

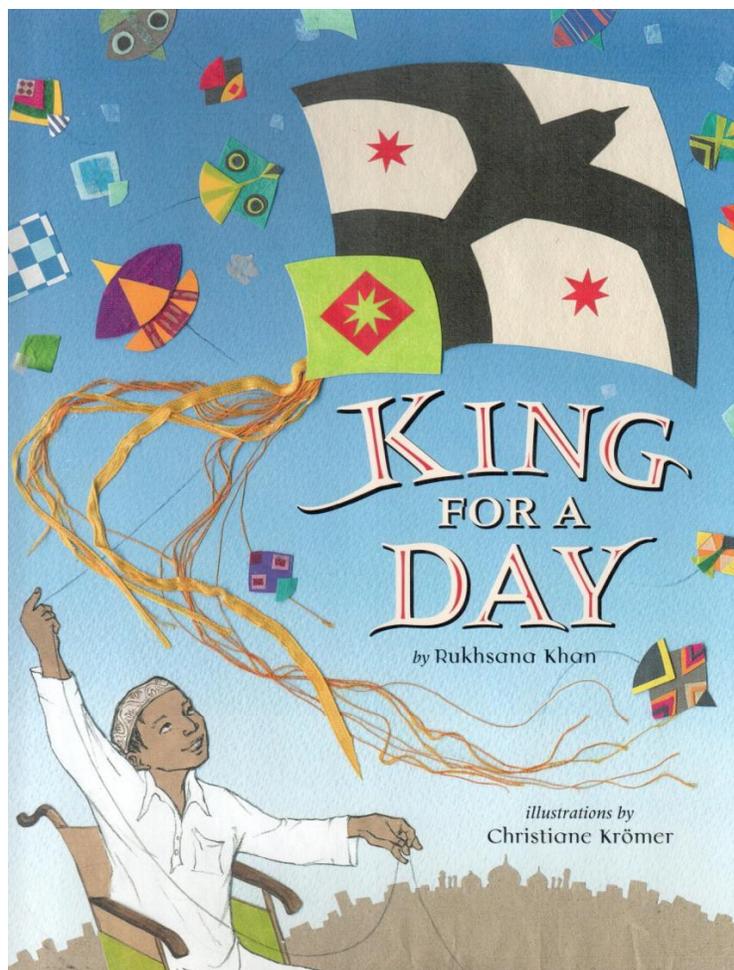
# *King for a Day*

## **Teacher's Guide for Grades K - 3**

### **With Student Activity Sheets**

by Rukhsana Khan

[www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com)



## About Rukhsana Khan

Rukhsana has been writing seriously since 1989. Currently she has twelve books published, several of which have been nominated and/or won awards. She is an accomplished storyteller and has performed at numerous festivals. For more information on Rukhsana and her books please visit her website:

[www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com)



Rukhsana was born in Lahore, Pakistan and immigrated to Canada, with her family, at the age of three. She began by writing for community magazines and went on to write songs and stories for the Adam's World children's videos. Rukhsana is a member of SCBWI, The Writers Union of Canada and Storytelling Toronto. She lives in Toronto with her husband and family.

### Books by Rukhsana:

*King for a Day*

*Big Red Lollipop*

*Wanting Mor*

*A New Life*

*Many Windows*

*Silly Chicken*

*Ruler of the Courtyard*

*The Roses in My Carpets*

*Muslim Child*

*King of the Skies*

*Bedtime Ba-a-a-lk*

*Dahling if You Luv Me Would You Please Please Smile*

To see the video book talk/tutorials for *King for a Day* and other titles, check out [Rukhsana's Youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/user/MsRukhsanaKhan)  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MsRukhsanaKhan>



The following curriculum applications are fulfilled by the discussion topics and activities outlined in this teacher's guide:

Legend	
 writing applications	 character applications
 visual art applications	 math applications
 drama applications	 Social Studies

For insights into the creation of this book, read the interview between the author Rukhsana Khan and the illustrator Christiane Kromer in Appendix 1

## Discussion Topics before reading the book

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

### Grades K - 3:

Examine the cover of *King for a Day*.

What do you notice?

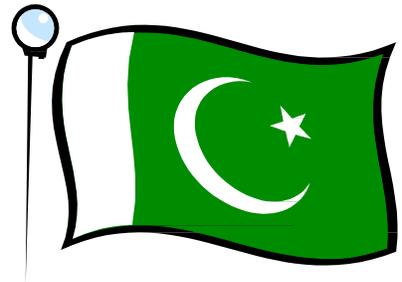
What kind of clothes is the boy on the cover wearing? What kind of hat?

Do you see any unusual buildings in the background that make you think this story is set in another country?

Where do you think the story is set?

One of the kites on the cover is bigger than the others. What sort of animal do you see on the big kite?

Do you think this big kite is going to be important in the story?



Which of the kites is your favorite?

What kind of chair is the boy sitting in?

What does that tell you about the boy?

Why do you think the book is called *King for a Day*?

How would you feel if you were king for a day?

What kinds of things would you do?

How would you behave towards other people?



Have you ever flown a kite?

What did it feel like?

Go to [Teachingbooks.com](http://Teachingbooks.com) and search Rukhsana Khan's *King for a Day*. You will find an audio recording of the author speaking about the inspiration for this story. Share it with the class.

### Explore the Setting and Basant:

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7 and 8)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Find Pakistan and then Lahore on a map.



Read the information piece at the back of the book. Discuss the meaning of any unusual words.

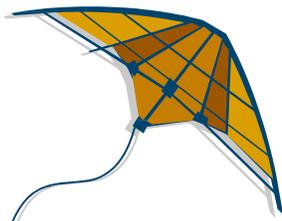
Basant is a spring festival. What other spring festivals can you name?

The following books describe kite flying and kite festivals in other cultures. Discuss what makes the festivals in these books the same as Basant and what makes them different.

*Kite Flying* by Grace Lin

*The Emperor and the Kite* by Jane Yolen

*The Tiny Kite of Eddie Wing* by Maxine Trottier



## Discussion Topics and Activities after reading the book:



### Discussion Topics

#### Grades K - 3:

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3 and  
Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- Why do you think Malik only made one kite?
- Why is the day of Basant so important to Malik?
- Describe the steps you would take to build a kite to compete with his at next year's Basant celebration.
- Imagine if the Bully had won the kite battle with Malik? What would Malik have done?
- How would you feel if you were Malik?
- Predict what the Bully will say to Malik the next time he sees him.
- What do you think will happen next year at the celebration of Basant?
- In the story, Malik says: "Because it is so big, Goliath is slow." Are big kites always slower? Why do you think that is true?
- In your own words define these words: Basant, downwind, 'currents of air', 'bird of prey'.
- What do you think are the rules of Basant? What happens if you cut another kite string?
- Why do you think Malik doesn't go downstairs with his brother and sister right away? Why does he say, "I want to make my day last a little longer."?
- Do you think that Malik will still be a 'king' the next day?
- Why did Malik drop the Goliath kite off the roof so the little girl could have it?
- Do you think that was a good idea?
- How do you think the Bully would feel if he knew that his Goliath kite was given to the girl he pushed down?
- At the end of the story Malik says, "My day is done. I am no longer king of Basant." Do you think Malik minds going back to being 'normal'? Would you?



## Additional Discussion Topics

### Grades 2 – 3:

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1 and 3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

On a deeper level, this story is a moment in Malik’s life that he has been preparing for and that will affect the rest of his life.

The story doesn’t occur within a vacuum. There is a history between Malik and the Bully that Malik hints at.

During the course of our lives, each one of us will probably have a little ‘realm’ where we are king or queen. Learning some of the traits that make Malik such a good ‘king’ could help us in our dealings with those we ‘rule’. Malik displays many characteristics that a good ‘king’ might have.

Some of the traits that Malik displays:

#### **Preparation:**

Malik has worked hard and he gets up early on the day of Basant.

#### **Confidence:**

Malik has put a lot of thought into the design of his kite, so even though there’s only one kite, he’s confident it will be ‘enough’.

#### **Teamwork:**

He enlists his brother and sister to help him.

#### **Empathy:**

He can tell his sister’s feelings are hurt by the Bully’s mean words.



#### **Strategy:**

He has a plan. He positions his brother downwind keeps his sister close.

■

**Skill:**

By his proficiency, it's obvious Malik has been practicing and studying how to best fight the bully's kite.

**Restraint:**

Even after he has beaten the Bully, Malik restrains himself from taunting or calling him names.

**Co-operation:**

The siblings cooperate all through the day.

**Mercy/Justice:**

When Malik sees the little girl in the alleyway being abused, he drops the Bully's kite down in an act of charity and justice. Then he hides so his gift is anonymous.

Guided discussion: As a class, explore some of these traits, and describe incidents in your own life when you too may have displayed them.

**K- 3 Activities:**

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4)

Find some Basant or Pakistani music from the internet for example:

<http://www.flixya.com/video/4779393/Top-Basant-Song-> In a circle, pretend you are a kite flying up in the air swooping and diving. Try not to bump into anyone.



On pg. 9, color the picture of the kite and design it so that it would best represent you.



In pairs, act out the entire story told in *King for a Day*.



Using the first page, tap out the rhythm of the words as the teacher reads them.

The girl in the alley never says a word yet we know how she feels. Pretend you are her and write a story of what happened when you went home to tell your mother.



## Grades 2 – 3 Activities

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4 and 6)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 2 and 3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4)

Read the interview between the author and the illustrator in the appendix. Create a writers' theater: Copy and paste appropriate excerpts to create a script. Have two student volunteers read aloud as if they're the author and illustrator discussing the book.



Create a found poem: Read the story out loud as the students jot down any words that stand out to them. Compose and edit the found words into a poem. Recite them out loud in front of the class.



Using bamboo and tissue paper, design a kite for height and speed. Why do the big bulky

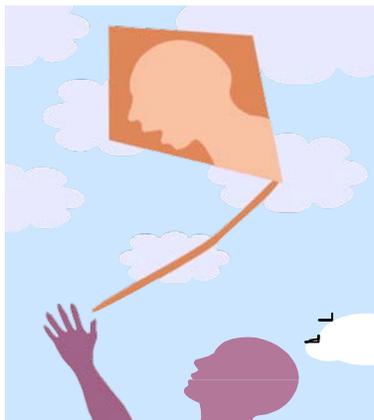


kites move slower than the small stream-lined kites?

As you reread the story, write down all the feelings that each person would have felt throughout the tale. Example : Girl on street: disappointment, sadness, surprise, joy, excitement.



This story is about a boy with one disability and one amazing ability. Make a graph for the class. List everyone's disabilities and abilities. ie. Who can skip rope, who can ride a bike, who can tie their shoes, who can whistle, who can snap their fingers. This will show that just like the boy in the story there are some things we can do and some things we can't do—we each have our own abilities and disabilities.



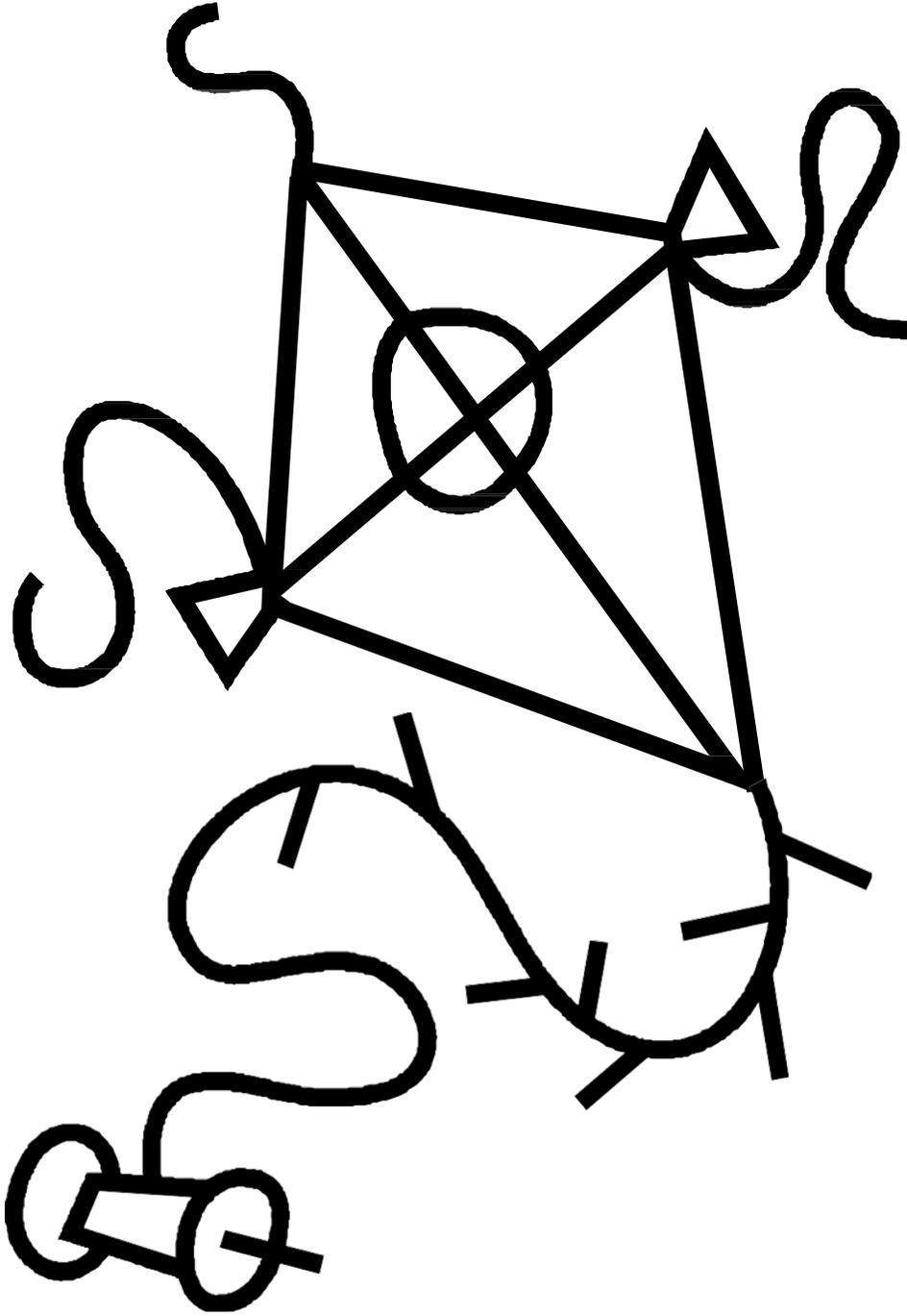
Draw a silhouette of yourself on a kite shape. On the front write all the things you can do. On the back write things you wish you could do. Hang the kites in the classroom for your own Basant.



**Student Activity Sheet**

**Grades K – 3**

**Colour the Kite for Basant!**





## Student Activity Sheet

### Grades 2 – 3



1. Who are the major characters in the story?

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2. Why is the day of Basant so important to the boy?

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3. Describe how his sister and brother help Malik with the kites.

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4. Does the bully's kite match the bully? Does Malik's kite match him too?

Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

-

5. Who is the nicest to each other: Malik to his sister, Malik to his brother, or the other way around? Why?

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Other Resources:

*The Kite Making Handbook* (2004) compiled by Rossella Guerra, Giuseppe Ferlenga

*The Kite Book : all the know-how you need to fly a kite* (2007) by Rosanne Cobb

*Kites: Flying Skills and Techniques, from Basic Toys to Sport Kites* (2007) by Rosanne

Cobb

*Kites in History, in Teaching, and in Therapy* (2009) by Jose Fadul. Lulu Press

*The Kite Fighters* by Linda Sue Park

*The Kite Festival* by Leyla Torres



## Appendix 1: Christiane Kromer interview

[www.christianekromer.com](http://www.christianekromer.com)

How the art for KING FOR A DAY came to be  
This interview was conducted by author Rukhsana Khan



RK: How did you get the inspiration for the illustrations?

CK: At the very beginning, when I had read the manuscript but was still waiting for the finished version I visited an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art called Wonder of the Age: Master Painters of India 1100-1900. I came out transformed. I felt such a burst of color inside of me, such artistic possibility, such a surge of energy. Next I found out that Lahore, where your story takes place, was a major city of the Mughals! That's when I knew: This is it! I have to do the whole book in Mughal miniature style!

At that time, I still knew very little about Pakistan. I once had a fantastic Pakistani roommate but realized with regret that I've asked her way too few questions about her whereabouts. I knew about Pakistan and India being separated, I'd seen my fill of Bollywood movies about that subject, but I didn't know a lot about the actual geography. Before I was offered to illustrate your story I didn't know that Lahore even existed. And I didn't know that culturally India and Pakistan were so close.

But the more research I did, the more I felt that I virtually lived in Lahore. When I really started to catch fire was when I found out about the existence of the beautiful old city of Lahore, the Walled City. There were narrow alleys that were literally woven together with electrical wires, there were goats, bicycles, skinny cats, hairdressers discussing politics on the doorsteps, children playing, cracks in the walls of ancient Mughal facades, walls that were covered with flyers in beautiful Urdu calligraphy... I could only imagine the smells and sounds of it... and I began to make my virtual home there. Now I knew exactly where the kids in the book should live!



Eventually, I even downloaded maps of the Walled City and decided where our kids' roof would have to be so they'd have a good view of Badshahi Mosque, the beautiful Mughal style landmark of Lahore that resembles the Taj Mahal. Without ever having physically been there, I became a little bit of a—virtual patriotll.

RK: How did you start designing the book?

CK: My very first impression, prior to the Mughal exhibit,

hadn't been very good. I had done research on youtube and I was really put off, because what I found when I typed in —basantll were only grainy amateur videos of macho men on roofs. No woman in sight! Full of cynicism I thought, 'That's not a national holiday, it's a men's holiday.' At the same time I knew that when a project comes to me, it comes from a higher source. It is an offer to make visible deep humanness, its an offer to go on an intense, work-filled joyride. And so I just knew that I'm going to transform it into something beautiful.

Finally I got the manuscript I could work with. I did pencil sketches, and the publisher and I discussed many changes before I could, at last, rummage through my boxes full of colorful papers for the actual artwork. I ended up not working in the Mughal miniature style but in my old collage style that I had developed in my previous books. However, I made sure that, like in the miniature paintings, the Mughal style arches of Lahore are like a red thread that leads through the whole book, beginning with the title and even the dedication-page. And on one page, I drew many little children who are catching kites on a tan-colored Indian paper, just like the Mughal miniatures.

Today's cityscape of Lahore seems to be pretty beige, but since the story takes place during a joyous festivity, I wanted there to be a feast of color on every page, not just the culmination page where all the kites are in the sky. Suddenly I got a great idea: I went out and bought fabric swatches with gorgeous textures and patterns in the Indian and Pakistani fabric stores around 39th Street in Manhattan.



Now the real ecstasy began. My workspace turned into a colorful landscape of papers, fabrics, photos of Pakistani street scenes, cutout shapes of children I had drawn, inkpots, brushes, pencils... and my ever-present teapot. No wall, no surface was there that didn't have anything Pakistani or silken or satin on it. In the middle was always my illustration board on which it would all assemble. There, tiny bits of paper pieces would be endlessly pushed around until they found their perfect spot. I'm sorry to say that this is all that got published, and not the colorful mess around it as well!

For me though, an illustration stands or falls with whether the faces of the people on it are beautiful. If they are not I'm not satisfied with the whole page, no matter how gorgeous the colors. The faces can be the hardest part, and the hardest to control. They seem to have a life of their own; they have true personalities, and it is up to them if they want to

appear at my pencil's tip or not. Sometimes they simply seem to fall on the paper by themselves and look great right away, and on other days I can draw the same face over and over a hundred times, and each time again it looks like a grimace. That is illustrator hell!

When I worked on *Anh's Anger* I had very little time. So without doing any pencil sketches, I jumped right into the finals. That's where the book got its slammed-together, lively look. But *King for a Day* became a very detailed work because it was based on very detailed pencil sketches. It was meticulously planned.

RK: So did you really grow from this process?

CK: I did.

RK: In what ways did you grow?

CK: I grew a lot in communicating with the editor and art director. I've never been as authentic in my professional communication, talking about what is going on in me internally during the artistic process. And when we were discussing changes I was really speaking from the heart. I learned to trust that if I do that, good things will happen. All that good stuff will go into the book, and you can feel it when you hold it in your hands. I live in New York, and since 9/11 and then Hurricane Sandy (during which I worked on this book), my perception of life completely changed: I realized that life can be over at any minute, so you have to do what is important in your life NOW, or it might be too late. Every book could be my last. So it has to become good! I have to risk everything - making myself vulnerable, being true to myself, fighting for my ideas. And I know that insisting on my vision of how I want the illustrations to look is not an expression of my egotistic willfulness, but it means to fully accept my responsibility for them. It means to enable this beautiful vision I see —somewhere up there to really come through me and turn into reality, radiate out into the world as a gift to everyone. If I don't stand up for my vision it feels as if life would have been in vain. It's just that intense.

At the very beginning when I did research about Pakistan, before I had discovered Mughal miniature painting and the beauty of the Walled City of Lahore, I had found many disconcerting things. Apart from the macho men on the roofs, I came across a lot of images of violence. But even then I knew, love, vitality and plain human goodness just have to be there somewhere. There is no way it cannot be. I just had to find it, trust that it is there, connect to it, and if it all starts in my own heart. So I was trying to find a sacred space within myself from which I could work, out of which I could create beauty. And then, there it was: In my inner landscape appeared a market place inside of a tall Mughal style building. Rays of light from high-up windows fell silently upon everything. It was a casual, every-day place, not a mosque, not a religious place, and yet it felt sacred, because I realized, only good people, or the highest part of people could go there. Everyone moved in peacefulness and calm. There were young people, old people, women, men, children, donkeys, pigeons, sacks of grain and straw. There were wonderful, yet every-day smells: the scent of burned wood, rosewater, donkey dung. And

this turned into the first illustration I did.

There was no mention in the manuscript about this market scene, but it felt so natural to include it. Half way done, I suddenly expected that the editor would want me to take it out, but it seemed to work well.

In a previous version of the back matter you not only wrote about the food and the festivities around basant, but that you were standing on the roof and eating an orange, so I included a lot of oranges in the illustrations, and I could just imagine the smell of orange blossoms all over Lahore!

That's why there's also an orange vendor.



1 The orange vendor

RK: Oh that's hilarious! No wonder there's such a tinge of orange through the illustrations! I loved that first illustration. You start on the ground and get to the roof! You're going up!

RK: How many books have you illustrated?

CK: This is my sixth book.

RK: Can you name the other books?

CK: The very first book I did was a West African tale called *The Treehouse Children*, published by Simon & Schuster in 1994

Then came *Flower Girl Butterflies*, published by Harper Collins.

The third book was for a Japanese religion called Tenrikyo and was published by Tenri Cultural Institute. The book's title is *God the Parent's Blessings*.



RK: So did you get to go to Japan?

CK: Three times, and the third time they invited me in appreciation of the art I did for the book.

Then, the fourth book was *Anh's Anger*, published by Plum Blossom Press, the children's book imprint of Parallax Press. This is the Buddhist publisher that publishes the books of Vietnamese Zen teacher Thich Nhat Hanh. *Anh's Anger* is a story that follows his teachings.

The fifth book was *Steps and Stones*, the second book in the *Anh's Anger* series, in which the boy Anh goes on walking meditation with his —friendll, the Anger.

And now, there is *King for a Day*. It has been a work of two years.

RK: Well I think you've done a fabulous job on *King for a Day*! And it's been such a pleasure getting to know you Christiane and know more about your creative process!

CK: And thank you, Rukhsana, for writing such a wonderful story! Because of it, my vision of the world has expanded. And without it, I would have never known about the oranges in Lahore!



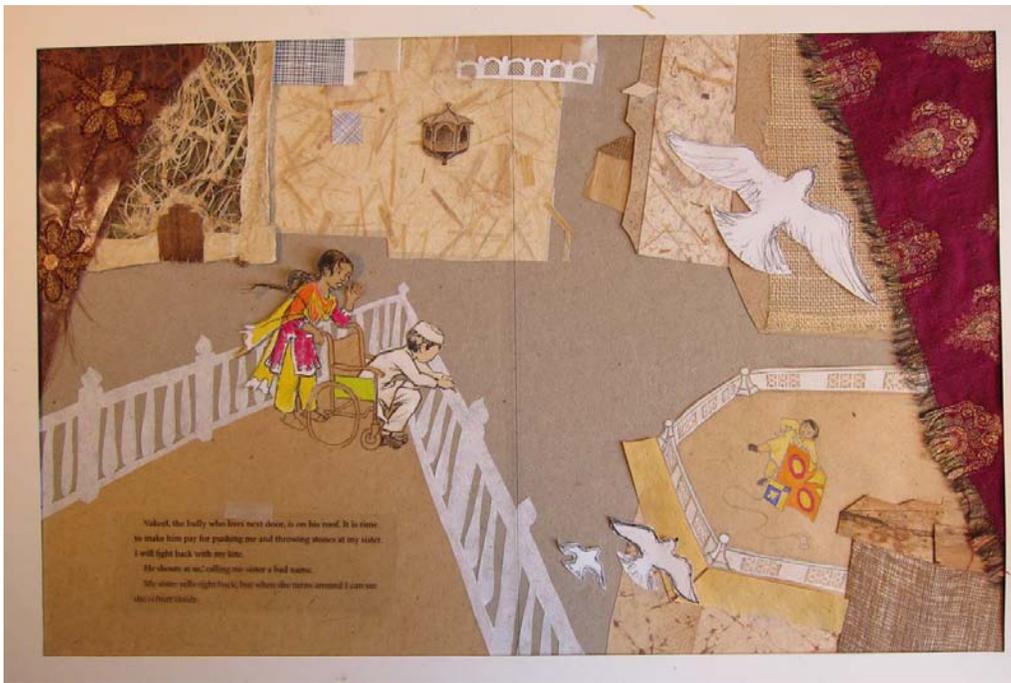
a developing illustration

**The Evolution of one of Christiane's Illustrations:**



**The beginning**





Ta Da! Done!