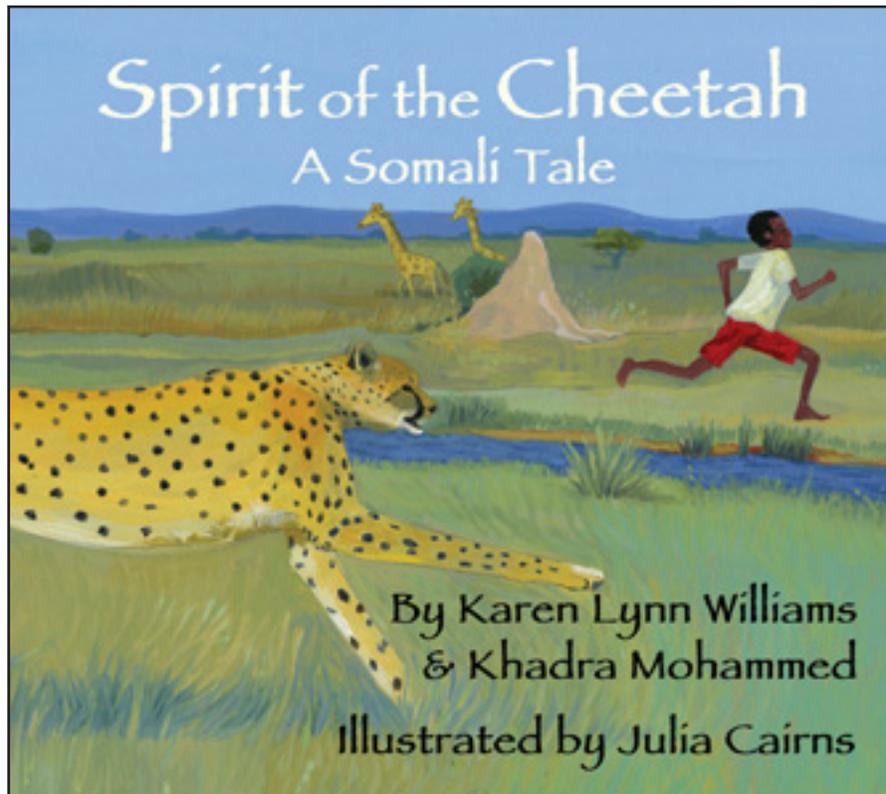


# Spirit of the Cheetah

## A Somali Tale

by Karen Lynn Williams & Khadra Mohammed  
illustrated by Julia Cairns

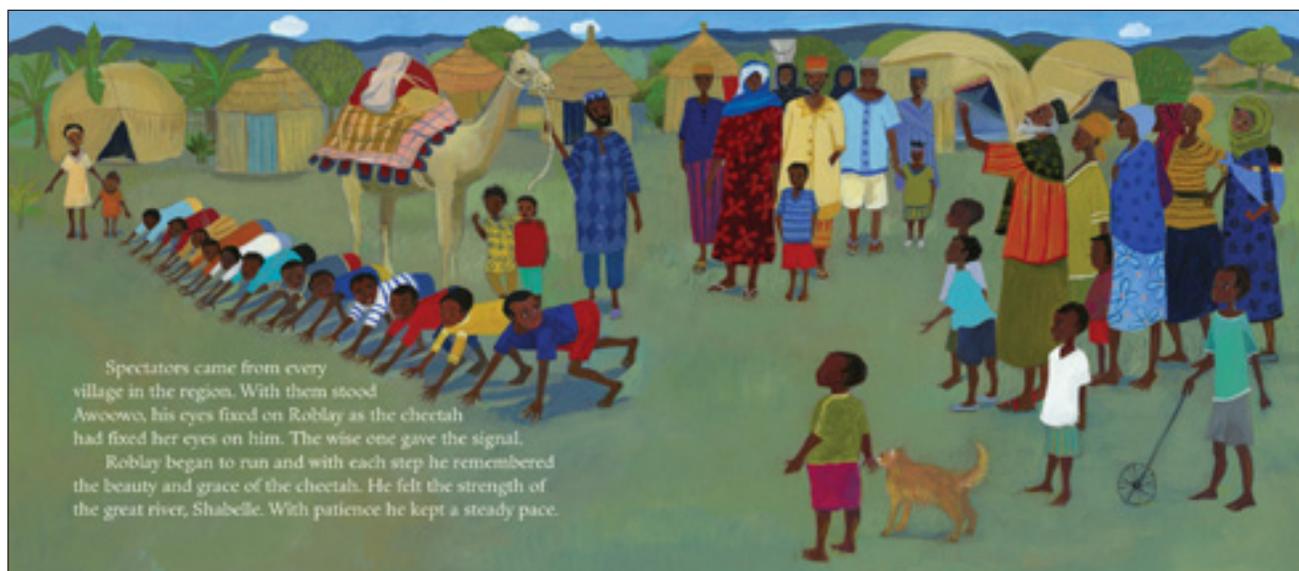
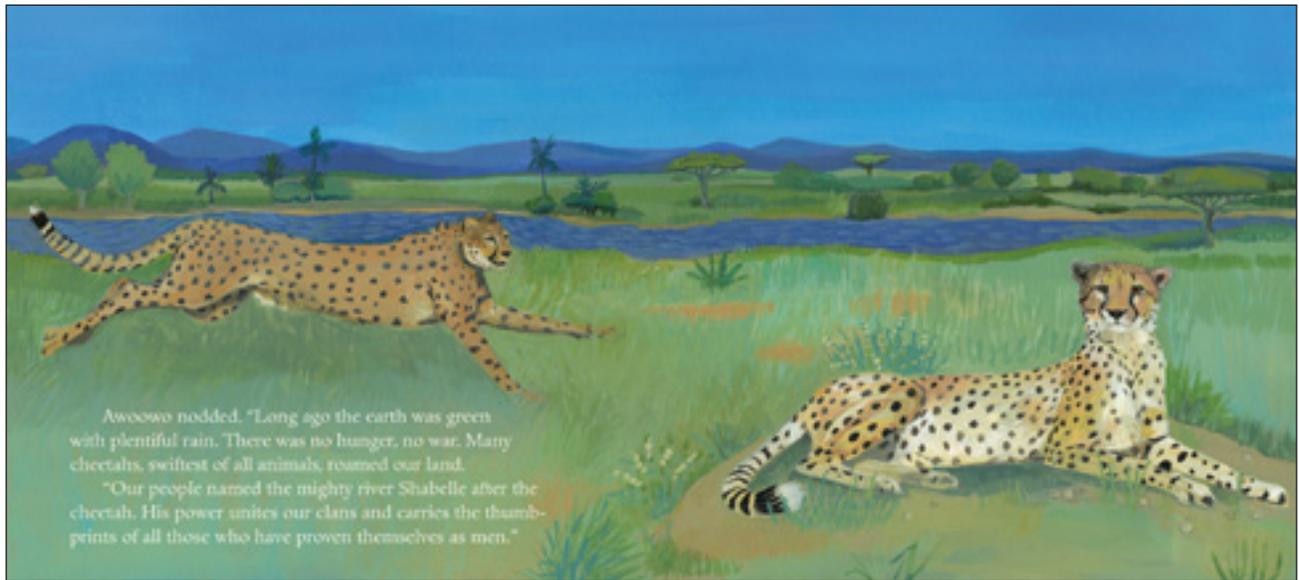


Young Roblay runs through his Somali village practicing for the big race, where only the fastest runners will be declared men. He turns for advice to his grandfather, who tells Roblay of the mighty Shabelle River, which is strong and swift like a cheetah. Roblay must capture that spirit if he is to finish among the winners of the race and become a man. Inspired by her father's storytelling, Khadra Mohammed joins Karen Lynn Williams in retelling this Somali coming-of-age tale, beautifully illustrated by artist Julia Cairns. The story of a proud people who once lived together peacefully and drew wisdom from the animals, it is sure to generate enthusiastic discussion in the classroom. An appendix provides further information on the cheetah—the fastest land animal on earth and now an endangered species.

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# Selections from the Book



## About the Authors

**Karen Lynn Williams** is a teacher, writing instructor, and award-winning children's book author who has published over 15 books for children. Karen has lived and worked in Malawi and Haiti and has been an instructor in writing programs at Seton Hill University, Chatham University, and the Institute for Children's Literature. She is the author of *Galimoto*, *Tap-Tap*, and *Circles of Hope*. Karen lives with her husband in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

**Khadra Mohammed** was executive director of the Pittsburgh Refugee Center from 2003 to 2015. She is Somali, grew up in the UAE, and has worked with refugees and immigrants in the U.S. and in refugee camps around the world for more than thirty years. She and Karen Lynn Williams previously collaborated on the acclaimed *Four Feet, Two Sandals* and *My Name is Sangoel*. She lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

## About the Illustrator

**Julia Cairns** is a fine artist and illustrator known for her colorful images and joyous, whimsical style. She has illustrated 11 books for children, including the award-winning *We All Went on Safari*, *Mama Panya's Pancakes*, and *A Full Moon is Rising*. Julia's work can be found in collections around the world and has been featured on many products from calendars to fabric. She lives with her husband in Galisteo, New Mexico.