



**John McCutcheon** is highly regarded as a singer, songwriter, master musician, legendary performer, and producer. His thirty-eight albums have garnered six Grammy nominations. He is also the author of the award-winning picture book *Christmas in the Trenches*. His original song, on which the book is based, was recently named one of the 100 Essential Folksongs by Folk Alley. John lives in Smoke Rise, GA.



**Kristy Caldwell** grew up in Louisiana and moved to NYC, where she received her MFA in Illustration as Visual Essay from the School of Visual Arts. She has illustrated posters and video projections for professional theater in New York. She now lives in Astoria, a multigenerational, multicultural community whose residents have roots in every part of the world, including Bosnia, the Middle East, and Israel. This is her first picture book.

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McCutcheon / Caldwell

Flowers for Sarajevo

John  
McCutcheon

Illustrations by  
Kristy  
Caldwell



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with special guest performance  
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Young Drasko is happy selling flowers with his father in the Sarajevo marketplace, where people from every neighborhood and background have mingled for generations. Yet when war encroaches on their beloved city, everything changes. Suddenly Drasko must run the family flower stand alone.

The violence finds even this small corner of the city and Drasko feels the full weight of the war. But he also finds he feels something more when he witnesses an unlikely act of heroism, an act that helps Drasko—and the world—understand the power of beauty and kindness in the face of violence.







To Vedran Smailovic—and to all those artists who,  
with their talent and their courage, continue to inform us,  
inspire us, and call us to action  
—J. M.

To Judy Caldwell, my mother, who loves this book  
—K. C.



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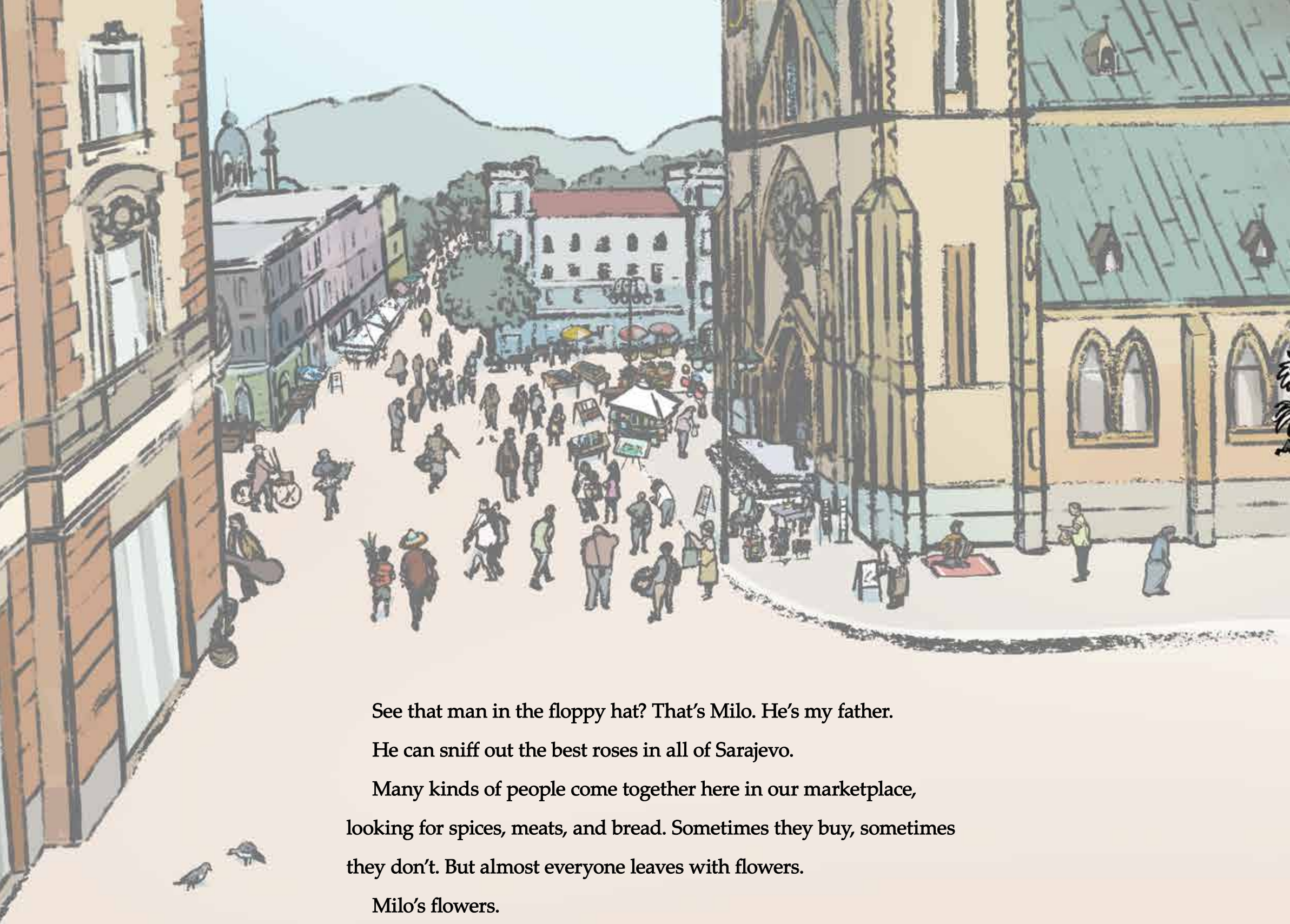
# Flowers for Sarajevo

John McCutcheon  
Illustrated by Kristy Caldwell



  
PEACHTREE  
ATLANTA





See that man in the floppy hat? That's Milo. He's my father.

He can sniff out the best roses in all of Sarajevo.

Many kinds of people come together here in our marketplace,  
looking for spices, meats, and bread. Sometimes they buy, sometimes  
they don't. But almost everyone leaves with flowers.

Milo's flowers.



I'm Drasko.

I am his son.



"The Serb and the Croat, the Muslim and the Christian—we have plenty to argue about," my father says. "But, like these flowers, we manage to live side by side. Even old Goran, there." He nods toward the cranky spice merchant in the next stall.

I give my father a doubtful look.

"Believe it, Drasko! Underneath that thorny hide, there beats a beautiful heart!" My father slips one of his prized roses into Goran's apron. The old man snorts.

I understand giving flowers to little Gertie or poor Mrs. Novak, but to the meanest man in the market?

My father is a mystery to me.







Many things are a mystery to me.

I wonder how so much can change so quickly. Overnight, it seems, we are at war. My country is tearing apart.

Every day, men are leaving for the battlefield. Even my father. Now it's my job to keep the flowers fresh and our family fed.

But I am only a boy.



The merchants who were our friends are tired and bad-tempered. They have pushed me to the worst corner of the square. No shade. No water for the flowers. Now I'm even too far from the bakery to enjoy the smell of fresh bread. Where once they had kind words and treats for me, now it's

"Move on, Drasko!"

"Not here, Drasko!"

"Out of my way, Drasko!"