mother does, but he refused it. Yousef kept crying, his screams growing louder.



I couldn't control myself, and I started crying too. My sobs grew louder until I started to scream alongside Yousef. I screamed, and Yousef screamed.



My mother came running. “Thank God you’re okay, Thikra. Thank God you’re okay, Yousef,” she said. But she picked Yousef up and left me.



My father rushed in. He picked me up and held me in his arms and kissed me. He lovingly patted my back until I calmed down. My mother nursed Yousef and he calmed down and fell silent.



I love my father. I love my brother. I love my mother. But now I feel that my mother is more concerned with my brother than with me! Does she love him more than me?