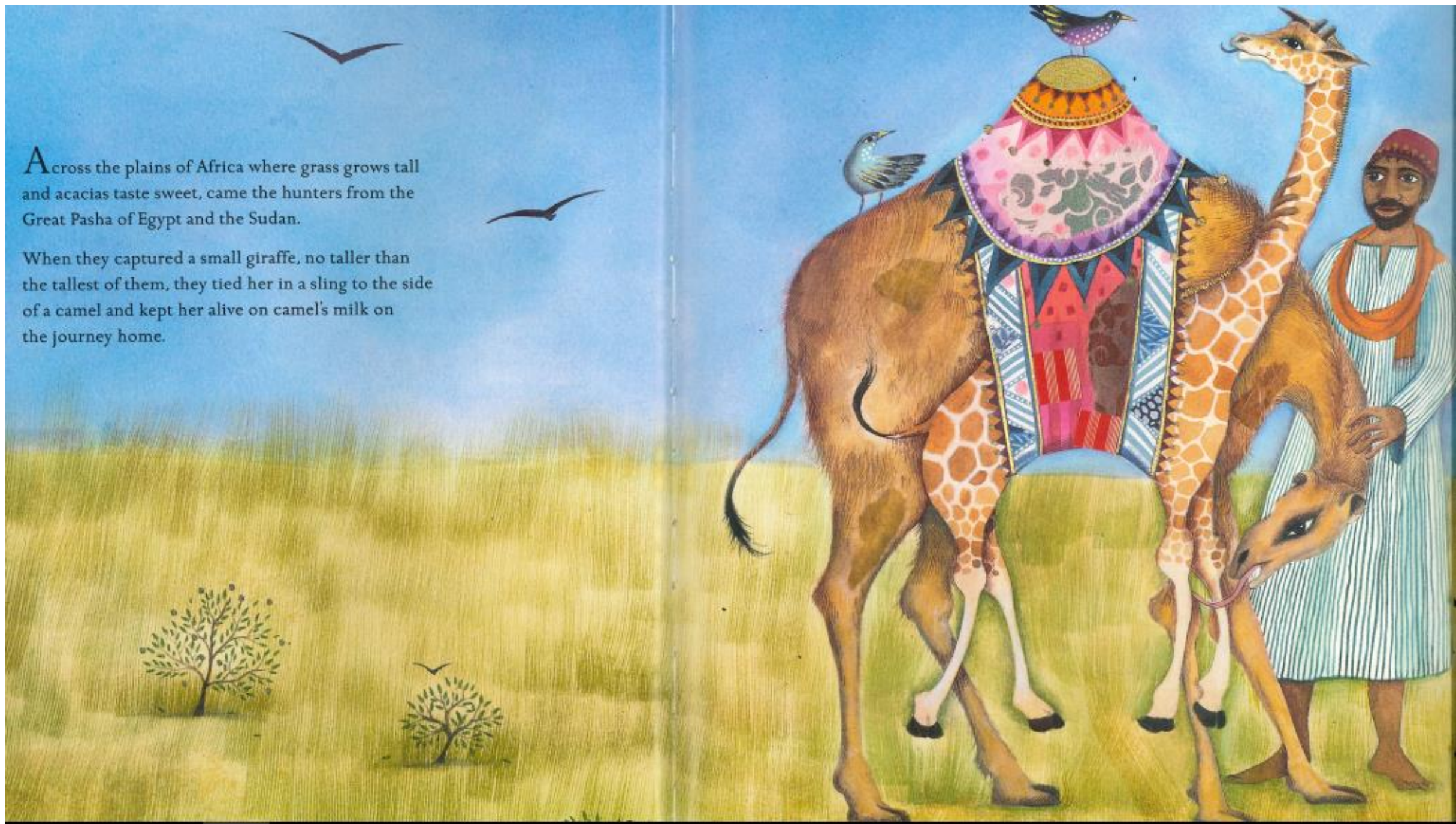


Across the plains of Africa where grass grows tall and acacias taste sweet, came the hunters from the Great Pasha of Egypt and the Sudan.

When they captured a small giraffe, no taller than the tallest of them, they tied her in a sling to the side of a camel and kept her alive on camel's milk on the journey home.



The Pasha was delighted.

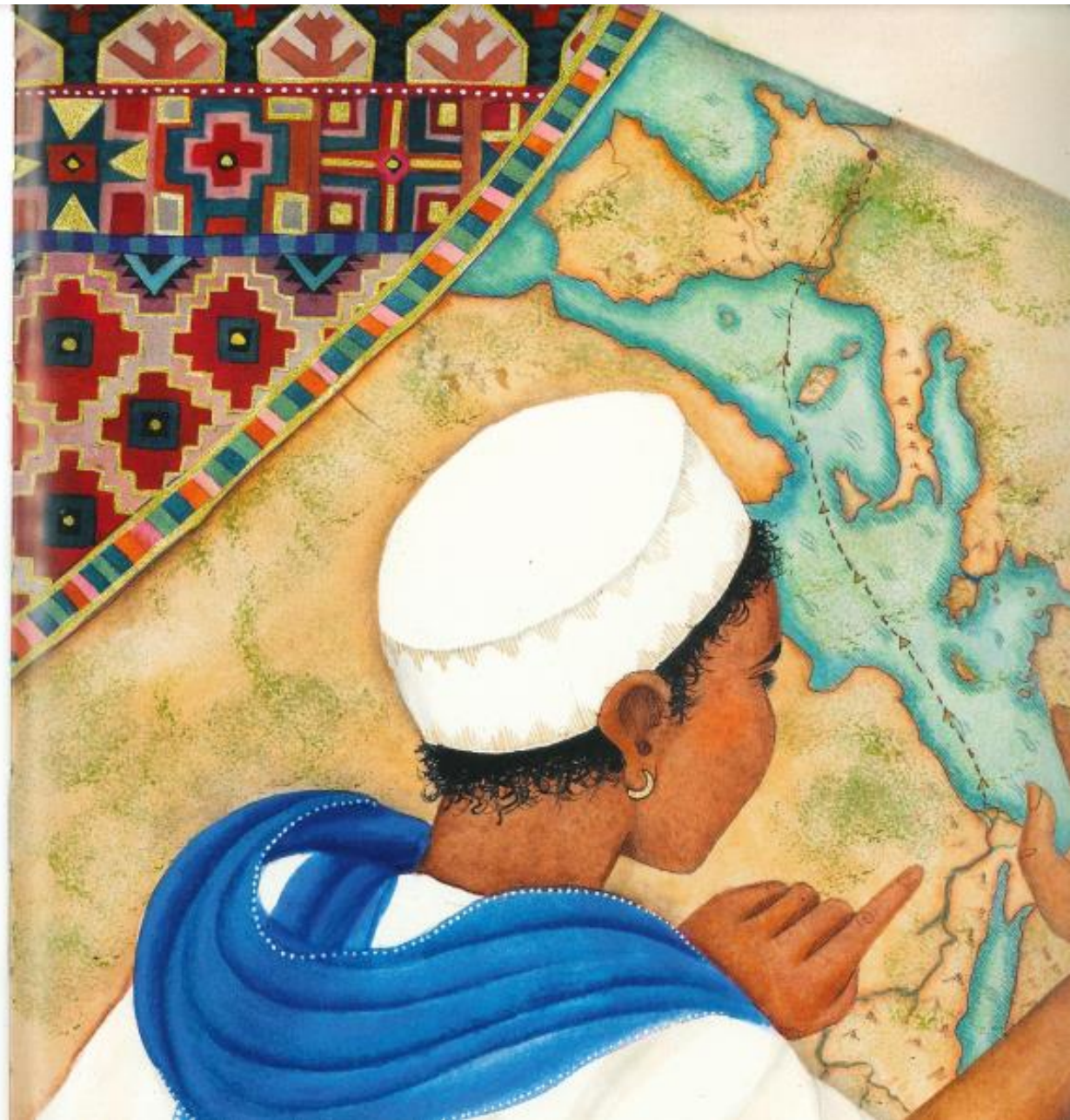
“She is the perfect gift for my friend, the King of France!”

He appointed his servant boy, Atir, as her keeper and handed him a letter addressed to the King, along with a map.



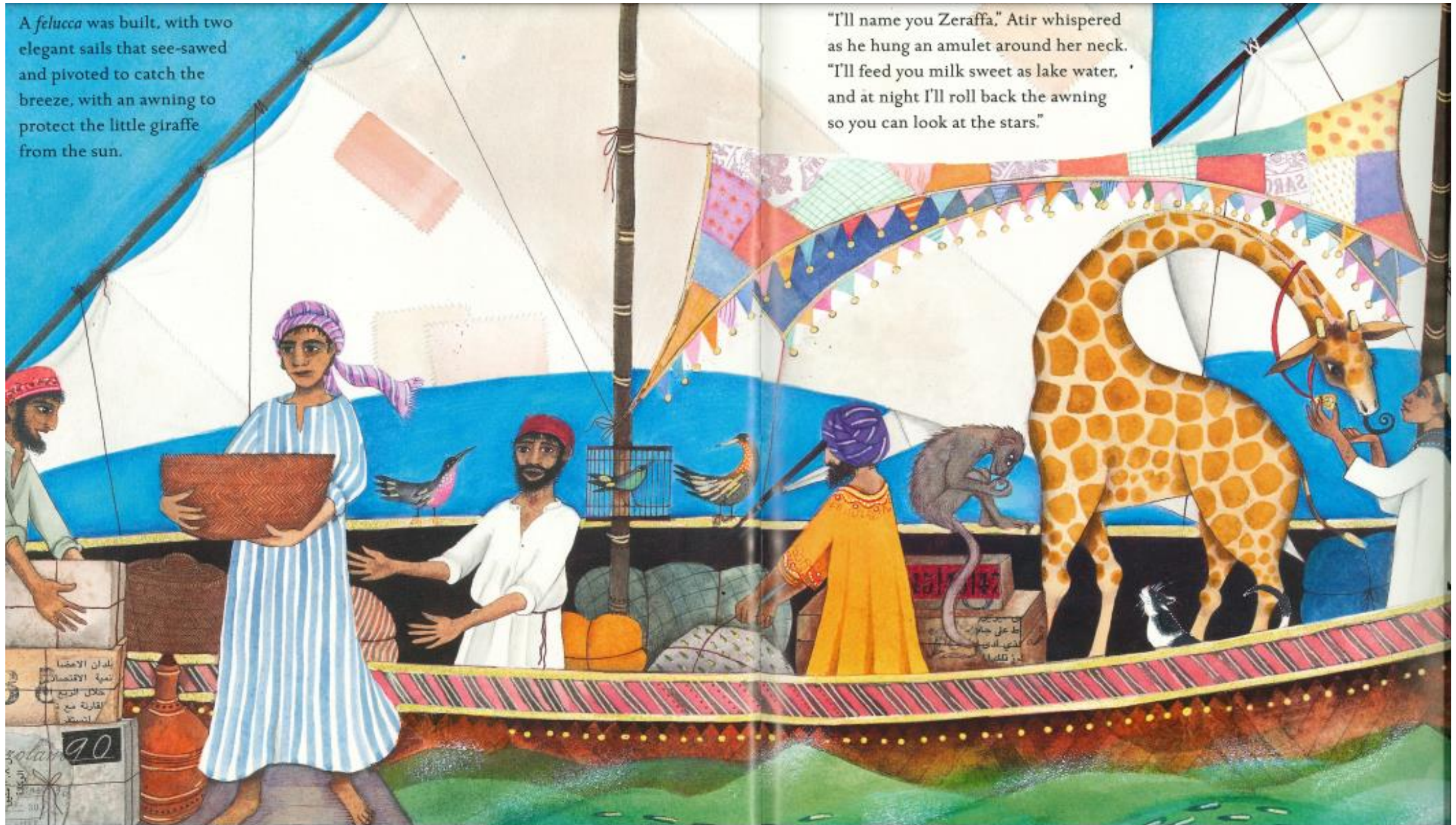
Atir unrolled the map and measured the distance. Paris was very far away. It was beyond the edge of Africa, over the sea on the other side of the world.

But first they had to sail down the River Nile.



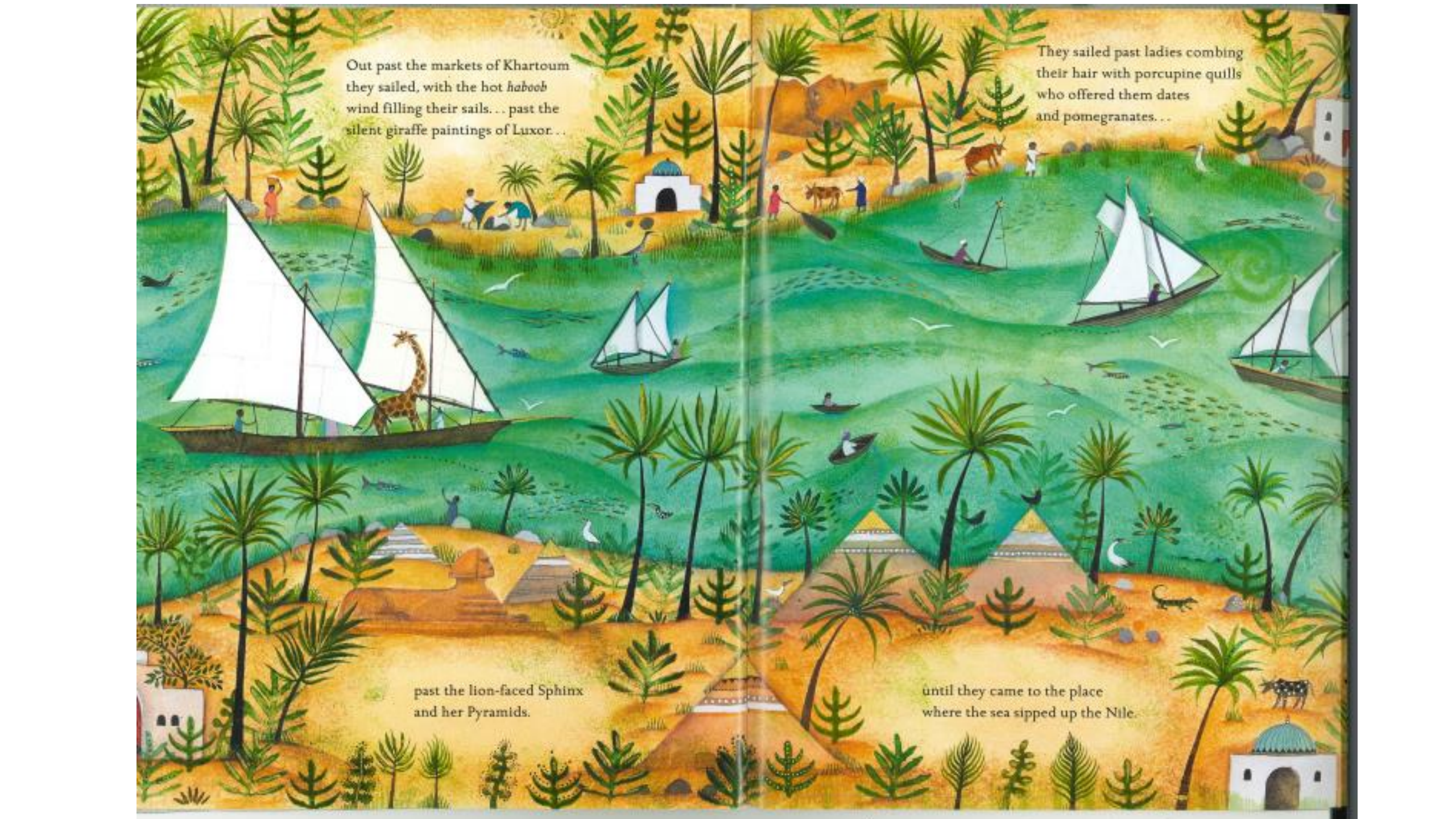
A felucca was built, with two elegant sails that see-sawed and pivoted to catch the breeze, with an awning to protect the little giraffe from the sun.

"I'll name you Zeraffa," Atir whispered as he hung an amulet around her neck. "I'll feed you milk sweet as lake water, and at night I'll roll back the awning so you can look at the stars."



بلدان الاقتصاد
نمية الاقتصاد
خلال الربع
القارئة مع
التصدير

90



Out past the markets of Khartoum
they sailed, with the hot *haboob*
wind filling their sails... past the
silent giraffe paintings of Luxor...

They sailed past ladies combing
their hair with porcupine quills
who offered them dates
and pomegranates...

past the lion-faced Sphinx
and her Pyramids.

until they came to the place
where the sea sipped up the Nile.

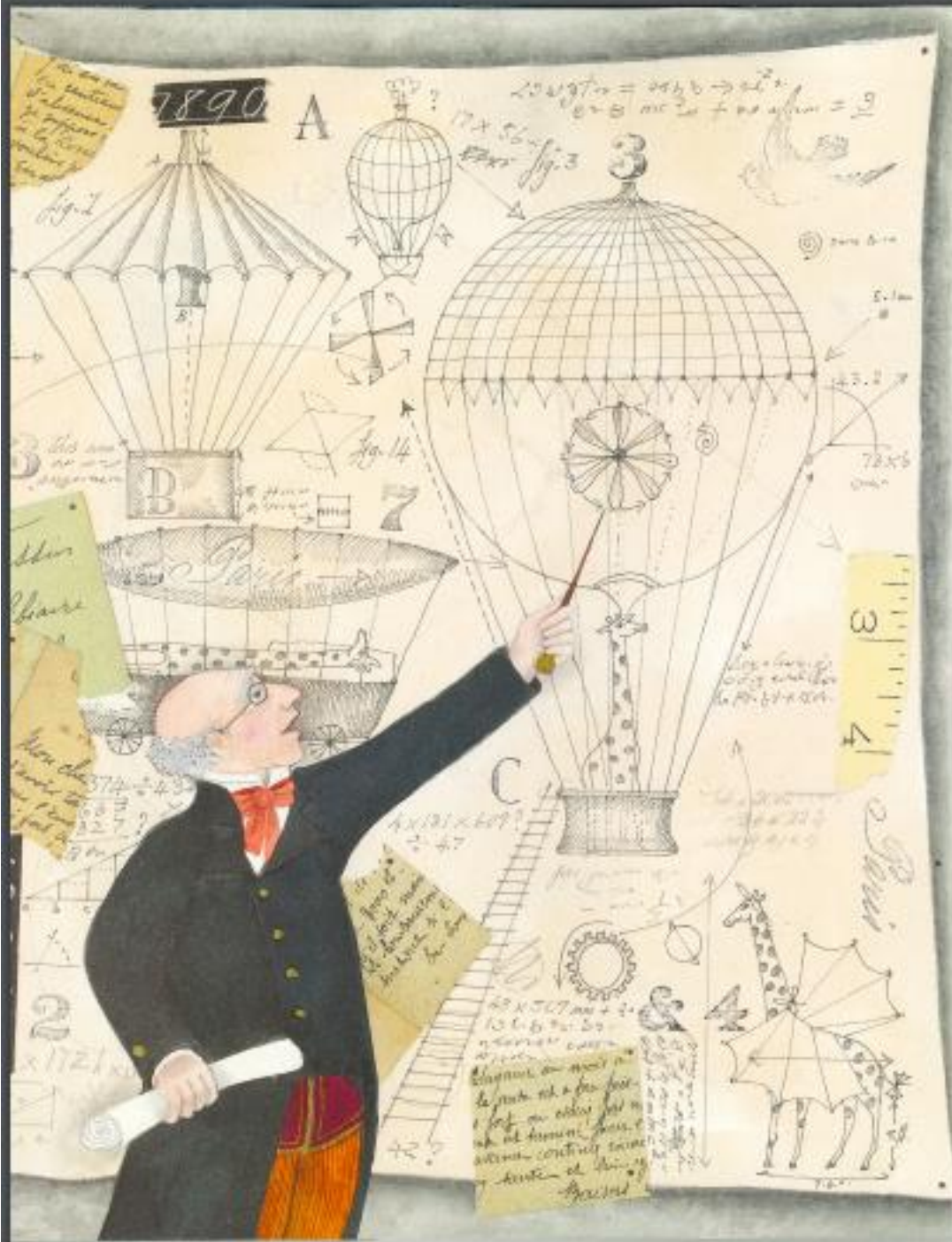


Atir led Zeraffa on board a boat bound for France.
And at night the sailors sang songs to the
beautiful long-necked creature that gazed down
at them from between the sails.

On the cobblestones of Marseilles, people pushed
forward for a glimpse of her.
The Mayor threw up his hands when Atir told him
he needed to travel to Paris.

"With a giraffe? How? It's impossible! We must consult
Monsieur Stravganza, inventor of things *extraordinaire*."





So Monsieur Stravganza drew sketches.
He added a propeller here, an extra wheel there.
But each time, the Mayor shook his head.

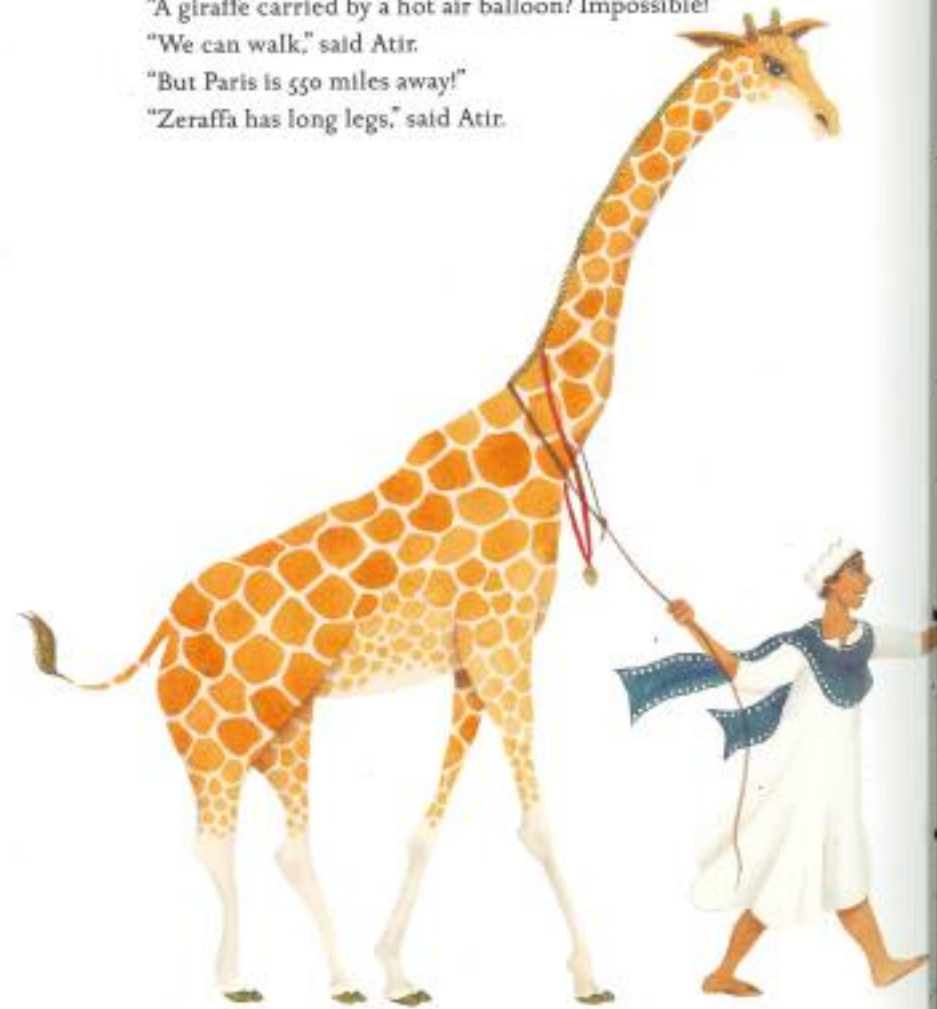
"No! A machine like that will never work."

"A giraffe carried by a hot air balloon? Impossible!"

"We can walk," said Atir.

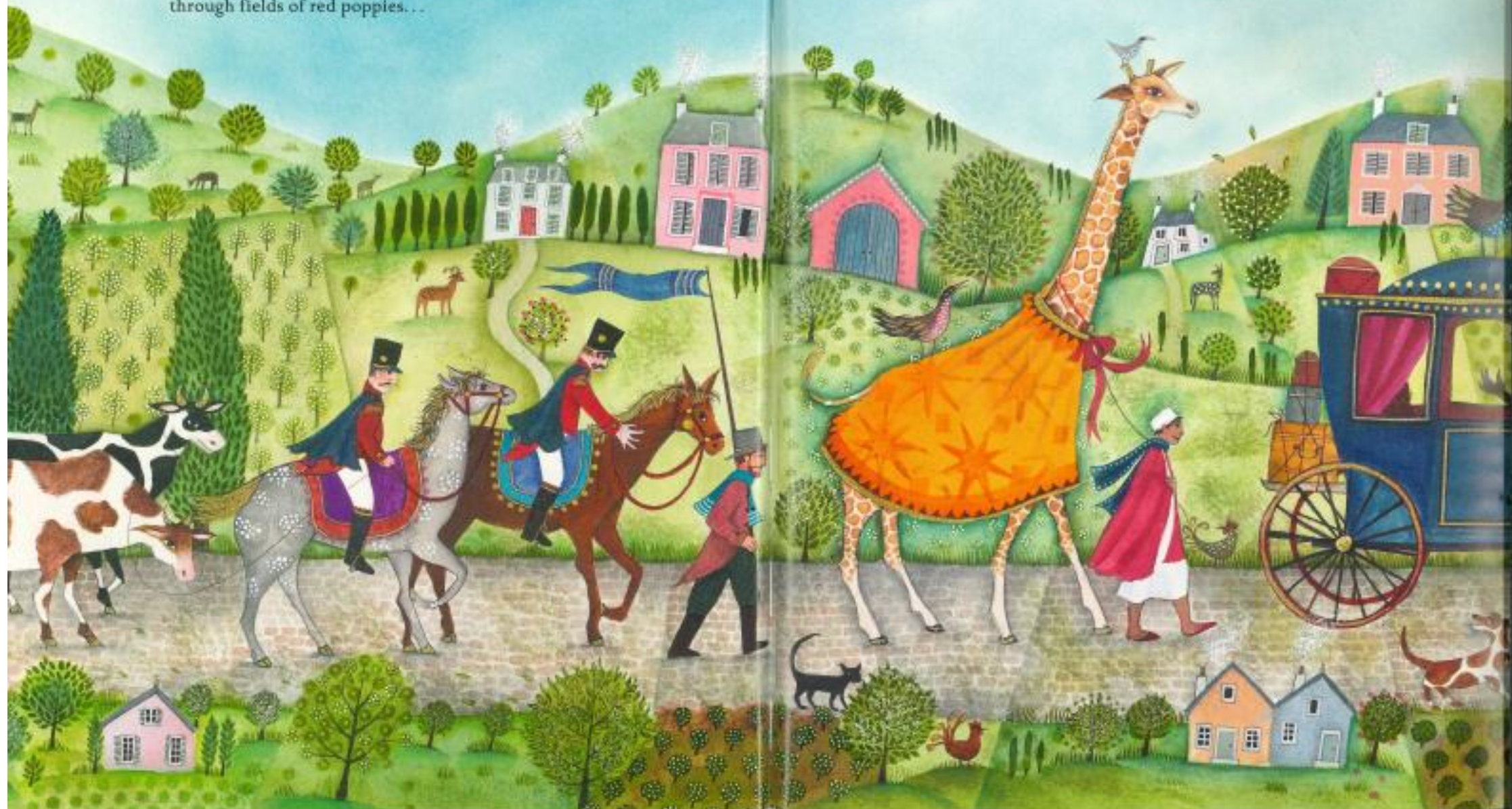
"But Paris is 550 miles away!"

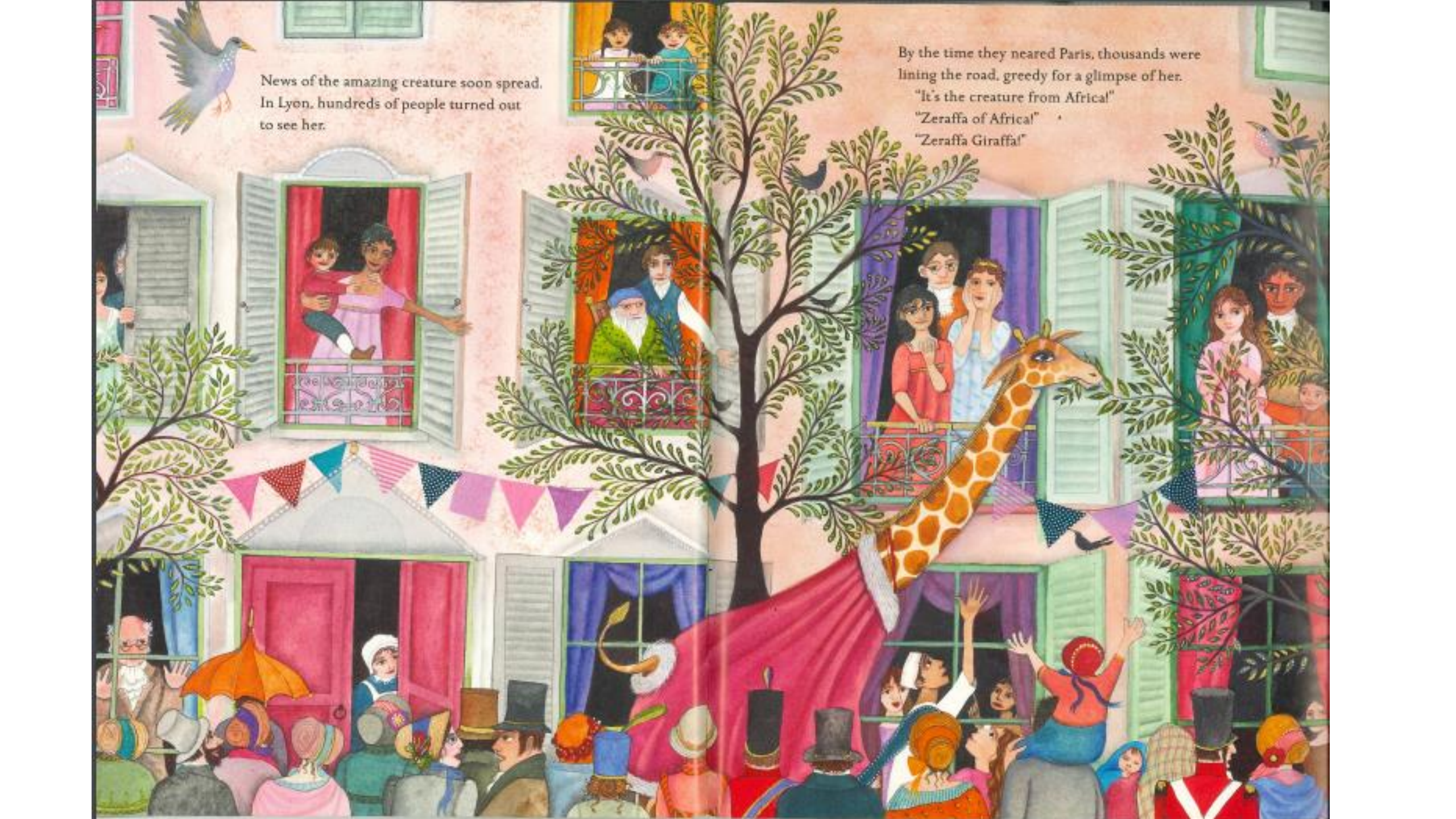
"Zeraffa has long legs," said Atir.



So they set off with guards on horses, a carriage,
two milk cows and Atir leading Zeraffa, protected
by a waxed taffeta cloak.
They walked through orchards of almonds and olives...
through fields of red poppies...

through the vineyards of the Rhone valley,
where the mistral wind blew so cold that
the waxed taffeta cloak had to be replaced
with a woollen one trimmed with fur.





News of the amazing creature soon spread.
In Lyon, hundreds of people turned out
to see her.

By the time they neared Paris, thousands were
lining the road, greedy for a glimpse of her.

"It's the creature from Africa!"

"Zeraffa of Africa!"

"Zeraffa Giraffa!"