



MEHRDAD ZAERI: PRINCESS SHARIFA AND BRAVE WALTER

TWO ANCIENT STORIES RETOLD ANEW



Title: Prinzessin Sharifa und der mutige Walter

Illustrations: Mehrdad Zaeri
Text: Anne Richter

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Picture book, 40 pages
Ages 5 and up

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SYNOPSIS

Much is different in this book. It can be read from right to left, or from left to right, in German or in Arabic. Two ancient stories from the Arab and from the Western worlds meet in the middle: the story of Sharifa, the fearless princess, and that of Walter, Wilhelm Tell's son.

Intrepid Sharifa wants to see the country that hasn't got any women. In a fit of anger King Hamed bin Bathara, the ruler of a neighbouring kingdom, banned all women – except for his mother – from the country. Sharifa disguises herself as prince Sharif and risks her life to pay a visit to the kingdom of men. The king mistrusts the beautiful visitor. In an attempt to find out his guest's secret he sets her three tasks. But brave and clever Sharifa knows how to deal with them.

The legend of Wilhelm Tell, in turn, is well-known to us. But what happens when the quintessential European story about bravery and freedom is read and interpreted in today's Egypt? The emphasis shifts, and son Walter takes centre stage. Mehrdad Zaeri has illustrated the two adaptations, and the result is a children's book which playfully overcomes cultural barriers, and enables us to see old stories in a new light. A symbolic bouquet of pictures full of impishness and poetry.



THE ILLUSTRATOR



Mehrdad Zaeri-Esfahani was born in Isfahan in Iran in 1970. When he was 14 his family first emigrated to Turkey, and then to Germany. After completing his schooling he decided to become an artist. Today he lives in Mannheim in Germany with his wife, and works as a freelance artist. Zaeri has already illustrated numerous books for adults. This was his first book for children, more followed since, for example „A big friend“, published by Baobab Books in 2015

THE AUTHOR

Anne Richter studied drama, Nordic studies and comparative literature in Munich in Germany. She was a dramaturge at the Volkstheater Rostock, at the Erfurt theatre and at the Schnawwl, the children's and youth's theatre of the Nationaltheater Mannheim. She then worked as a journalist writing about theatre and literature for children and youths. Richter lived in Shanghai from 2002 to 2005. She returned to the Schnawwl in Mannheim as a dramaturge in 2009.



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