



# Crocodile and Baboon

Little Zebra Books

Jeremiah Dube





Baboon and Crocodile were good friends.

They played together. They ate together. They did everything together.



One day, Crocodile got very sick. He was close to dying.

Crocodile went to the fortune teller. "If you want to get better, you have to eat baboon meat," said the fortune teller.





When he heard this, Crocodile  
cried.

If he wanted to get better, he  
had no choice than to eat his  
good friend the baboon.



When Baboon went to see his friend, he got on Crocodile's back.

Crocodile took Baboon out to the deepest part of the river.





"What is troubling you, my friend?" asked Baboon.

Crocodile said, "The nyabezi told me that if I want to get better I must eat you, my friend."



Baboon replied, "No, don't eat me. I'm too small!

Wait a minute and I'll call my grandfather. He's bigger than me. Eat him and you'll be full."





Crocodile said, "Where is this grandfather of yours?"

Baboon replied, "He's in the tree on that island."

Crocodile said, "Go and get him so that I may eat him."





Baboon jumped off Crocodile's back and ran straight up the tree.

Crocodile waited and waited. But Baboon did not return.

And that was the end of their friendship.



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## Crocodile and Baboon

**Author - Basilio Gimo**

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# Akai's Special Mat

Ursula Nafula

Catherine Groenewald





When Akai was a little girl, her mother used to put her to sleep on a beautiful mat. Akai's aunt made this special mat from palm leaves.



The mat had bright pink, blue and green colours. It was different from other mats that Akai's mother had in the hut.





The land around Akai's home was very dry, hot and full of stones. There were many scorpions, spiders and snakes too. But Akai was never in danger of being bitten by these dangerous creatures.



Her mother said, "Her special mat protects Akai from any harm."





Akai was a clever child. She discovered where the nearest shallow well was.

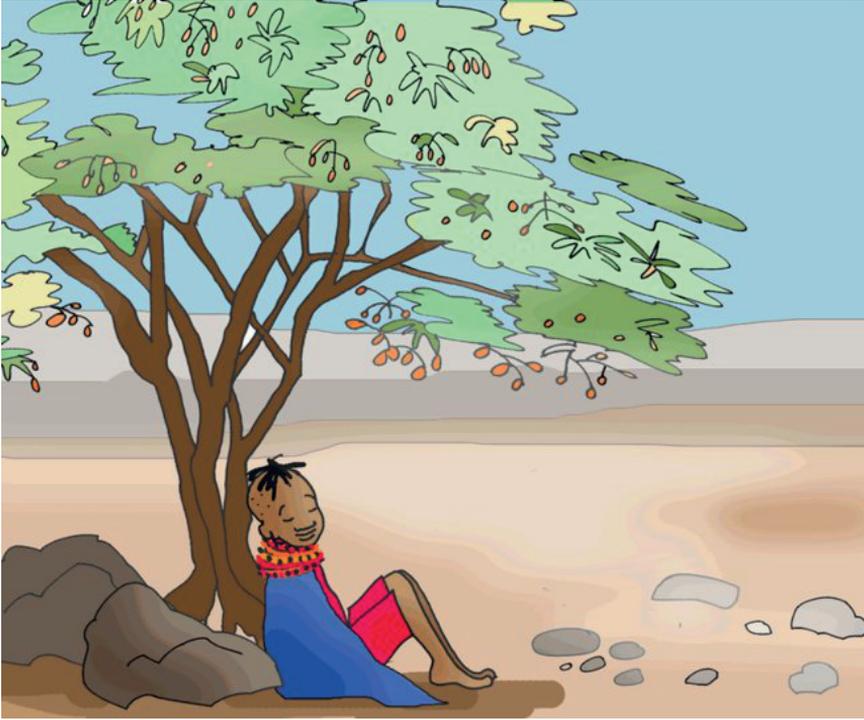


Akai also knew where her grandmother's basket was located. She often went to drink camel milk with her grandmother.





One day, Akai was not so lucky. She left to go to her grandmother's manyatta, but she got lost in the hills. Akai was afraid.



She sat under an mango tree and waited for help. Soon she fell asleep and had a dream.





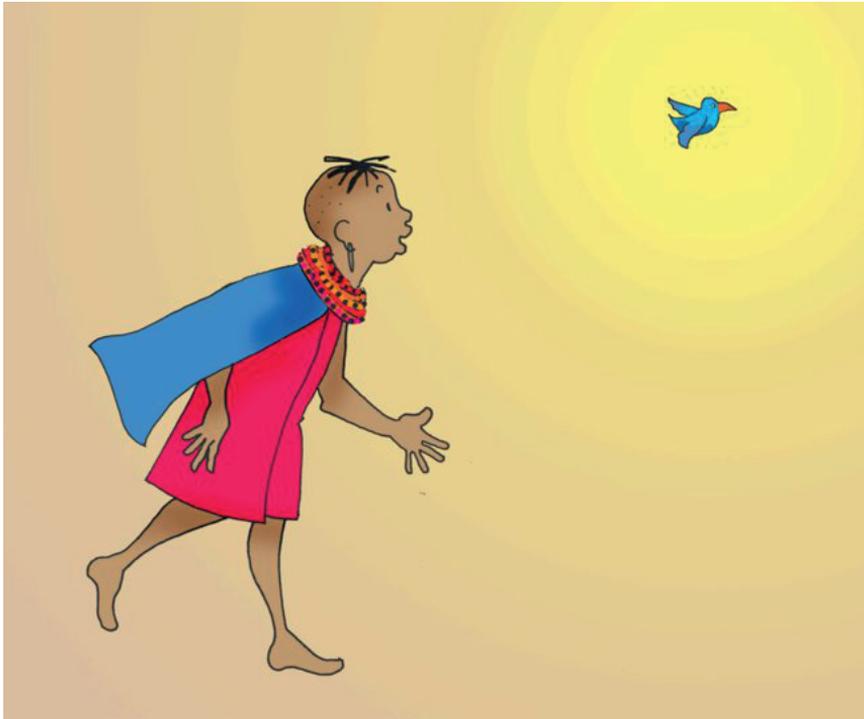
This is what Akai dreamed. She was lying on her special mat. A woman who looked like her grandmother was watching over her. The old woman smiled and gave her a bowl of camel milk. Just when Akai stretched out her hand to take the milk, she woke up.





Akai opened her eyes slowly.  
When she looked up, she saw a  
small blue bird on a branch  
above her.





When Akai got up, the small blue bird flapped its wings and led the way for Akai. She followed the bird.



Akai came to a place where the path went in two different directions. The blue bird dropped a piece of a mat that was like Akai's own mat.





Picking up the piece of mat, Akai saw footprints that she knew were her mother's. Soon she saw the shallow well from where they fetched water.





Akai's family sang and danced to welcome her home. They slaughtered a goat, roasted the meat and celebrated their child's safe return.





Akai sat on her special mat and enjoyed eating a big piece of roast meat.



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## Akai's Special Mat

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# Father and Son

Frista Nattabira

Wiehan de Jager



There was a man called  
Tatah.





Tatah had a son called Fai.





One day the man said to his son,  
"Let's go for a walk."





They found a very beautiful suitcase by the roadside. It was packed full.





"The man got very excited. He said to his son, "Pick it up and we will take it home."



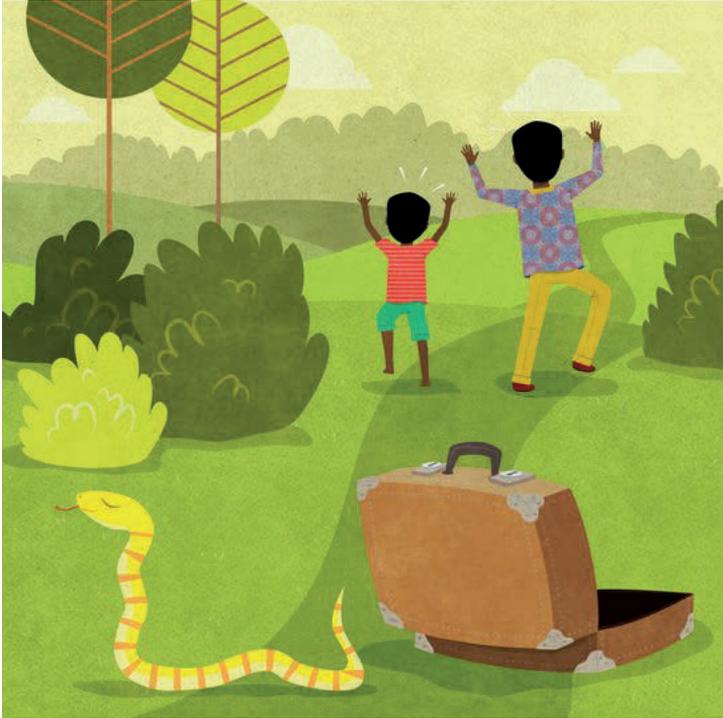


The son picked up the suitcase and carried it on his head. The son did what the father told him to do.



On the way home, a snake  
slithered out of the suitcase. It  
landed on Fai's feet!





Father and son were both very scared. They dropped the suitcase and ran away very fast!



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## Father and Son

**Author - Frista Nattabira**

**Illustration - Wiehan de Jager**

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# Kalabushe the Talkative

Gasph Juma

Jesse Breytenbach



Long time ago, there lived a girl whose name was Kalabushe. Kalabushe was a very talkative girl. Although her mother warned her not to talk too much, Kalabushe did not listen.



Kalabushe's aunt lived across the valley on the other side of Kalabushe's village. One day she fell ill. She had nobody to take care of her.





Kalabushe's mother was very busy. It was late in the evening when she gave Kalabushe food to take to her sick aunt.



On the way, Kalabushe met Samari. Samari was a hyena who had changed into a person.





Samari asked Kalabushe, "What are you carrying?" Kalabushe answered, "I am carrying meat, eggs and milk." Kalabushe's mother had warned her not to say what she was carrying.





Kalabushe also said, "I am taking the food to my sick aunt." Samari licked his lips at the thought of the meat that Kalabushe was carrying.



Samari quickly ran ahead of Kalabushe to her aunt's house.

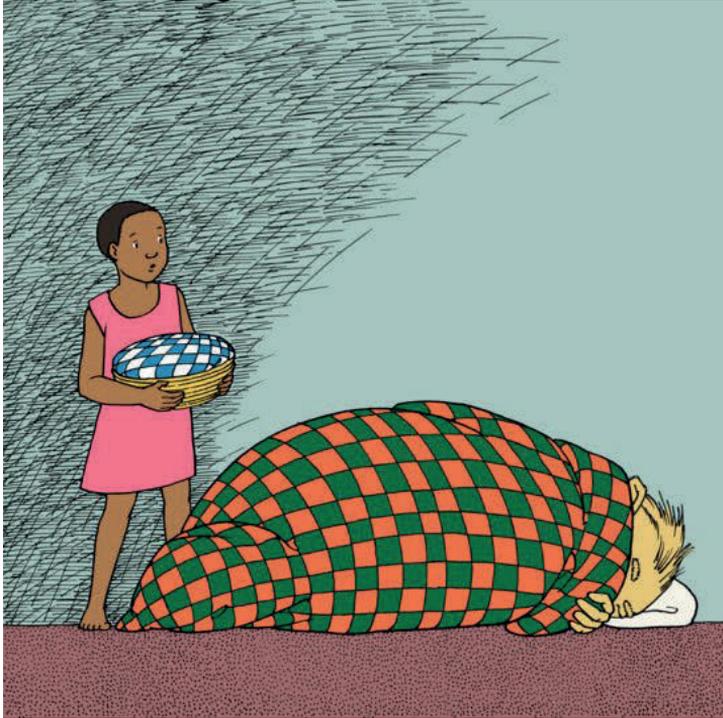


He swallowed Kalabushe's aunt  
and then covered himself with  
her blanket.





When Kalabushe arrived, the house was very quiet. She went inside and called out, "Aunt, where are you?"



Kalabushe did not hear her aunt's voice. She went to the inner room where her aunt slept. She was surprised when she saw someone covered with a big blanket.





Kalabushe asked, "Aunt, why are your ears so big today?"

Samari replied from under the big blanket, "So that I can hear you well."



Kalabushe asked again, "Aunt,  
why are your eyes so big today?"

Samari answered, "So I can see  
you well."





Kalabushe finally asked, "Aunt, why is your mouth so big today?"

Samari replied, "So I can eat you up!" He jumped from the bed and swallowed Kalabushe.



Kalabushe kept talking even when she was inside Samari's stomach. She asked many questions.





In the end, Samari was so tired of Kalabushe's many questions that he decided to spit her out.





Kalabushe and her aunt were rescued by the villagers.

From that day, Kalabushe did not talk too much to strangers.



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## Kalabushe the Talkative

Author - Gaspah Juma

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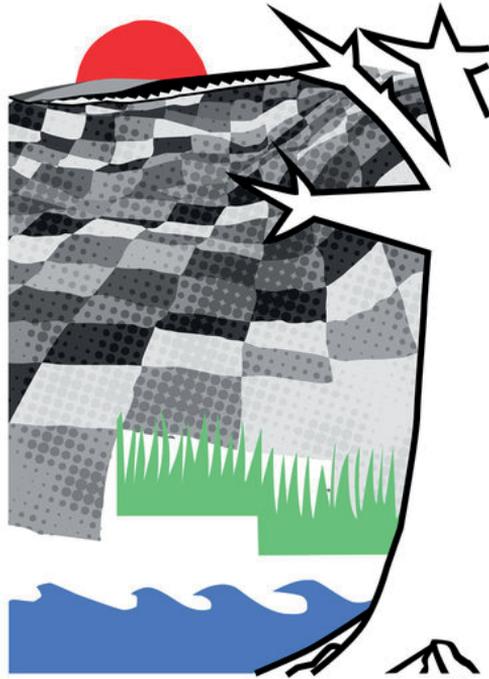


# First Man and First Woman

## Southern African Folktale

Jemma Kahn

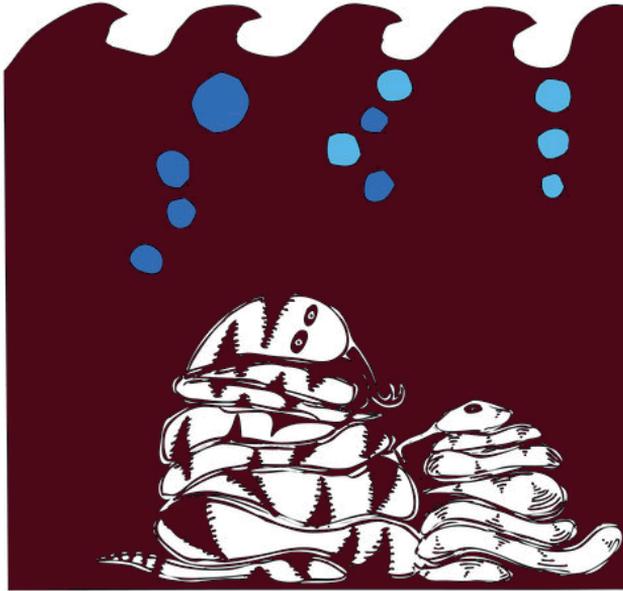




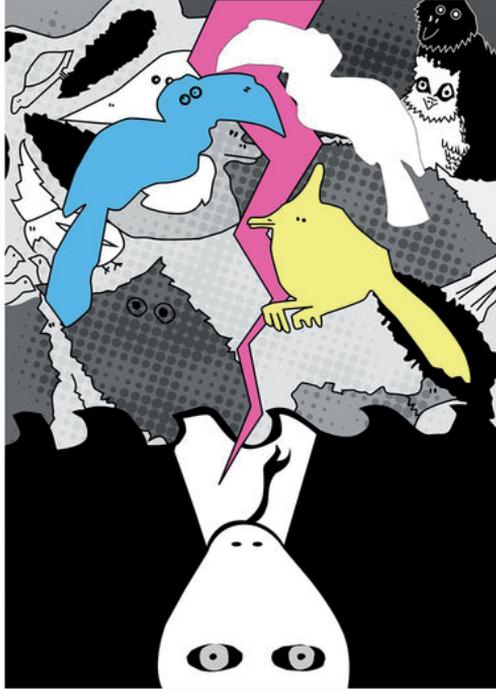
Long long ago when the earth  
was new, great mountains  
covered the world like a blanket,  
and tall trees spiked the sky.



In this world, there was a deep  
dark pool, silent and cold.

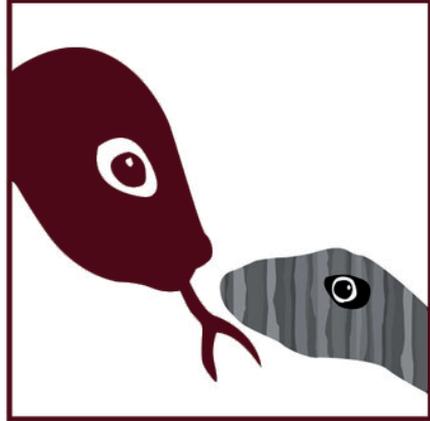


At the bottom of this pool were two snakes. One had thick strongly patterned coils, and the other was smaller and more delicate.

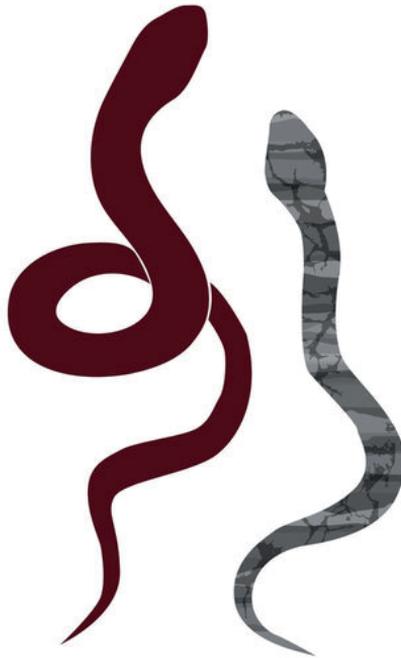


Then one day, there was a great storm. A flash of lightning pierced right to the bottom of the pool. The waters parted for a moment. The snakes saw the earth above, full of colours and shapes and feathered creatures. When the waters closed again, the snakes could not forget the beauty they had seen.





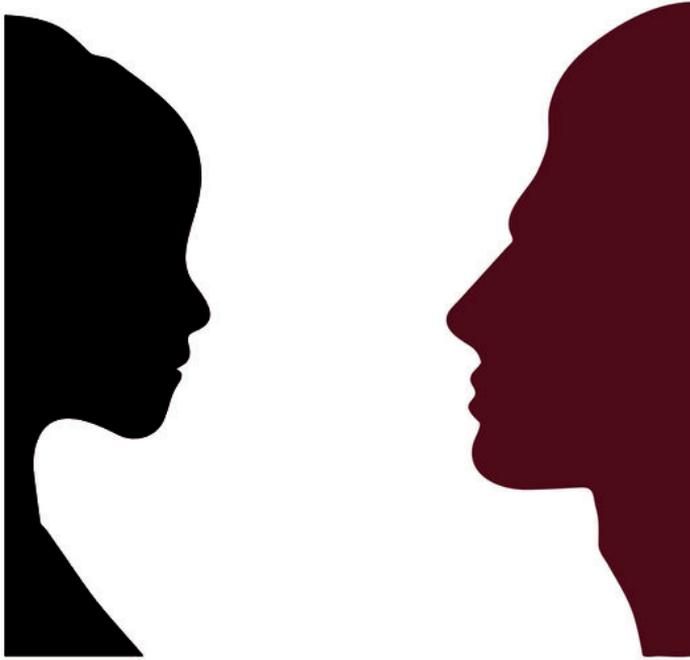
"We cannot stay in this dark cold pool any longer," they said to each other. "Let us go up and see the earth above." "How will we live on earth?" said the smaller snake. "Will we crawl on our bellies?"



"The birds of the air will not laugh at us for being so low," said her friend. "We will not crawl, we will walk!" Very slowly the snakes uncoiled themselves. Close together they began to swim up, up, to the light above.



And as they reached the surface of the water, a strange thing happened. The tips of their tails split into two. They grew limbs with feet and toes. From just beneath their heads grew two arms with hands and fingers.



They were no longer snakes, but  
Man and Woman.



"We will make our home in the hills," said Woman. "Each morning we will see the sun rise and feel it warm on our backs."  
"We will look after the grass and the trees," said Man. "And be friends with Bird and Beast."





"Come," said First Man. "I will,"  
said First Woman. And they  
walked out together into their  
new world.



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## First Man and First Woman

Author - Southern African Folktale

Illustration - Jemma Kahn

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# A Fish and a Gift

Liesl Jobson

Jesse Breytenbach



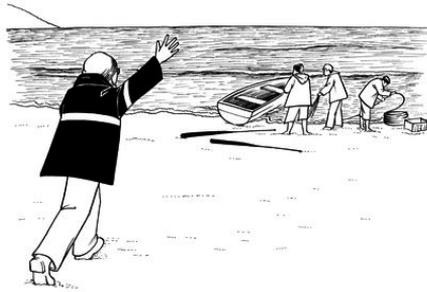


One special Friday Yusuf's father gets dressed before sunrise. He pulls on his heavy weather-proof jacket and the green woolen cap that covers his ears. He waves his boy goodbye. Yusuf's eyes brighten when Papa says, "Today is the day I will catch a fish and bring a gift home for you."

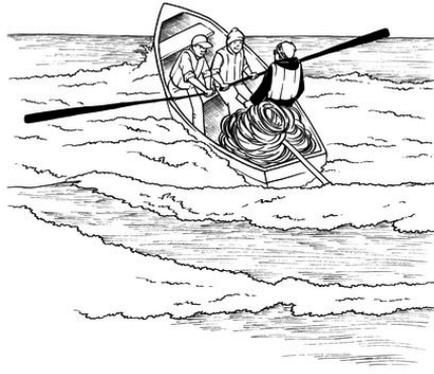


A fish and a gift? Oh, what will it be?  
Papa cycles down to Limbe.  
Squeak squeak go the wheels all the  
way to Surfer's Corner. Gulls circle  
the sky. "Whaaat? Whaaat?Whaaat?"  
they cry. "What will you bring back  
for Yusuf?" Papa rings his bell. "Wait  
and see what it will be!"





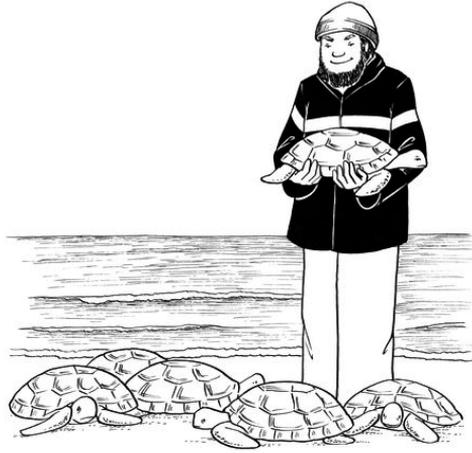
The fishermen watch the sun rise.  
They check their nets. They check their  
oars. They listen to the wind. They  
drag their boats down to the water.  
Yusuf's grandfather, Grandpa Salie was a  
treknet fisherman. Before him his father,  
Great Grandpa Musanje, knew the sea  
too.



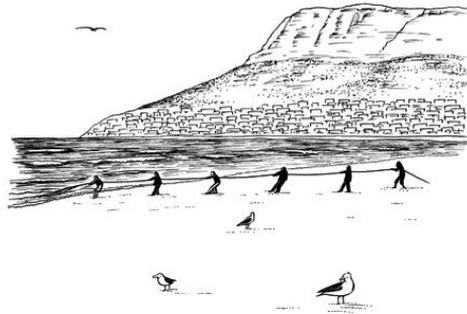
The boat rides into the waves. Papa's arms stretch to the oar. His leg braces against the side. His neck strains, his back muscles ripple. Papa sings as he works: "Drop and swish. Find a fish. Pull and plop. Don't you stop."



All day long Yusuf looks at the sky. It is bright and clear and windless. A fish and a gift! What will Papa bring home from the sea? Sometimes he brings a beautiful shell. Sometimes he brings a jewel green bottle rinsed by the waves.



Some days Yusuf's father brings a story. Like the time they found sea turtles on the sand, hundreds washed up in a storm. "Whaaat? Whaaat? Whaaat?" cried the gulls. "What will you do to help the turtles?" Papa said, "We saved those turtles, I tell you straight. We sent them back to the ocean, every last one."



Always Papa brings a song. He sings  
the song while he pulls the oars. He  
sings the song while he pulls the nets.  
He sings the song as he winds the  
ropes. He sings the song as he cycles  
home. "Drop and swish. Find a fish.  
Pull and plop. Don't you stop."



Grandma Safiya wants a nice fat yellowtail for her supper. "But we'll be lucky if they catch even a tiny crab. More likely it will be fish tail Friday. There's not so many fish left in the sea," says Ouma shaking her head. Yusuf holds Ouma's hand. They cross the road at the bathing cabins. "Whaaat? Whaaat? Whaaat?" cry the gulls perched on the bright rooftops. "What is for supper?"



Last year the fishermen fought with the surfers. Angry fists and shouting words. "Whaaat? Whaaat? Whaaat?" cried the gulls. "There's enough sea for everybody," said Yusuf's father. He showed them the fishing license that had been Grandpa Salie's. "Waves for all. Water for free."





Grandma Safiya watches through her binoculars, her fingers curled in curiosity. The shark siren sounds. Swimmers run back to the sand and grab their towels. Surfers rush to the shore, carrying their boards under their arms. Under the showers they strip off their wetsuits. "Whaaat? Whaaat? Whaaat?" cry the gulls. "What will Yusuf's father bring from the ocean?"





Yusuf's father and uncle and cousins heave and pull. A little shark has been caught. It twists and thrashes in the waves. Yusuf's father untangles the nets, singing to the shark: "Drop and swish. Find a fish. Pull and plop. Don't you stop." When the shark at last is free it streaks back into the waves, leaving only one fat yellowtail in the net. Grandma Safiya will be pleased.



The men pull the boat in and coil up the cables. A hard white triangle catches Papa's finger. "Whaaat? Whaaat? Whaaat?" cry the gulls. "What did you bring back for Yusuf?" As the sun goes down, Papa answers the gulls. "A lucky shark tooth for my boy." At home Yusuf holds his gift up to the stars.

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## A Fish and a Gift

**Author** - Liesl Jobson

**Illustration** - Jesse Breytenbach

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**Level** - Longer paragraphs

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