

# BLAH

## The Pebble Game

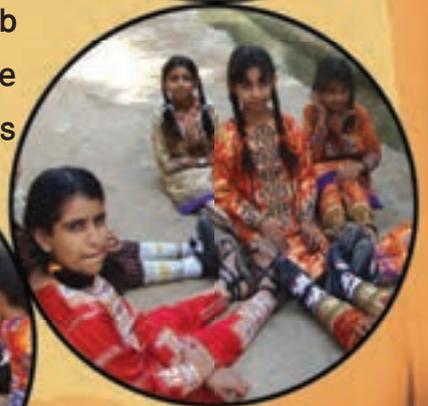
### Traditional Game

Script and pictures by: 1st sergeant / Salim Al-Shahi

A game played by girls which aims to teach the players how to get out of a difficult situation quickly.

#### How to play it?

The girls will squat in a circle. One of them will hold a pebble in her hand while another girl will sit in the middle of the circle. The girl holding the pebble will pass it to the girl next to her. Thus, the pebble will be passed among all the players secretly in order to prevent the girl in the middle from catching it. However, if she manages to grab it from any of the players, that player will take her place. The game will continue until the girls decide to stop it. They sing beautiful songs while they are playing this game.



# ALSA

Omani Craft

## Omani Incense Burner

Script and pictures by: Alaia Al-Numani

In the beginning, the craftsman selects some fronds from young palm trees and straitens them by a sharp knife. Then, he prepares, cleans, and soaks the fronds in water from 2 to 3 days. Finally, he takes them out and makes them into tiny sticks in order to be folded in a circle shape. The burners consists of four pillars made from the fronds and joined together by palm fibers. The price of Omani incense burner on the market ranges from RO 3 to RO 5. It is popular in most of our governorates.



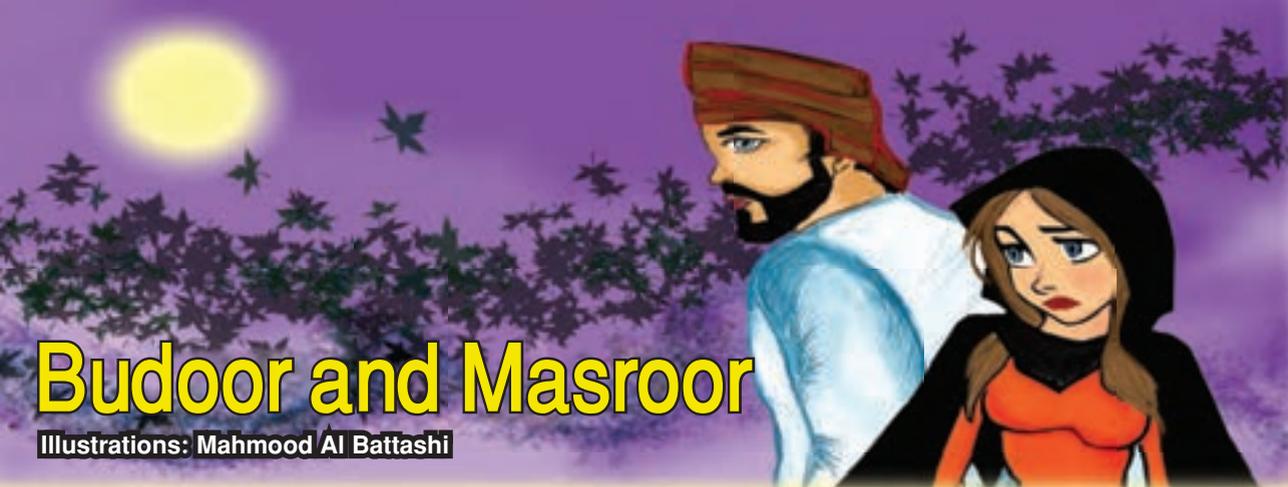
In the morning, Masroor went with Budoor to see her father. None of them told him about what had happened on their way. When Budoor's uncle saw her with her husband he became envious. Budoor's uncle had a big farm. In the middle of the farm, there was a beautiful palace. However, no one dared to approach it because it was occupied by a huge and scary snake. Budoor's uncle suggested to his brother to convince Masroor to bring some dates from the garden. When Budoor's father asked his son-in-law he did not hesitate and went, along with his donkey. On his way, he stopped by his father-in-law's farm to take one of the swords he buried.

When he arrived at the farm he picked the dates and put them on his donkey's back, after which he released it. As for him, he remained at the palace. Masroor remained there until the snake showed up. So he took out his sword, and killed it. Since then, the farm became his and no body dared to come near it. Masroor stayed at the farm for a very long time until his wife lost hope and thought he was dead. In the meantime, her uncle kept urging her to marry her cousin until she finally agreed.

On their wedding night, her husband saw a mouse. So he took out his sword and cut it in two pieces. He asked Budoor to take the dead mouse to her father to show him how brave he was. However, Budoor went to the farm instead and said, "I would prefer to die where my husband died. He killed a mouse and wanted to tell my father about it, whereas my ex-husband didn't want anybody to know that he killed a number of soldiers and buried their weapons in my father's farm.

When Budoor reached the farm, its gate was opened and her husband received her with open arms. While everyone thought they were dead, Masroor and Budoor were living happily in the same palace served by maids. They had many boys and girls.





# Budoor and Masroor

Illustrations: Mahmood Al Battashi

Once, there lived a father who had a beautiful daughter called Budoor . When his nephew proposed to her, he refused to marry her to him. Instead, he married her to a brave man from a remote land who was called Masroor. After some time, Budoor missed her family and wanted to visit them. When she asked her husband to accompany her, Masroor immediately agreed and took some goats and horses as gifts for his in-laws. As they started their journey it was already night. So they decided to camp and sleep near a roadside tree. While they were about to cook their food, they spotted a burning fire from a distance. They immediately realized that they were some people sleeping nearby. While Masroor was slaughtering a goat, he sent Budoor to ask them for a torch of fire. When she got near them she found out they were a bunch of thieves. They were very happy to get such an easy catch. However, the oldest man among them warned them by saying, "Don't be deceived by this woman, she might have been sent to us as bait in order to destroy us". So they gave her what she wanted and let her go. Budoor returned to her husband, cooked their food, and then everybody went to sleep. In the morning, the thieves realized that the husband and his wife were just a couple.

They decided to attack them but Masroor and Budoor had already packed up. Masroor was aware of their bad intentions. So he got off his horse, got out his sword, and yelled at them, "Whoever wishes to steal my horse and my woman let him come forward". The thieves accepted the challenge and Masroor killed them one by one with his sword except for the oldest man. "I beg you to spare his life as he saved my life earlier "Budoor told her husband. Masroor released the old man, collected the weapons of the dead men, and left with his wife. When they arrived at her hometown, he asked her about the location of her father's farm because he didn't want to take the weapons to her father's house. She lead him to one of her father's farms where he hid the weapons and spent the night there with her.

