

Lovereading4kids.co.uk
is a book website
created for parents and
children to make
choosing books easy
and fun

Opening extract from **Ballerina Dreams**

Written by Elaine DePrince & Michaela DePrince

Illustrated by Ella Okstad

Published by

Faber & Faber

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.



First published in the USA by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of
Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House LLC,
a Penguin Random House Company, in 2014
First published in this edition in the UK in 2017
by Faber & Faber Limited
Bloomsbury House,
74–77 Great Russell Street,
London WC1B 3DA

All rights reserved

Text © Elaine DePrince and Michaela DePrince, 2014

Illustrations © Ella Okstad, 2017

The rights of Elaine DePrince, Michaela DePrince and Ella Okstad to be identified as authors and illustrator of this work respectively have been asserted in accordance with Section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed in China

978-0571-32973-1

24681097531

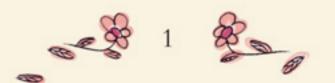
To Magali Messac, the ballerina on the cover of the magazine

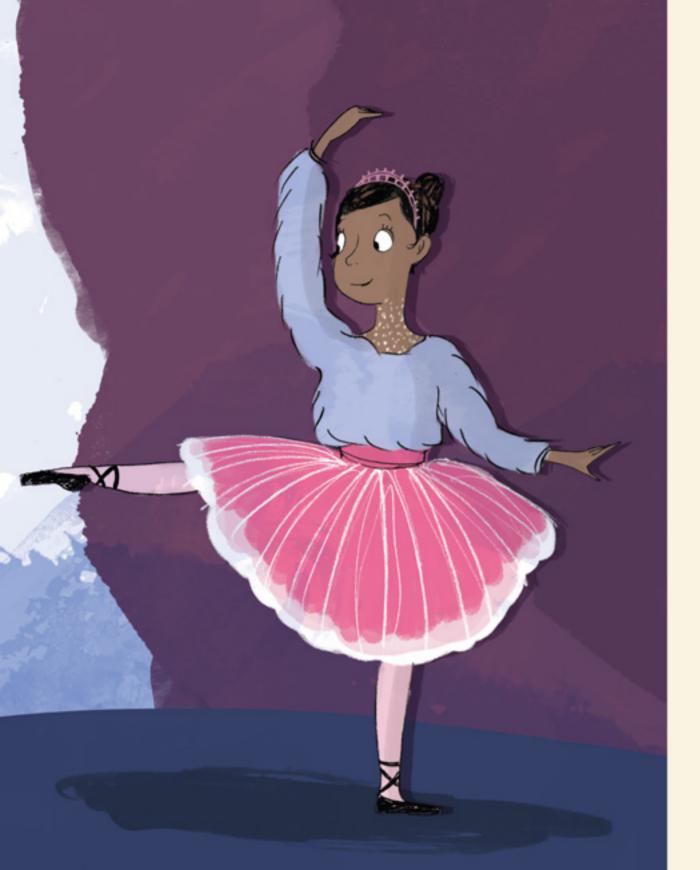
The Ballerina

It is a chilly night in December. I stand backstage wearing leg warmers and a sweatshirt, but I'm still shivering.

"Five minutes, Michaela!" I hear.

It's time for me to dance. I stretch my





legs and point my toes to get them ready.

I check my tiara to make sure it's not loose, and fluff out my pink tutu.

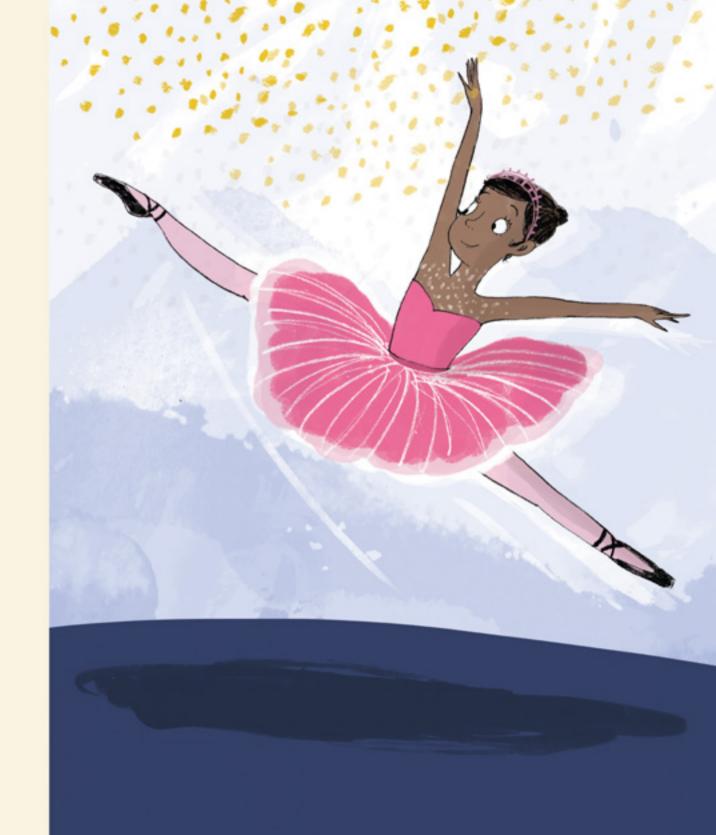
The knots in my pointe shoe ribbons are tied nice and tight. I wouldn't want them to slip off during the performance.

I peek through the stage curtains and see the eager faces of the audience.



They are waiting for the ballerina to appear.

The music begins, and my heart beats fast with excitement. I fly on to the stage. I am the ballerina!





2

The Orphan Girl

Long before I became a ballerina, I was an orphan in Sierra Leone, a country in western Africa. My parents died there in the ongoing war. I was sent to an orphanage, where children without

parents live.

There were twenty-seven children in the orphanage, but I was the only one with a condition called vitiligo. The vitiligo made some of my skin lose its colour. I have white spots on my brown skin.

Some of the other children laughed at my spots. They called me names, and I often felt sad.





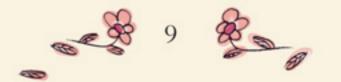
One girl never laughed at me. Her name was Mia, and she became my best friend. We shared a grass mat to sleep on at bedtime. We shared our rice at mealtimes. Mia sang to me and told me stories. I taught Mia how to play new games.

Sometimes I would miss my parents very much, but I would not cry in front of the other children. Instead, I would sit



at the orphanage gate alone and let my tears flow.





One windy day, a magazine blew down the road in front of the gate. I reached out and caught it.

A pretty picture of a woman was on the front cover of the magazine. She wore a short pink dress that stuck out

