



The Water Story

Zoe loves singing. She also likes spending time with her grandpa. But grandpa walks so fast that sometimes Zoe gets tired / and grandpa has to wait for her to catch up.

“Come on, I'm thirsty!” calls her grandpa.

But when Zoe opens her water bottle, she sees that it is empty.

“Grandpa, we've finished the water!” says Zoe.

But grandpa looks at her kindly and says:

“Well, if the bottle's empty, I'll have to tell you...

THE WATER STORY

Not that many years ago, in a village in Africa, there lived a little girl called Sahiba. Sahiba loved to sing, and she also liked walking down to the river every day, to fetch water.

"It's so hard to carry a water jar on your head like the grown-up women!" thought Sahiba.

And when she reached the river, she found her friends and lots of women from other villages. On the riverside, they told stories, and when they got home, they had always learned a new song.

But one day, it started raining. The ground got wetter and wetter and turned into mud, and Sahiba slipped and fell. What a disaster! She had hurt her leg badly and broken her water jar.

Sahiba stopped singing and started to cry. The villagers carried her home, and told her that she had to rest. Poor Sahiba! She had to stay inside all day, and couldn't go out to play with her friends! But what she missed most of all was going down to the river. She missed it so much, that at night she dreamt of the route she'd take to fetch water. But the dream always ended in the same way. Her jar broke and Sahiba woke up at home, with her injured leg. When would she be able to go back to the river?

Sahiba grew sadder and sadder. She never sang any more and everyone in the village asked:

“What's the matter with Sahiba?”

They were so worried that one day they sent the shaman to see if he could find out what was going on.

“What's wrong?” asked the shaman.

“I'm sad because I can't go to the river to fetch water” answered Sahiba.

The shaman danced one of his magic dances to see if a solution would come to him.

“I've got it!” he cried. “Let's call a plumber. If you can't go to fetch water from the river, we'll bring the water to you.” he said.

In no time at all, the plumber had installed a pump in the middle of the town. So Sahiba could go and fetch water.

The villagers were delighted.

“This is great! We have water!” they said.

And Sahiba, walking veeery slowly, went out with her new jar to fetch water. Now they didn't have to walk all that way to the river.

But they say that the women of the village still go down there, from time to time. They're not weighed down with water jars any more. Now they go to swim, to have fun, to talk and to tell each other stories. Sahiba goes too. That was what she missed. Seeing her friends made her happy. How else was she going to learn new songs?

“Grandpa I'm really thirsty!” said Zoe, who had listened to the story as they walked in the hot sun.

“Then fill up the bottle yourself,” said her grandpa.

Zoe imagined that she was Sahiba, as she listened to the sound of the water.

“Do you want some?” she asked a boy who was watching her.

You see, where there's water, there are always people. And where there are people, there'll always be stories. And stories can be shared, whether they're happy or sad. Do you hear that? What is it? Is it a bird singing? Or the water in the bottle? What do you think? Is the bottle half empty -or half full?

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