

The boy who nobody loved Phumy Zikode English





Once upon a time, there was a boy who was so ugly that nobody loved him, even his parents.

At home, he would sit alone while his family watched television.

At school, you would find him sitting alone while other children were playing.





When they went to fetch the cattle, you would find him walking behind all the other boys because they didn't want to walk with him.



One day he decided to leave, but he didn't know where he would go. He walked until he got to an indigenous forest.

He started to get scared but was comforted by the thought that nobody would speak to him because nobody loved him.

When he was about to enter the forest, an old, dirty, ugly woman came up to him. She greeted him and asked what he was doing in the scary forest.

The boy was shocked to hear someone speaking to him. He told the old woman that he wasn't going anywhere because no one loved him.





The old woman asked if he needed help. He responded quickly and said "Yes". The old woman said that before she helped him, she wanted him to lick her face until she was clean and beautiful.

The boy didn't have any other option but to lick the old woman's face in order to get the help he needed. He started licking the sleep from her eyes, the snot from her nose and the wax from her ears. He licked her face until she was clean and beautiful.





The old woman thanked him. She said, "You will find many wonderful things in the forest, but don't take any of these things. Only bring back the root that you find."



The boy ran, wanting to see all of those things in the forest. But before he could enter the forest, the old woman called him. She said, "Boy! Come back here!"

He ran back to her and said, "I'm here". She asked him if he had heard what she said to him. "I said you will find many wonderful things in the forest, but don't take any of these things. Only bring back the root that you find," she repeated. The boy nodded and so the old woman allowed him to go into the forest.

The boy ran off, but before he could enter the forest, he heard a voice saying, "Boy! Come back here!" He started to be confused about what the old woman wanted. He ran back to her.

She said, "I don't think you heard me properly. I said you will find many wonderful things in the forest, but don't take any of these things. Only bring back the root that you find." The boy nodded and ran back to the forest.



Just after he had entered the forest, he heard a voice again saying, "Boy! Come back here!" He tried to ignore the voice but it continued so he went back to the old woman.

The old woman said, "I don't trust you. I don't think you'll do what I ask you to do. You will find many wonderful things in the forest, but don't take anything. Only bring back the root that you find." The boy was becoming annoyed with the repetition. He ran until he was in the forest.





Once he was in the forest, he saw a bowl filled with money. He took the money and put it in his pocket. All of a sudden, he thought about what the old woman said, that he mustn't take anything except the root.

He took the money out his pocket and put it back in the bowl.

He looked around and saw some splendid new clothes. He took off the clothes he was wearing and put on the new ones. Again he thought about what the old woman had said. He took off the new clothes and put his old ones back on.



He looked around and saw the root. It was withered from the sun. He asked himself what the old woman thought he would do with the root. Next to the root, there was a bowl of food. The food smelled delicious and the boy was hungry. He couldn't stop himself from eating.





When he had finished, he remembered what the old woman had told him. He remembered that the old woman had said he must only take the root.

He looked around for the root, but he couldn't see it.



He went back, feeling disappointed, to tell the old woman what had happened. But the old woman was gone.

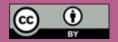
The boy who nobody loved

Writer: Phumy Zikode Illustration: Wiehan de Jager Translated By: Phumy Zikode Language: English



This story is from the Family Literacy Project in South Africa.

© African Storybook Initiative, 2015



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution
(CC-BY 4.0) Version 4.0 International Licence
Disclaimer: You are free to download, copy, translate or adapt this story and use the illustrations as long as you attribute or credit the original author/s and illustrator/s.

