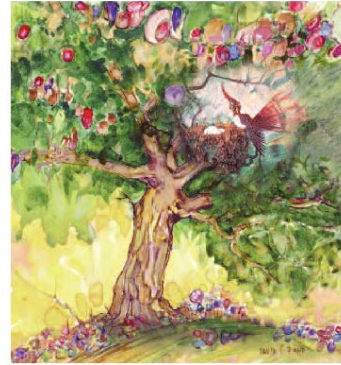


The following story is from the book

The Central Figures

Bahá'u'lláh

Volume One



These stories are lovingly provided to download as a convenience to teachers or communities otherwise unable to acquire the book. Each book in this storybook series also includes an appendix with questions for discussion and reflection, a glossary of words and phrases used in the stories, a bibliography, and an index.

These books may be purchased from the Louhelen Bahá'í School bookstore for \$15.25 each, including shipping in the United States, or \$23.00 to most international locations.

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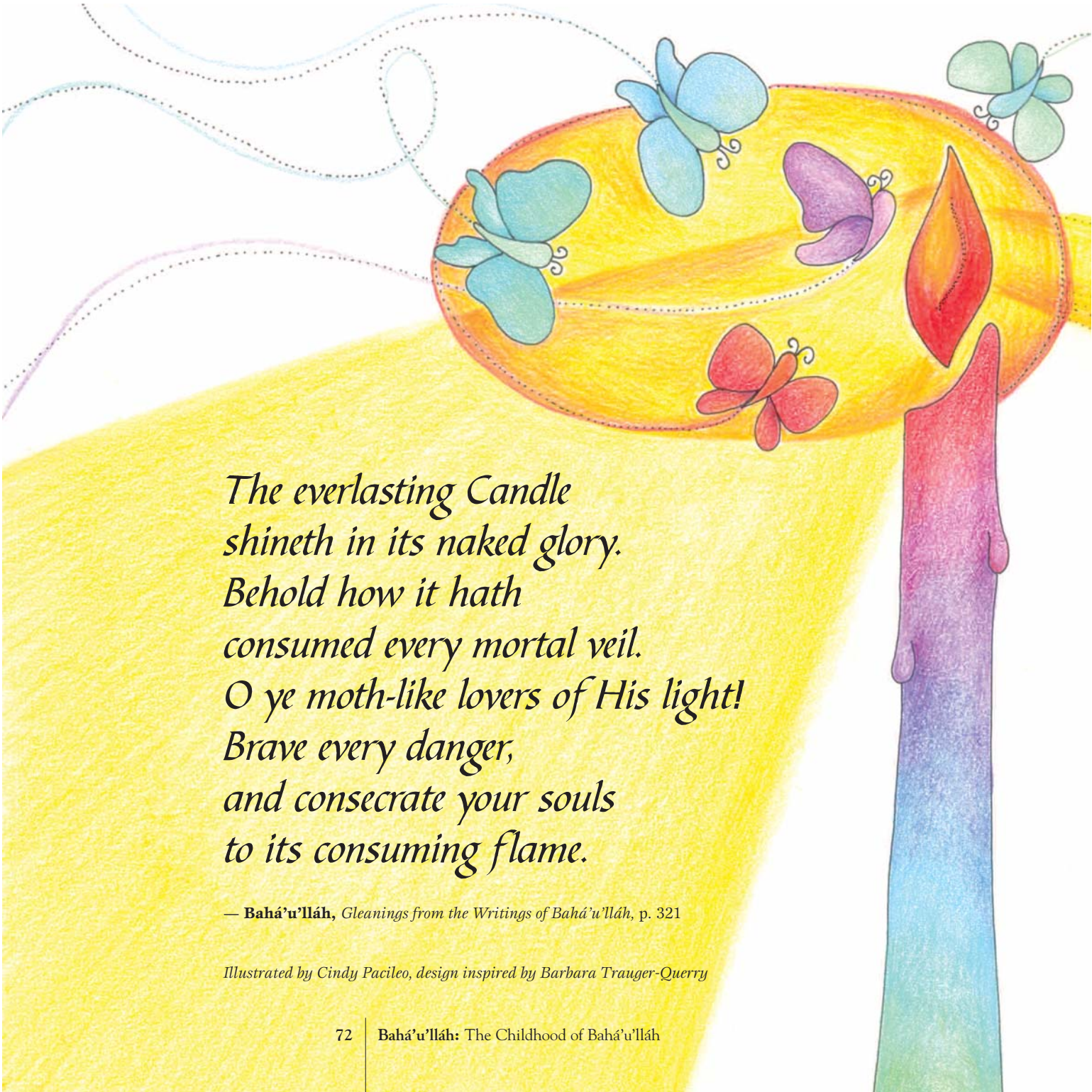
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An illustration of a candle with a flame. The candle is lit, and the flame is bright yellow and orange. The candle is surrounded by several colorful butterflies in shades of blue, purple, and red. The background is a soft, yellowish glow. The text is written in a cursive font on the left side of the page.

*The everlasting Candle
shineth in its naked glory.
Behold how it hath
consumed every mortal veil.
O ye moth-like lovers of His light!
Brave every danger,
and consecrate your souls
to its consuming flame.*

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 321

Illustrated by Cindy Pacileo, design inspired by Barbara Trauger-Querry



The Puppet Show

*Written by Suzan Nadimi
Illustrated by Cindy Pacileo*

Jacob walked into the kitchen with his hair combed, face washed, and his book *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh* in hand. There he found his father, sitting behind the table, gazing through the window and drinking coffee.

“DAD! You’re not ready!” said Jacob.

“The building contractor just called to say he was coming over,” Jacob’s father replied. “I’m afraid you’ll have to miss class.”



Jacob reminded his father of his promise to take him to Bahá'í class this week. That's why 'Alí's parents hadn't come to pick him up.

"I know your mother and I haven't taken you to class lately," Jacob's father said. "We've been so busy working overtime and planning for the renovation. But imagine spending time together in our bigger home, sitting by the fire, playing games, and reading books. Just think about it!"

Jacob didn't want to think about it. He wanted to go to class. He thought of Peter, Ryan, and 'Alí playing dodge ball without him. He saw them munching on the freshly baked cookies their teacher, Ms. Gomez, always brought. He imagined them play-acting the puppet show Bahá'u'lláh had seen as a young boy about a king and his princes, servants, and soldiers.

"And I was going to be the king," Jacob muttered to himself.

As courteously and emphatically as he could, Jacob expressed his desire to attend Bahá'í class. Gently and firmly, Jacob's father informed him that the contractor was not to be missed.

"The contractor's a very busy man," he said. "We're lucky he's agreed to see us today."

"We can still make it to class if the meeting doesn't last too long," Jacob said. "I'll just miss the cookies and the prayers."

Jacob's father replied that he expected the meeting to last a long time.

Jacob ran to dial 'Alí's number. Nobody picked up the phone. "They must've left already," Jacob said to himself.

"Please help me get to class, Bahá'u'lláh," Jacob prayed. Then he sat down at the table to think.

Before long, Jacob's thoughts wandered to the story in his book about the puppet show. In the show, puppets dressed as servants rushed out of a tent calling, "The King is coming! The King is coming!" The puppet-king, in his royal robe and dazzling crown, strutted upon the scene, followed by his ministers and soldiers. Trumpets blared. Shots were fired into the air. Smoke filled the tent. The puppet-king showed off his glory and power by ordering soldiers, ministers, and princes this way and that. After the show was over, a man emerged from behind the tent carrying a box under his arm.

Jacob opened his book and read where Bahá'u'lláh asked the man, "What is this box?"

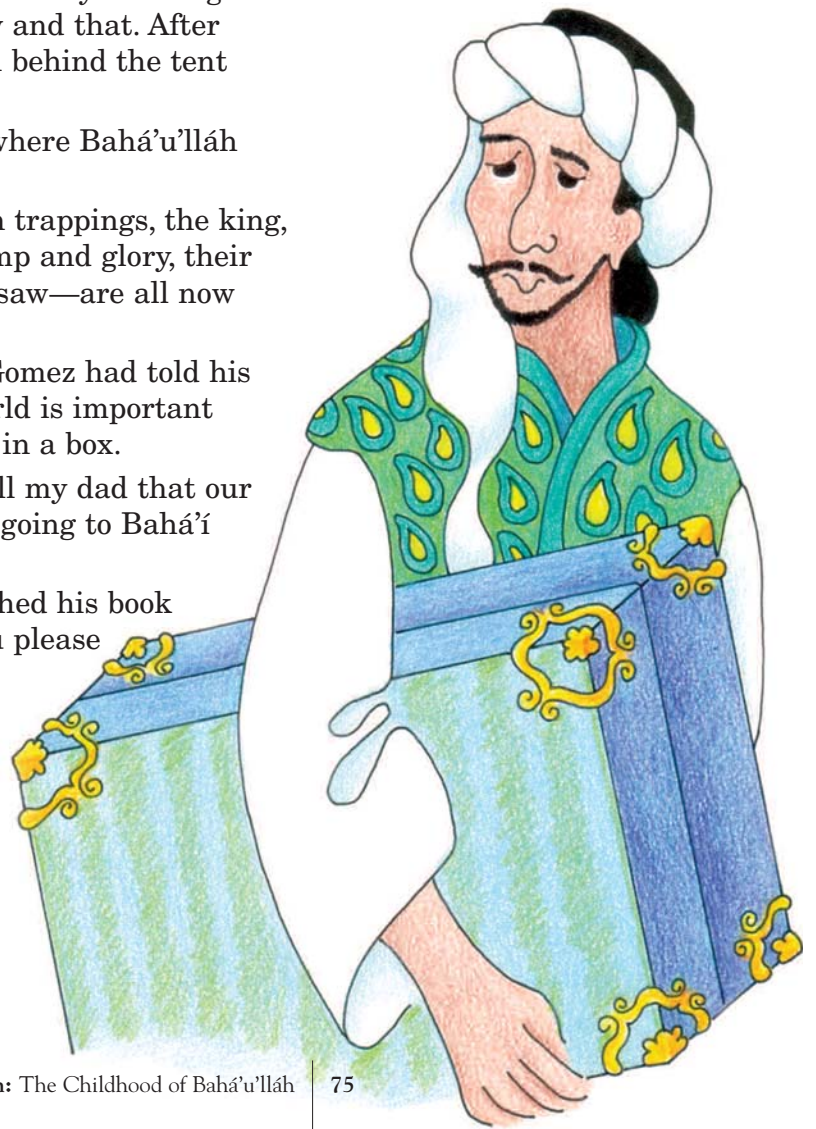
The man replied, "All these lavish trappings, the king, the princes, and the ministers, their pomp and glory, their might and power—everything that you saw—are all now contained within this box."

The moral of the story was, Ms. Gomez had told his class, that nothing belonging to this world is important because one day everything will end up in a box.

"I wish Bahá'u'lláh could come tell my dad that our bigger house isn't more important than going to Bahá'í class," Jacob thought.

Suddenly he had an idea! He pushed his book toward his father and asked, "Could you please read this story, Dad? I need to practice my part. I'm going to be the king."

Jacob's father read the story, at first glancing at the kitchen door every so often, but soon forgetting to do so.



He read out loud, “Erelong these outward trappings, these heaped-up treasures, these earthly vanities . . . this gorgeous finery . . . all shall pass into the confines of the grave, as though into that box.’”

“Bahá’u’lláh was a very wise boy to see that none of those things mattered,” said Jacob’s father when he finished the story. “Okay! Let’s go to Bahá’í class!”

Just then the contractor approached the kitchen door.

“But what about your meeting?” Jacob asked.

“I’m going to ask the contractor if we could start the meeting in the car so I can drop you off,” Jacob’s father said. “After all, our bigger house isn’t more important than going to Bahá’í class, is it?” ★

