



Kidnapped!

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Kipkirui
English

My friend Kiki and I love to go exploring,
and we know our neighbourhood well.

As we left school, we chatted about
places to explore that day.



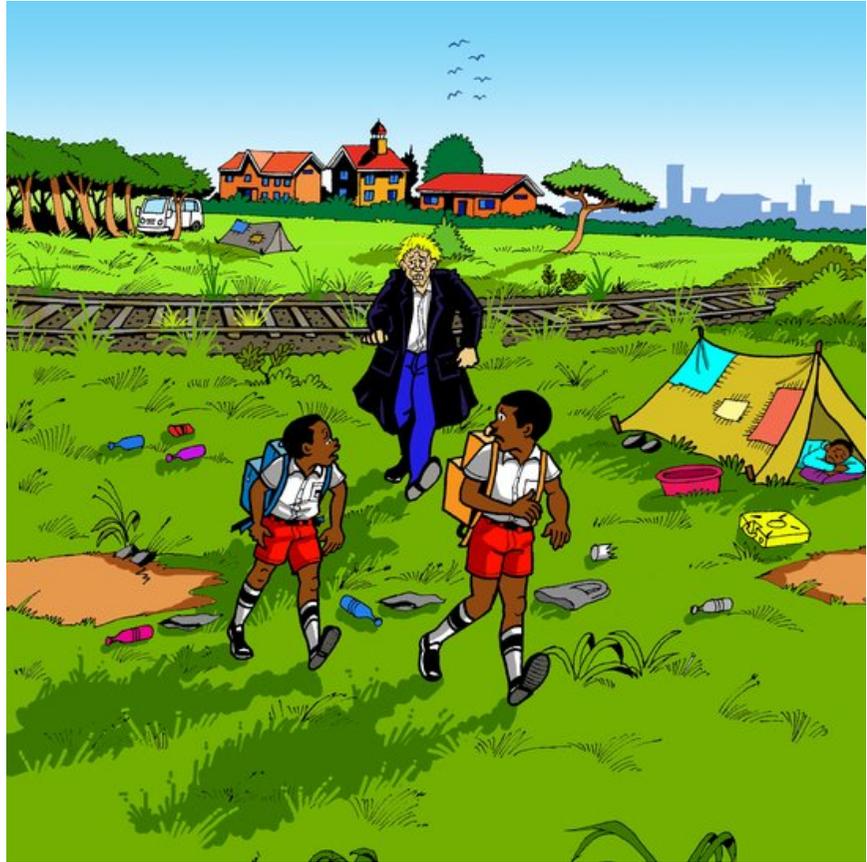
We decided to cut across the big empty field near the old railway. Even though Kiki's father had warned us not to walk there.

After a while, we noticed that a tall man in a long black coat was walking slowly behind us.



We slowed down to look at the man. His skin was full of pimples. His lips were too small to cover his dark brown teeth. He had a deep scar across half his face.

The man was following us!



We decided to stop and face the stranger. My heart beat so loudly that I thought he could hear it. I stared at him, noticing his features and clothes.

He did not like the fact that I was looking at him so keenly. He shouted, "What are you looking at, boy?"



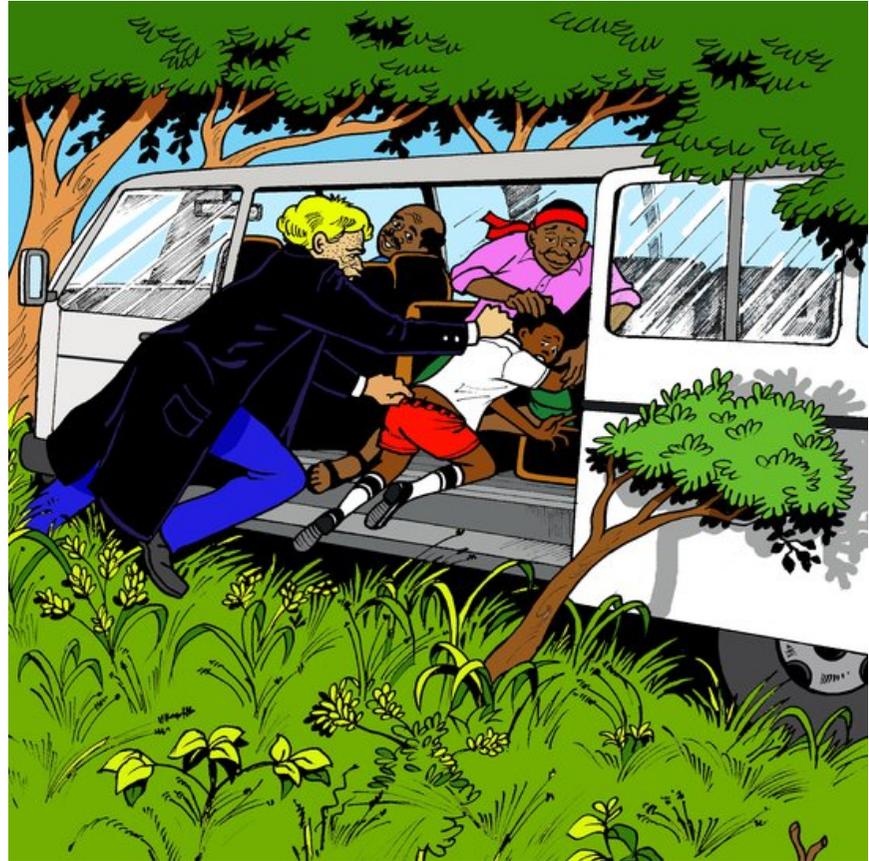
At that point, we turned to run. I was not fast enough. He caught me by my shirt and pulled me back roughly.

The man held me so tight that I thought my ribs would crack. But my friend Kiki escaped.



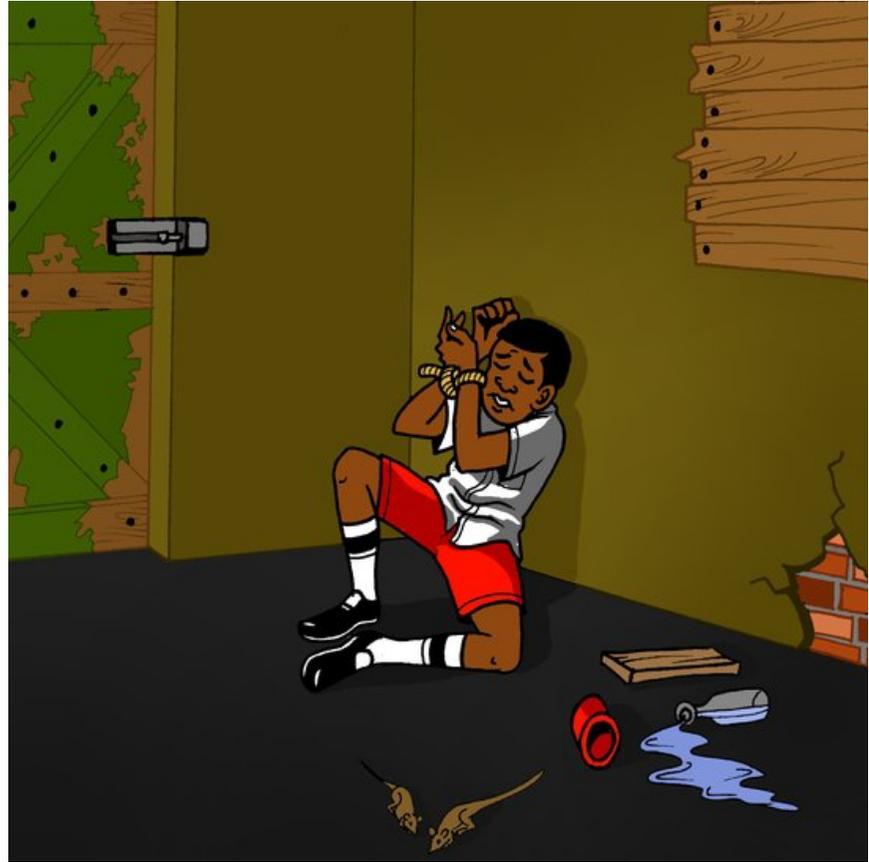
The tall man picked me up like a piece of crumpled paper. He threw me into a van parked in the field. Then he got in the front of the van.

Another man inside the van blindfolded me and tied my hands behind my back. Then the driver drove away at the speed of an ambulance.



The man next to me held a wet rag over my face. The liquid on the rag smelled sweet, and made me feel sleepy and dizzy. I fell asleep.

When I woke up I found myself sitting on the floor in a dark room with cobwebs and mice. At least I was no longer blindfolded.



The door of the dark room opened noisily, and a man entered carrying a plate. He was the man who tied me up and put me to sleep.

“Here is food for you. You better eat because you are going on a long journey,” mumbled the man. He cut the rope around my hands with a sharp knife hanging from his belt.



When I heard the word 'journey' I decided to eat. I would need to get the strength to rescue myself.

As I ate, the man sat down and smoked a cigarette. The smoke filled the entire room.



The other two men came in dragging a boy. It was Kiki! They had caught him as well. Now we were both trapped in the dark room.



I understood that the tall ugly man was the leader of the group. He gave orders to the other two. But the man who brought me the food did not seem to like what they were doing.

A while later, we heard them arguing outside the room. The leader shouted, "I don't care if you know his family. You can't change your mind now."



This argument made us realise that one of them knew us. I wondered who it was. Kiki said, "We must find a way of escaping. Our parents don't have the money to pay."

I untied my friend and luck was on our side. The men continued to disagree and started fighting. We quietly bolted the door inside the room and started looking for a way to escape.



We saw some thin cracks of light between old planks of wood nailed across one wall. We pulled at a plank until the nails came out of the crumbling wall.

We pulled at another plank, and another, until the thin dim light became brighter. There was a small broken window boarded up with those planks!



Quickly we made a decision. Kiki was faster and smaller than me, so he would run to get help. I helped him up.

Kiki wriggled out of the window. It wasn't far to the ground outside, and I heard him land on his feet, and take a deep breath. Then he was gone.



By this time the men had heard the noise we made, and were kicking the door against the bolt. They burst into the room and stood for a minute looking at the window.

Then they rushed outside, pushing each other, not sure which direction to go. The men were furious, especially the ugly leader. He hit me, shouting, "Your parents will pay for this!"



The men nailed back the planks of wood over the window and locked me in the room. But they still could not agree about what to do. I could hear them arguing again.

The man who smoked a lot wanted to let me go. The driver was worried that my friend would find his way back and bring the police. And the ugly leader, well, he wanted the ransom money.



It seemed like forever before I heard a soft tap from outside, on the broken window. A grown up voice said, "Don't be scared. Police are here. Lie on the floor, cover your head. Don't move."



I'm not sure what happened next.
Everything happened!

The men were taken by surprise as
police stormed the room they were in.
There was lots of shouting and noise,
and some gunshots.



A policewoman opened the door to my room. She picked me up off the floor, and wrapped a blanket around me.

She told me, "Your friend was lucky. He found the main road near here. We were driving on patrol when he ran into the road. After we heard his story, we called for backup and came to teach these criminals a lesson!"



The three men were arrested, handcuffed, and bundled into a police van. I got into a car with the policewoman. She took me home to my worried parents.

After that day, Kiki and I were more careful when we went exploring.

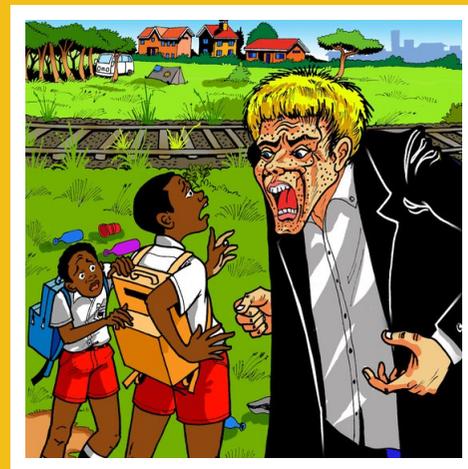


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This story was originally written by two learners at New Hom Academy (Kibera, Nairobi), and then edited by Ursula Nafula and Nina Orange.

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