

Juha and the meat readers' theatre script

Narrator 1: Juha was happy. He had lots of money in his pocket. He was feeling hungry so he went to the market to buy some meat.

Shopkeeper: Good morning. How can I help you?

Juha: I'd like some nice meat. Can I have that piece please?

Narrator 2: The shopkeeper weighed the piece of meat. It was exactly three kilos.

Narrator 1: Juha paid for the meat, put it in his bag and took it home to his wife, Amna.

Juha: Hello Amna. Would you please cook this meat for dinner? I have to go to work now but I'll be back later to eat it with you.

Amna: OK.

Narrator 2: Amna fried the meat. She added some sumac. It smelt delicious.

Narrator 1: The smell of the meat went out of the window and into the street outside.

Neighbour 1 (Maryam) : That smells amazing!

Neighbour 2 (Abdullah): That smells fantastic!

Cat: Miaow! That smells wonderful! Miaow!

Maryam: I think I'll go to visit Amna today.

Abdullah: I think I'll go to visit Amna today too.

Narrator 2: One by one, the neighbours came and knocked on Amna's front door. First came Maryam.

Amna: Hello Maryam. How are you? It's lovely to see you. Please come in.

Maryam: I'm fine thank you Amna. That meat smells delicious.

Amna: Would you like to try some? Juha will be home from work soon. Let's eat it together.

Narrator 1: Maryam sat down at the table. Then came Abdullah.

Amna: Hello Abdullah. How are you? It's lovely to see you. Please come in.

Abdullah: I'm fine thank you Amna. That meat smells delicious.

Amna: Would you like to try some? Juha will be home from work soon. Let's eat it together.

Narrator 1: Abdullah sat down at the table. All the neighbours came round in this way and they sat and waited for Juha.

Narrator 2: But Juha was late. They waited and they waited but he didn't come and the meat smelt so fantastic.

Amna: Let's just try a little of the meat and we'll save some for Juha when he comes home.

Narrator 1: So everyone had a little bit of meat.

Narrator 2: But the meat tasted so fantastic that everyone forgot about Juha and before they knew it the meat was all gone.

Narrator 1: At that moment Juha arrived home!

Juha: Sorry I'm late Amna. Hello Maryam. Hello Abdullah. Are you going to have dinner with us? Amna has cooked some delicious meat. It smells wonderful. But where is it?

Narrator 2: Juha looked at the empty plate.

Juha: What happened?!

Amna: I'm so sorry Juha. We were waiting for you and we were talking. While we weren't looking the cat came in and took the meat. It ate it all and there's nothing left. It's terrible!

Narrator 1: Juha looked at the cat and he looked at the empty plate. He picked up the cat and he put it on the kitchen scales.

Juha: The cat weighs three kilos. The meat weighed three kilos. So if this is the cat where's the meat? And if this is the meat, where's the cat?

Notes on the story

This is one of two Juha stories found in this collection. Juha stories are told in many parts of the Arab world and date back to Arabic literature from the 9th Century. They come from the oral tradition however and are probably much older.