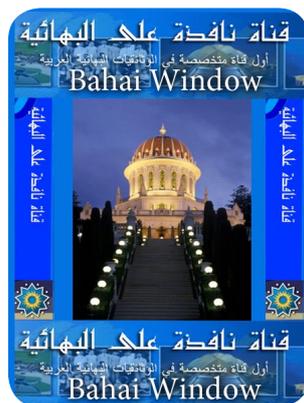




Illustrated Stories from Breezes of confirmation



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Graphic design and illustrations by Bahai Window

Illustrated Stories from Breezes of confirmation

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This book contains 14 illustrated stories of Breezes of Confirmation one book in a series prepared for junior youth. It tells the story of Musonda, a young girl who has just turned 13, and her older cousin Rose, who has come to visit for the school holidays. A theme that runs throughout the story is that of making an effort and receiving confirmations from on high. This book works best with young people aged 11 and 12, but is suitable for older youth as well. This is a valuable artistic material that could be used by animators of junior youth circles flexibly as they like.

Illustrated Stories

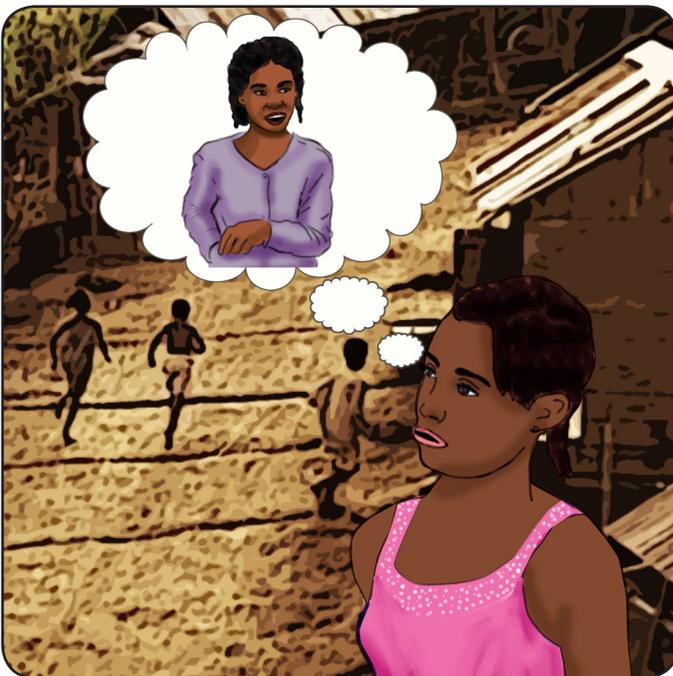
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Let's Meet Musonda



Musonda just turned thirteen. Her heart is full of joy. Musonda has two brothers and two little sisters. She loves to take care of her sisters, play with them and make them laugh. She lives with her family in a small village called Bumi. Her parents are Mr. And Mrs. Mulenga.



Today Musonda is excited because her cousin Rose is coming to stay with the Mulengas for a few weeks. Musonda and Rose are good friends. They like to tell each other their thoughts.

Meeting Rose at the Bus



Rose is fifteen years old. Musonda is looking forward to seeing her. She has many questions to ask Rose. She has been thinking about what she should do with her life.



Rose is travelling to Bumi by bus. Musonda and her father walk to the bus stop in the afternoon to meet her. When Musonda sees Rose come out of the bus, her eyes open wide. “Rose!” she calls. Rose turns and sees Musonda. They run to each other and hug for a long time. Then Rose greets Mr. Mulenga. He picks up Rose’s bag and the three walk home.

When they arrive home, Mrs. Mulenga is cooking dinner over the fire. Musonda's little sisters and younger brother run out to say hello to Rose. There is joy and laughter.



Mrs. Mulenga says:

I have cooked something special.



Rose says:

Oh, yes! I can smell the chicken cooking. I did not eat on the bus. A little boy and his mother were sitting next to me. After a while, the boy started asking for something to eat. I had some bread, and I gave it to his mother when I saw that she did not have any food with her.



Dinner



Musonda brings out the plates and cups, and Mrs. Mulenga serves the chicken. As they eat, they talk about Rose's family and how everyone is doing. After dinner the younger children clear the table, while the others wash the dishes together. Musonda and Rose offer to finish up. Alone with Rose, Musonda asks:

What do you think I should become when I grow up?

Rose says:

I keep asking myself the same question.

Musonda explains:

I think about service. I want to do something that can help other people. I would like to become a nurse, but you have to study hard. It also costs and I don't think my parents have enough money.

Rose says:

There is a word, «confirmation», that I learned a few weeks ago in one of my classes.

My teacher says that God confirms us and helps us in what we do.

I like this word very much now. I'm sure you will receive God's confirmation if you set your heart on becoming a nurse.

Rose says:



Whispering at Night



Later that night when the girls are in bed, Musonda whispers to Rose:

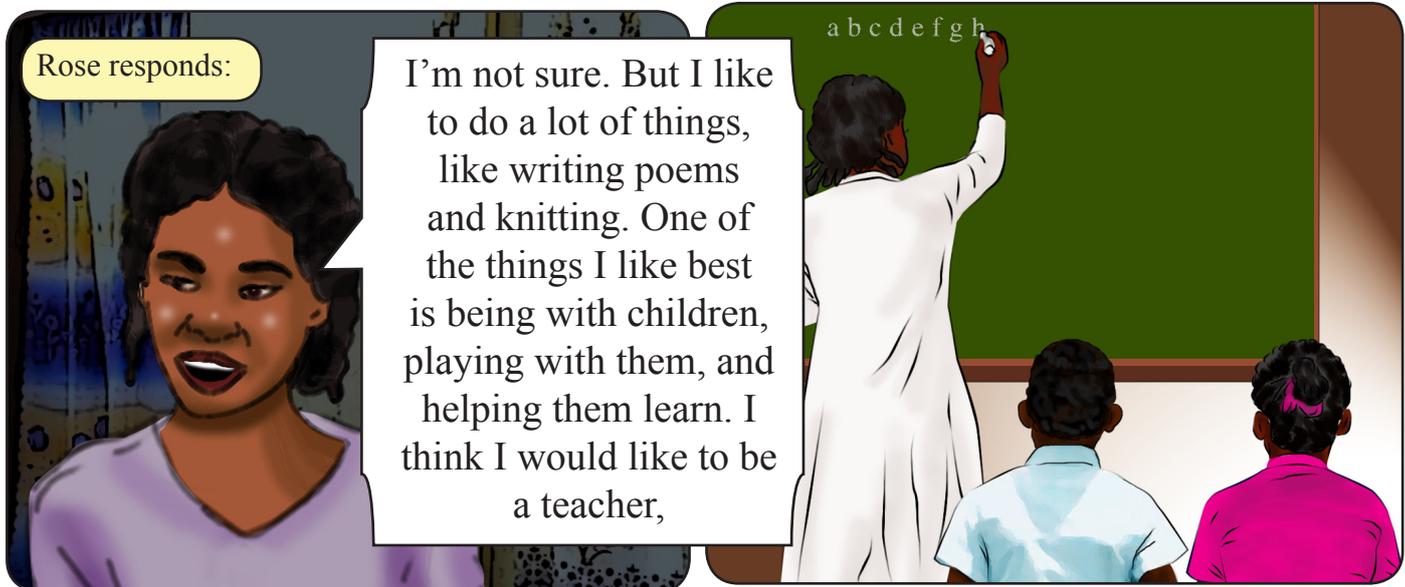
Rose, you said the word «confirmation». Does that mean that if I do the best I can in my schoolwork, God will send us money so that I can study nursing?



Rose rolls over and looks at Musonda.

Well, not exactly. I mean, I don't know. We have to try things and see what doors open. But I do know that God gives each of us talents. We must find out what our talents are and then learn how to use them,





Then she looks out the window at the stars in the night sky and listens to the cry of the crickets. She thinks about what her own talents might be. Then she thinks about her older brother, Godwin, and wonders what he will do with his future. He is four years older than she is and will soon be a man. They used to be such good friends when they were younger, but now they live in different worlds. « He is a good brother though» is her last thought before she falls asleep.

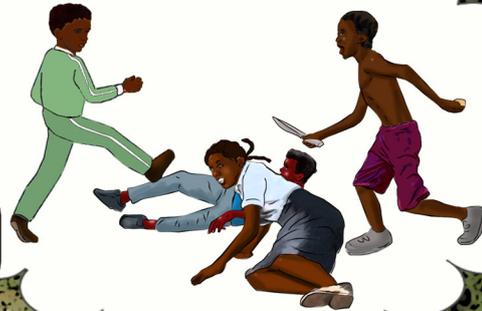
Prefer Your Brother



The next morning Musonda and Rose want to go walking together. But first they help Mrs. Mulenga clean the house. As they are hanging some clothes to dry, Rose sings a song. It is a beautiful song about thinking of the needs of others. They do their work quickly, and before it is too hot, they leave the house. They walk a long distance, sometimes talking and sometimes in silence.

Musonda asks Rose:

Why do you think some of the kids in the village fight so much?



Rose says:

I don't know, but it's not just kids. Look at all the people fighting and going to war with each other. In my youth group I learned this quote: « Ye were created to show love one to another...»

Musonda:

Yes, and the song you were singing this morning said that we should even prefer others to ourselves.

Rose says:

That came from another quote: «*Blessed is he who preferreth his brother before himself*»

There is silence for a while, and then Musonda says:

You know, that is true. If I preferred my brother to myself, and my brother preferred me over himself, things would work well.

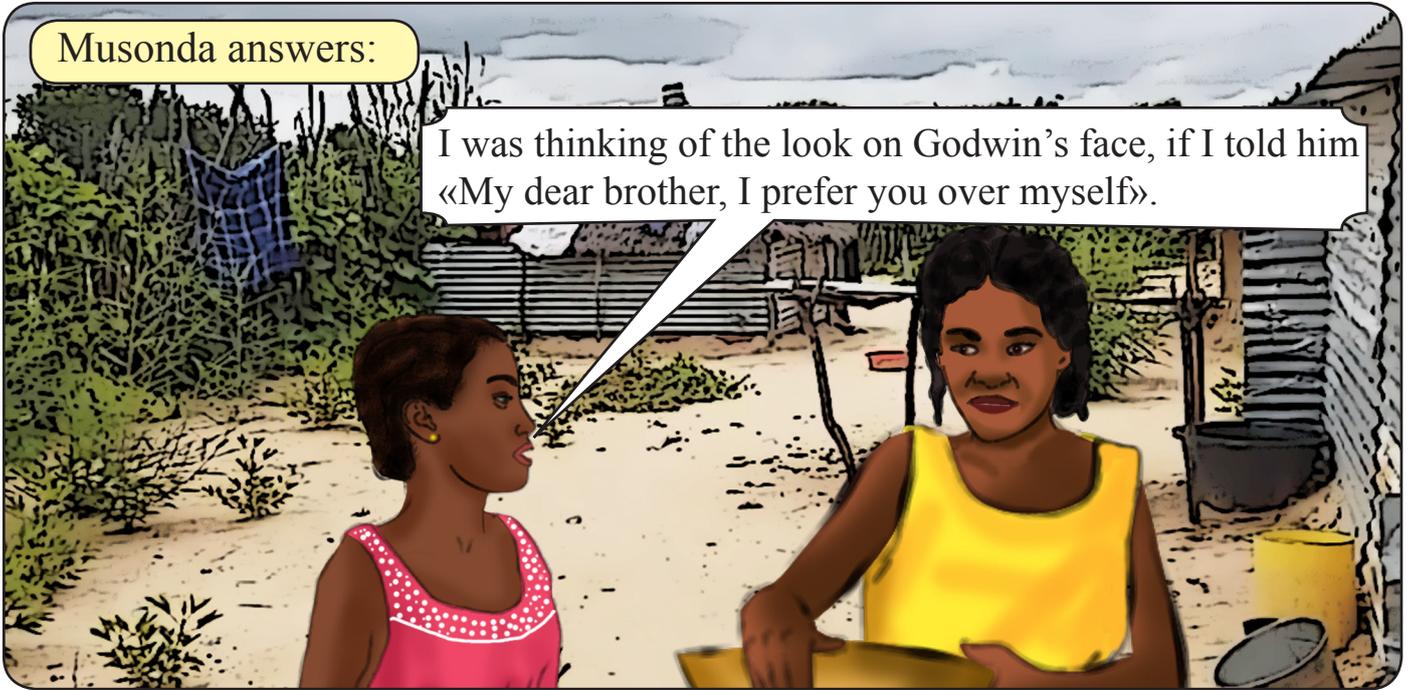
All of a sudden, Musonda begins to laugh:

Why are you laughing?

Ha HA HAAA!

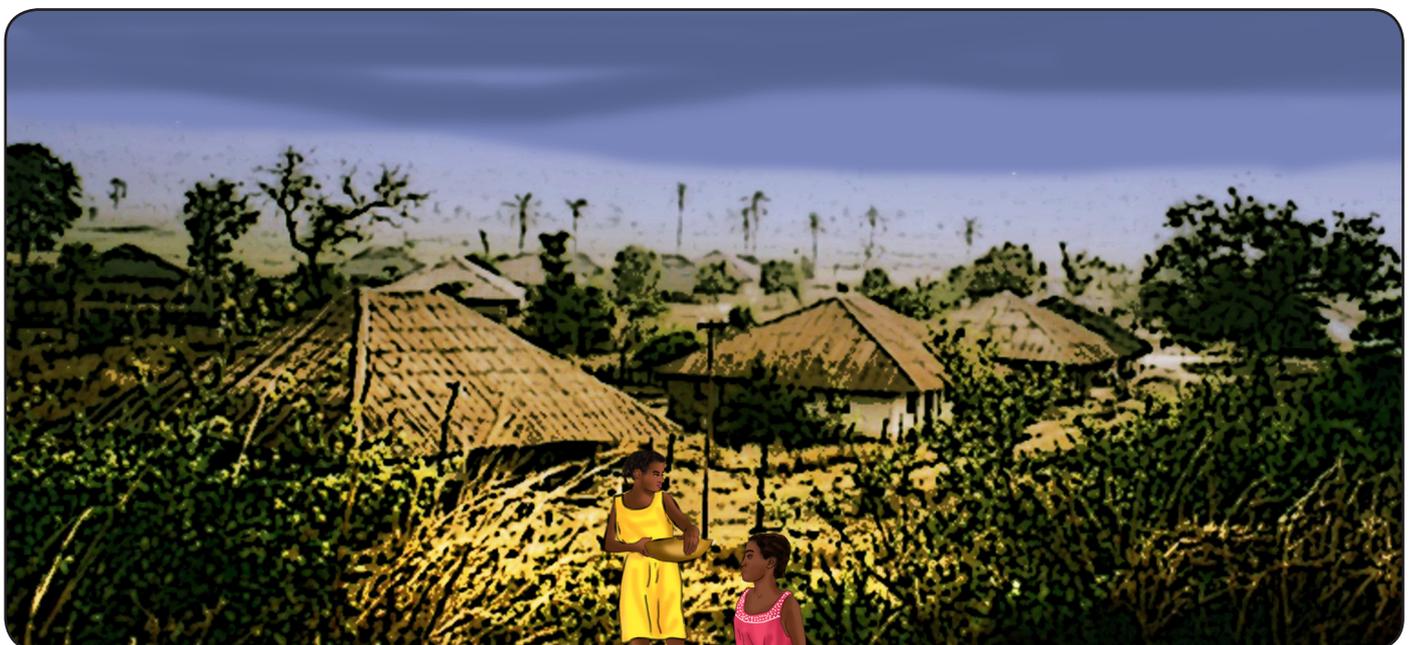
Musonda answers:

I was thinking of the look on Godwin's face, if I told him «My dear brother, I prefer you over myself».



Rose says:

That would be silly, Maybe we should talk about these things at dinner tonight. And who knows, we may bring up the subject of confirmation.



Chishimba



Godwin has a classmate and a close friend whose name is Chishimba. He often visits the Mulengas, and tonight he is staying for dinner. The conversation at the table jumps from one subject to another. Musonda wants to bring up the subject of confirmation, and she is impatient. Finally, there are a few moments of silence. Musonda says:



Rose and I have been talking about confirmation.

Godwin says , clearing his throat:



There goes my little sister

But to his surprise, Chishimba looks interested. he asks Musonda:

Musonda, also surprised, looks at Rose, hoping that she will answer. Rose says:

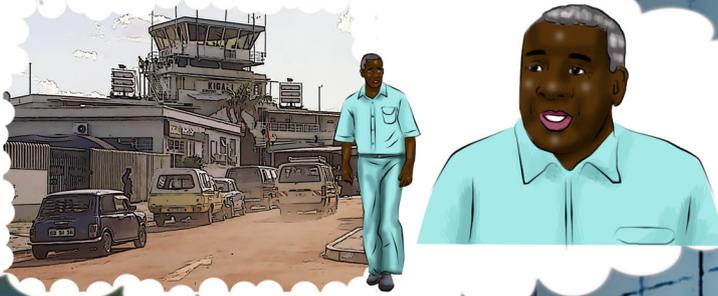


What does the word mean to you?



Confirmation... God confirms us and helps us in what we do!

Chishimba does not say anything for a while. There is sadness in his eyes. A few months ago," he slowly begins:



My father lost his job. He is honest and responsible, and everyone knows it.

For eighteen years he worked a guard in a company, and then, all of a sudden, they fired him. We all know the reason. If they had kept him two more years, he would have retired and the company would have had to pay him his pension.

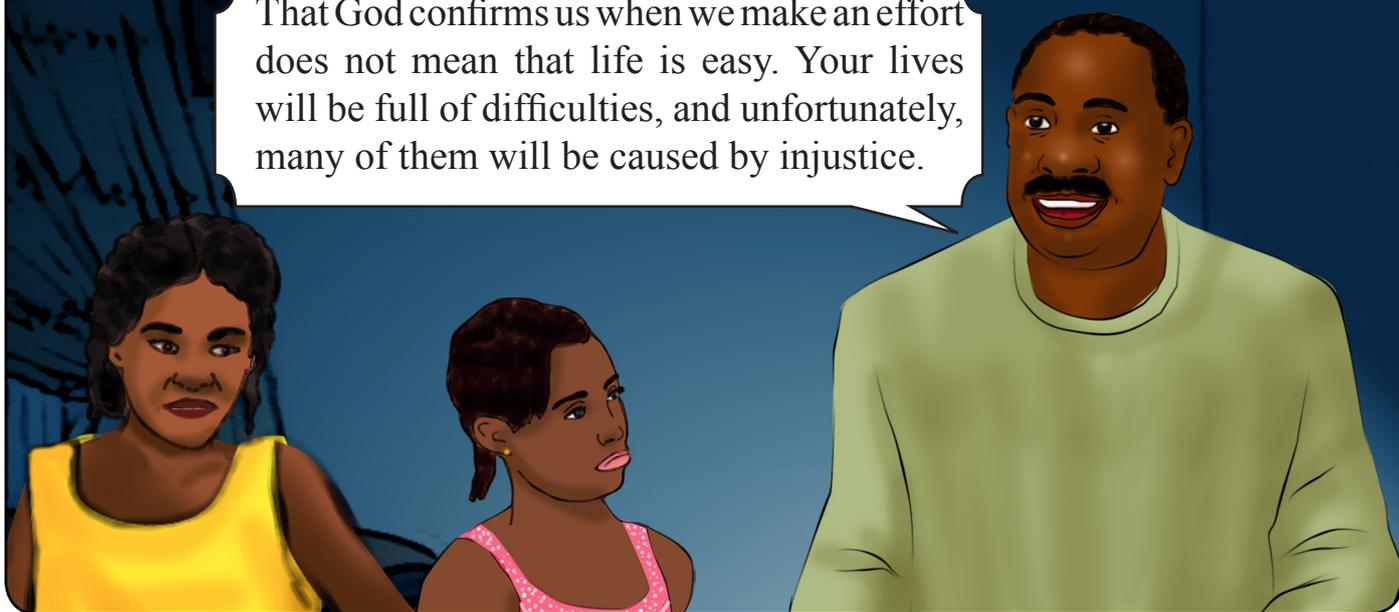
We don't have a lot of savings. Even though my older brother helps us, it looks like I cannot go back to school next year because I cannot pay for my room and board.



I really love school. I wonder why God does not help me.

Everyone looks in the direction of Mr. Mulenga, expecting him to answer this question. Mr. Mulenga smiles and says:

That God confirms us when we make an effort does not mean that life is easy. Your lives will be full of difficulties, and unfortunately, many of them will be caused by injustice.

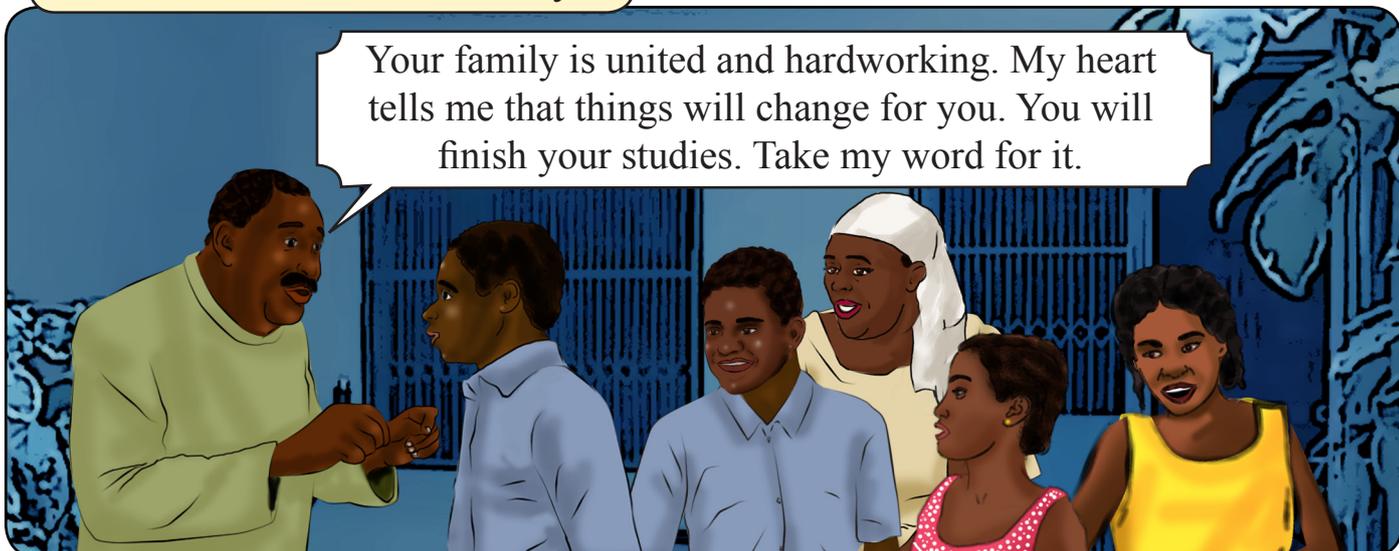


But you will have to work hard, and even though things may not go the way you wish for a while, you should be sure of God's confirmation. He will especially confirm you in your efforts to do away with injustice.



He turns to Chishimba and says:

Your family is united and hardworking. My heart tells me that things will change for you. You will finish your studies. Take my word for it.



The Football Match



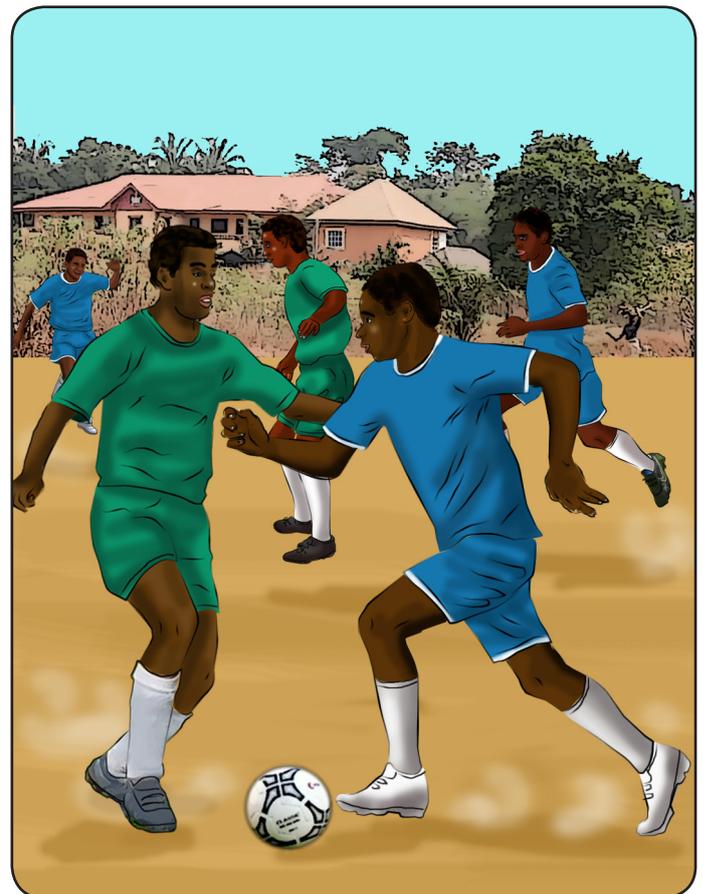
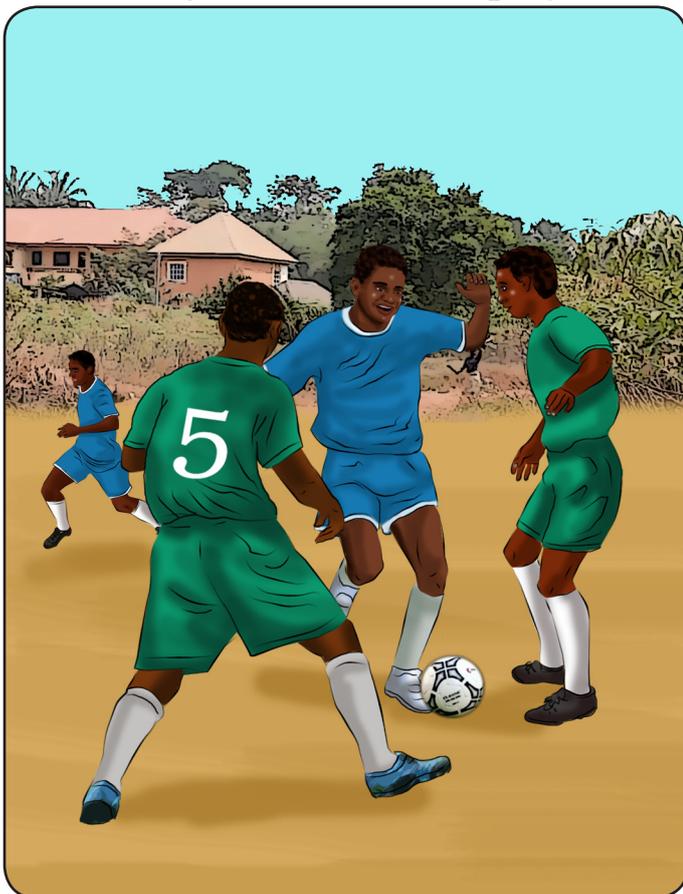
The Next day there is a football match between Bumi and the neighboring village, about three kilometers away. Godwin and Chishimba belong to Bumi's football team, and the whole family decides to go and watch the game. Musonda's grandparents live in the neighboring village, so the family will spend the morning with them, and then they will all go to the match in the afternoon. They set out on foot early in the morning. As soon as they arrive at the home of Musonda's grandparents, Godwin and Chishimba rush off to prepare for the game. Rose and Musonda stay to help their grandmother.



When they finish, they go around the village with Musonda's younger brother and gather together a few children. They bring them back to their grandparents' house and have a class with them. Rose teaches them songs and a beautiful quotation. Later their grandmother gives them a cool sweet drink, and then the children all run back to their homes. It is time for lunch.



Musonda's mother and grandmother have prepared a wonderful meal, and slowly everyone appears around the table. Her grandfather and father come in off the field, and Godwin and Chishimba arrive back from practice. The whole family is getting excited about the match. «*Don't eat too much,*» they tell the boys. «*You have to play later.*»



It is midafternoon when the match begins. Bumi scores the first point and is ahead throughout the match. But the other team scores two points in the last fifteen minutes of the game to win. It is a day of much excitement.



An hour before dark, the family starts back for Buumi. They have not walked far before they see at a distance a woman carrying firewood on her head. As she gets closer, they can tell that the firewood is heavy and that she is tired. Godwin and Chishimba immediately offer to help. She thanks them. They take the firewood to the woman's home, while the rest of the family continue on the road for Buumi.



After helping the woman, Godwin and Chishimba turn back for Buumi. They are full of energy and decide to try to get home before everyone else. «*I know a shortcut through the fields,*» says Chishimba. «*Follow me.*» and off they go. When the family arrives home they find Godwin and Chishimba standing at the door, tired but smiling.

The Clinic



Sometimes Musonda and Rose go to visit their friend Mrs. Phiri when she comes home in the afternoon. Mrs. Phiri is a nurse at the health clinic. One day the girls ask if they can go to the clinic and help, Mrs. Phiri says :

What a good idea! Come on Monday. On Monday mornings mothers bring their children under the age of five for their checkup.



Afterwards, there a class for the mothers to learn more about nutrition. It is difficult for them to listen because they have to take care of their children at the same time.

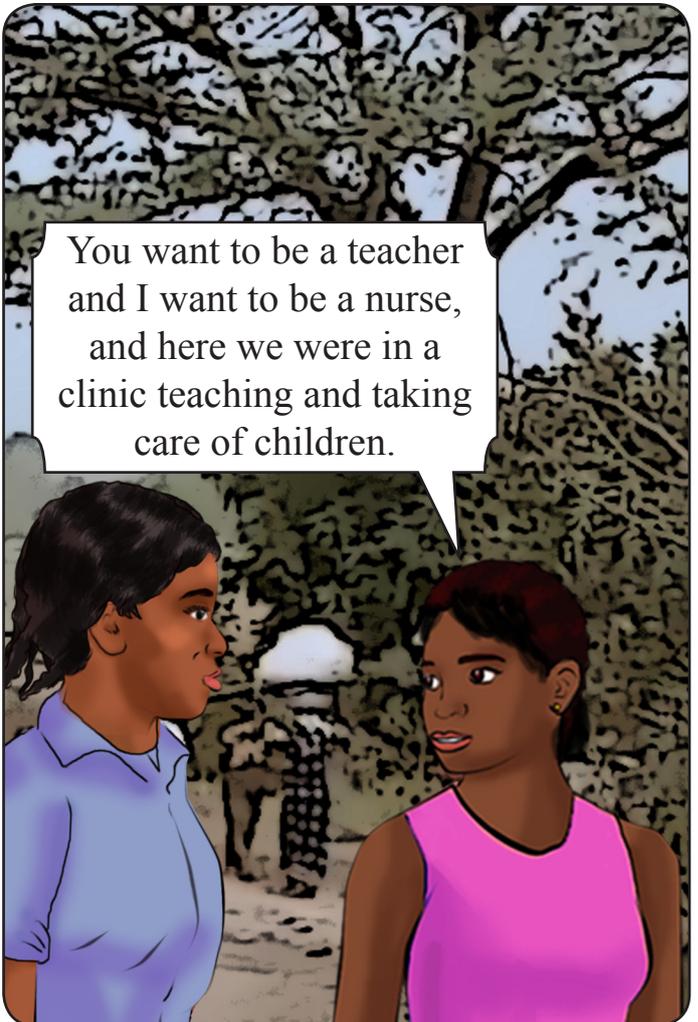
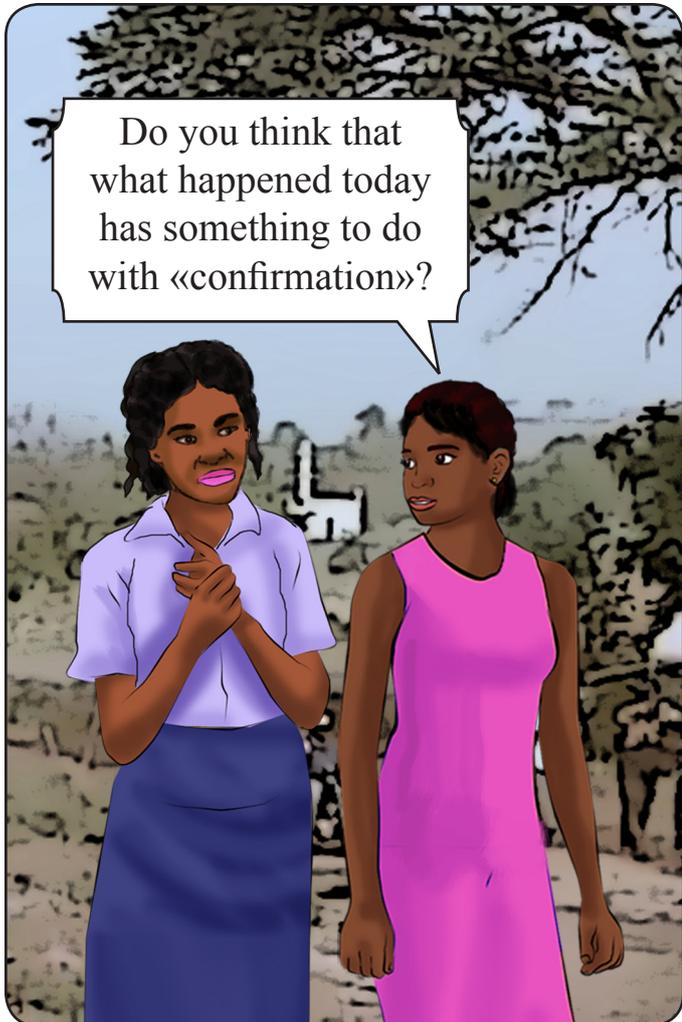


I have seen how good you are with Musonda's younger brother and sisters. Maybe you could have a class with the children while the mothers are having theirs.





The following Monday the two girls go with Mrs. Phiri to the clinic. When the time comes for the mothers to begin their class, Musonda and Rose take the children outside and sit with them in the shade of a tree. They sing songs and play games together, and Rose tells them a story. Just as the story is ending, the mothers arrive to pick up their children. Everyone is happy. Mrs. Phiri and the other health workers are pleased and ask the girls to come back the next week. On their way home, Musonda is very thoughtful. Finally she breaks the silence and says to Rose:



A Special Place



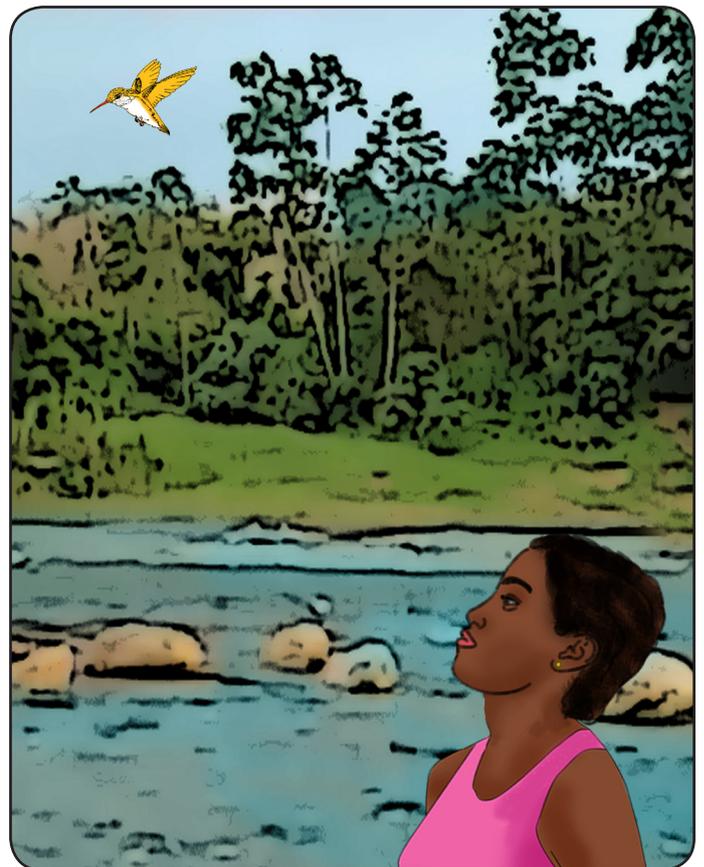
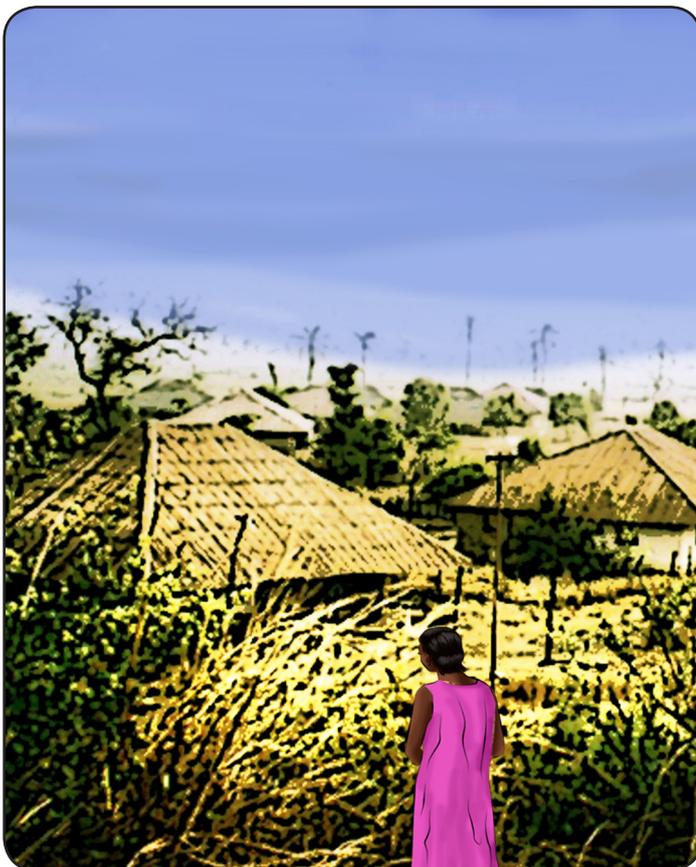
Musonda goes to a special place when she wants to be alone and think about things. It is near the river. Under the shade of a tall mango tree, there is a big, flat rock. Musonda climbs up the rock. She lies down on her back and looks up at the leaves and branches of the tree, and the blue sky between them. She listens to the birds and the soft flowing water of the river. It is a beautiful place, and Musonda always feels calm and happy when she is there.

In the weeks since Rose has come to be with her, the two girls have talked about many things, and Musonda's head is full of ideas. So one morning she decides to go to her favorite place. As she lies on the rock, she remembers the day at the clinic. «*It was good to do something useful,*» she thinks to herself. She remembers what her father often says, that trees should bear fruit. Then she wonders, «*How will I make sure that my life bears good fruits?*» She thinks immediately of the word «confirmation».





Just then there is a strong gust of wind. It blows some leaves into the air. Among the leaves Musonda sees a small yellow bird. After the wind dies down, the leaves all fall into the water, but the bird continues flying. As she watches the bird, a thought comes to her mind. The wind has given the little bird a push, and now it is flying higher and higher. Maybe that is what confirmation means. The bird made the effort to fly and the wind helped it. She climbs down from the rock and goes home to tell Rose what she has seen and thought. The soft breeze feels good on her face.



Fixing the Bicycle



One afternoon Musonda comes home after collecting water and finds Godwin working on Chishimba's bicycle. She sits in the shade near him and watches. After a few minutes she asks :



Godwin, do you remember how we used to play together when we were children?



Godwin says:

We would pretend we were hunters in the jungle, looking for wild animals,



Musonda adds :

And you would put me on your shoulders and let me lead the way. Things are different now. We are changing.





Godwin says :

Yes, you are too heavy to sit on my shoulders now!

Ha ha haaa haaa!



They both laugh:

Ha ha haaa haaa!



Musonda asks :

What do you want to be?



Godwin continues working on the bicycle , he answers :

I don't know. I want to make money. I want to help our parents and have a family someday,



Musonda asks :

But do you even think about your talents and how you can use them? Rose and I talk about this a lot.



He says as he picks up a wrench:

I know, I know, and you always talk about «confirmation»... «God helps us when we make an effort.

Musonda says :

But Godwin,
it is true.

Then she tells him the story of the yellow bird and the wind. She also tells him about the work she and Rose have been doing with the children at the clinic.



Just then Chishimba arrives :

Hello, How is the bicycle? Did you figure out the problem?

Godwin answers as he tightens a bolt :

The problem was in the gears. I am still working on it!

Chishimba says:

I knew you could fix it!

Then he looks at Musonda and says:

Do you know that your brother is a mechanic?

Rose comes out of the house and hears part of the conversation and she says :



Godwin, that is one of your talents! You are good at fixing things. You could be a good mechanic!

Godwin says :

Just because I can fix a bicycle, does not mean I am a mechanic. I would need training.

The other three smile and say, «So, make an effort!» Everyone laughs, even Godwin. :



Ha ha haaa
haaa!

Chishimba says with excitement in his voice :

Godwin, why don't you talk to Mr. Chiyesu, the mechanic with the shop near the market? Maybe he would teach you.

Rose adds :

Yes, that could be a way to start!



They laugh, but decide not to say anything to the boys.

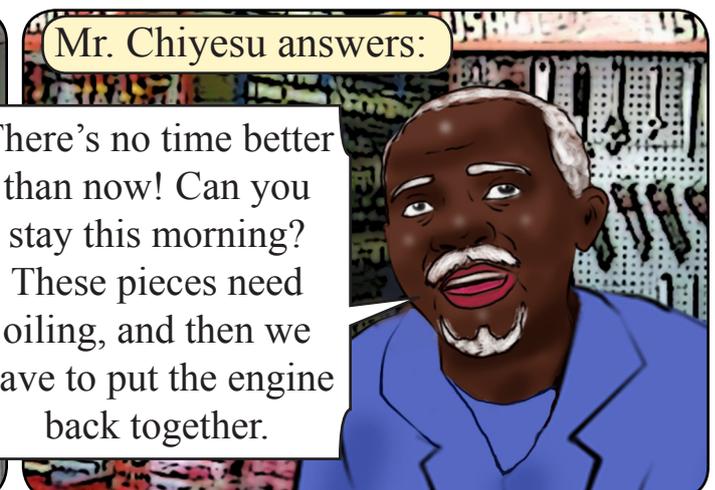
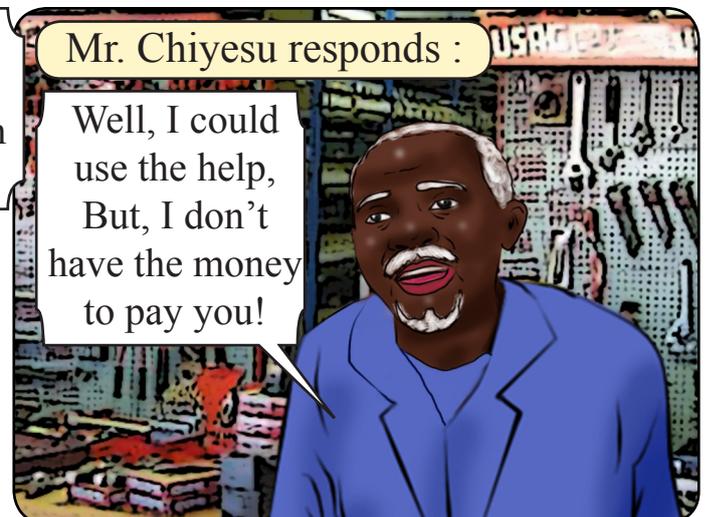
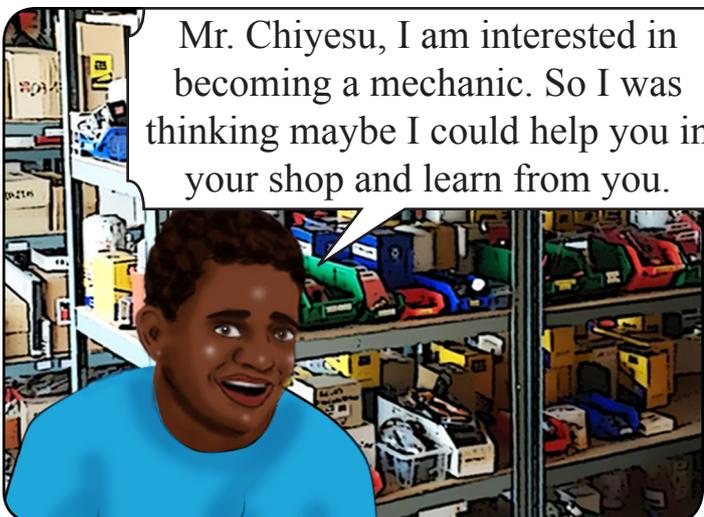


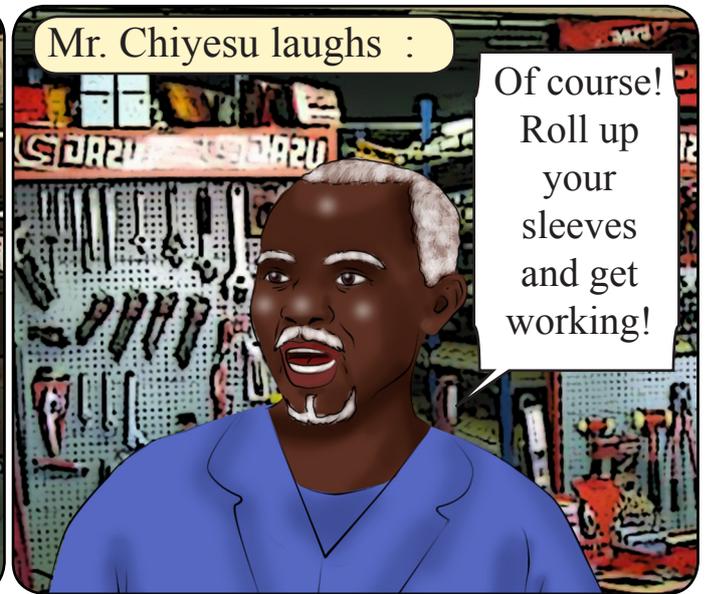
Godwin the Mechanic



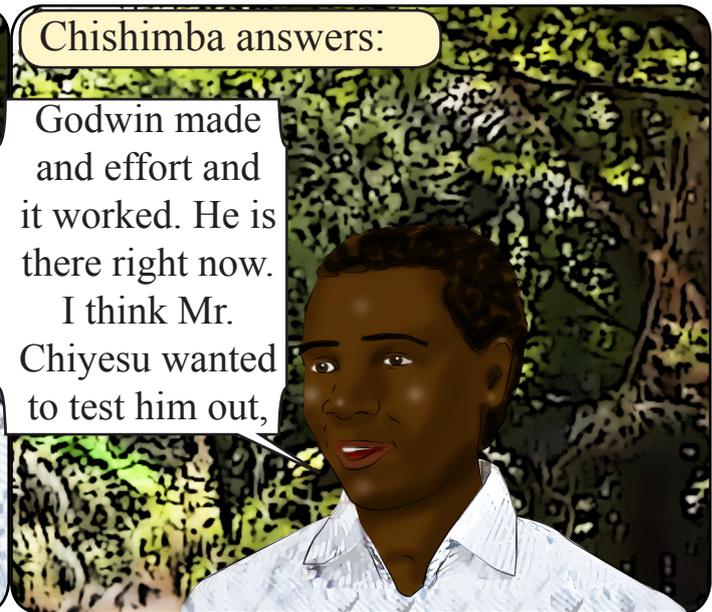
Early the next morning Chishimba and Godwin walk to the market. As they get nearer, they hear the sounds of people trading and bargaining, roosters crowing, and music playing from radios in some of the shops.

Mr. Chiyesu, a short, elderly man, is sitting outside of his shop. He is cleaning the pieces of a small engine and humming a melody while he works. His face lights up when he sees Chishimba, and they shake hands. Chishimba introduces Godwin and explains that he is good at fixing things. Godwin is nervous, but he finds the courage to speak up. He clears his throat and says:





Godwin eagerly begins his new work. After a few minutes Chishimba stands up to leave. He says goodbye to Mr. Chiyesu. He leans over and whispers «confirmation» in Godwin's ear. On his way home, Chishimba passes the clinic and sees rose and Musonda helping with the children. The girls are curious to know what happened. they ask:



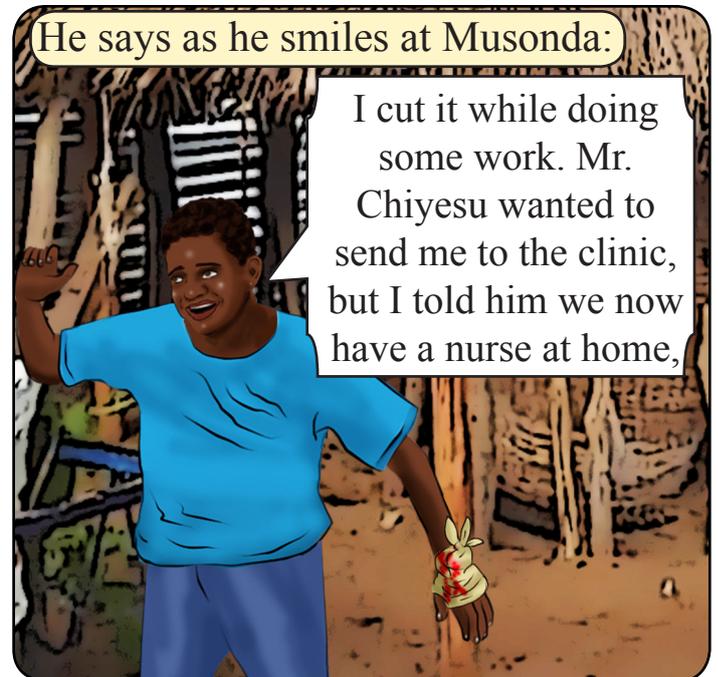
The girls go back to their activities with the children. «Helping others is a good thing» is Chishimba's thought as he turns down the road to his home. He whistles cheerfully.



Helping Chishimba

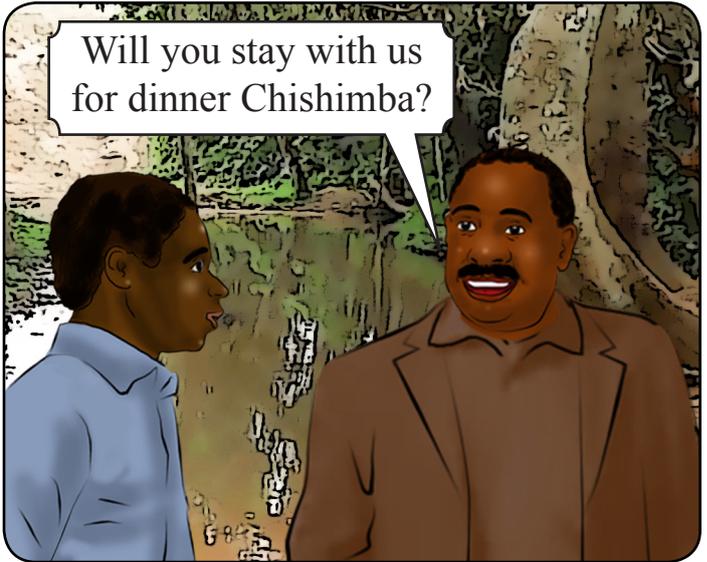


So many things have happened over the past few weeks that Rose decides to stay with the Mulengas for the rest of school holidays. She and Musonda will continue to help at the clinic on Mondays, and Godwin now works at the mechanic shop every day. Musonda is also participating with her mother in a first-aid course that is being offered in the village. She is learning what to do when someone gets hurt around the house. One day Godwin comes home holding his hand wrapped in a dirty cloth. By the look on his face, everyone can see that he is in pain.

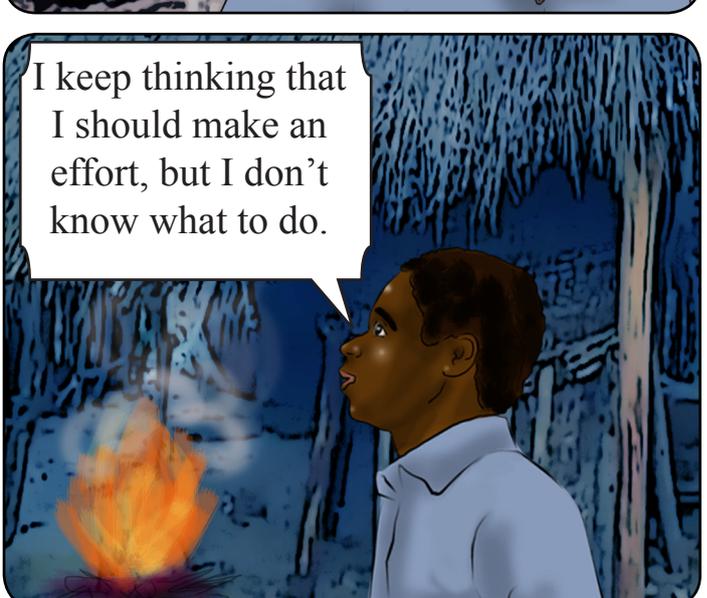
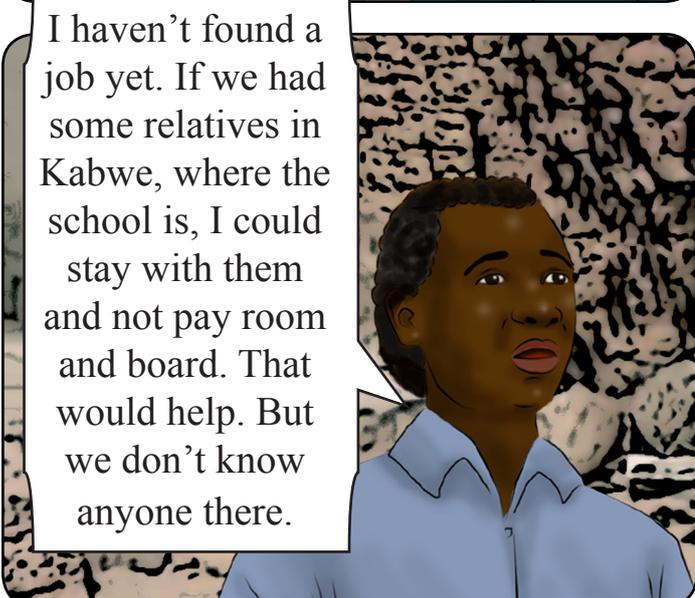
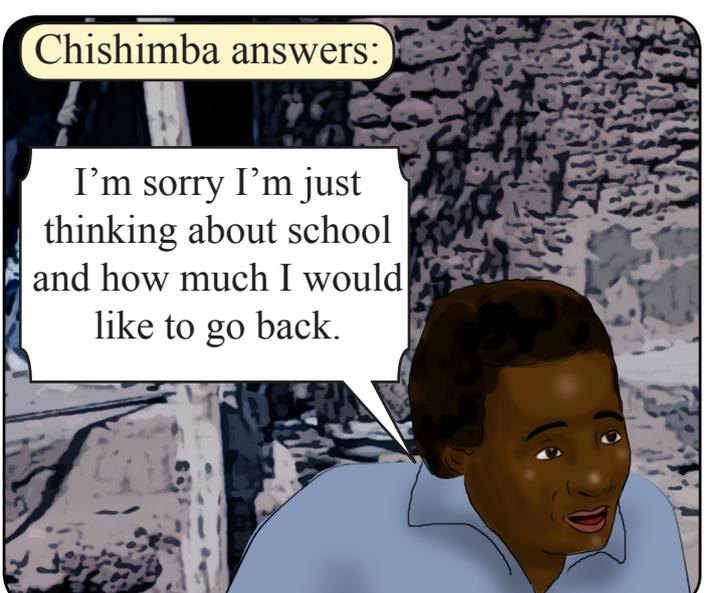


Mrs. Mulenga removes the cloth from Godwin's hand. The cut is not deep, but dirty. Musonda brings some water and soap and uses her new skills to clean the wound. «Ouch!» shouts Godwin as he pulls his hand away. Musonda realizes that she has been too rough. Chishimba is coming up the path to their house. He hears Godwin and calls out, «*I see the nurse is working with a difficult patient!*» Musonda pulls her brother's hand back into the warm water and washes it more gently.

A little while later Mr. Mulenga comes home from the field. He finds the others seated under the shade of a large tree and brings out a stool to join them.

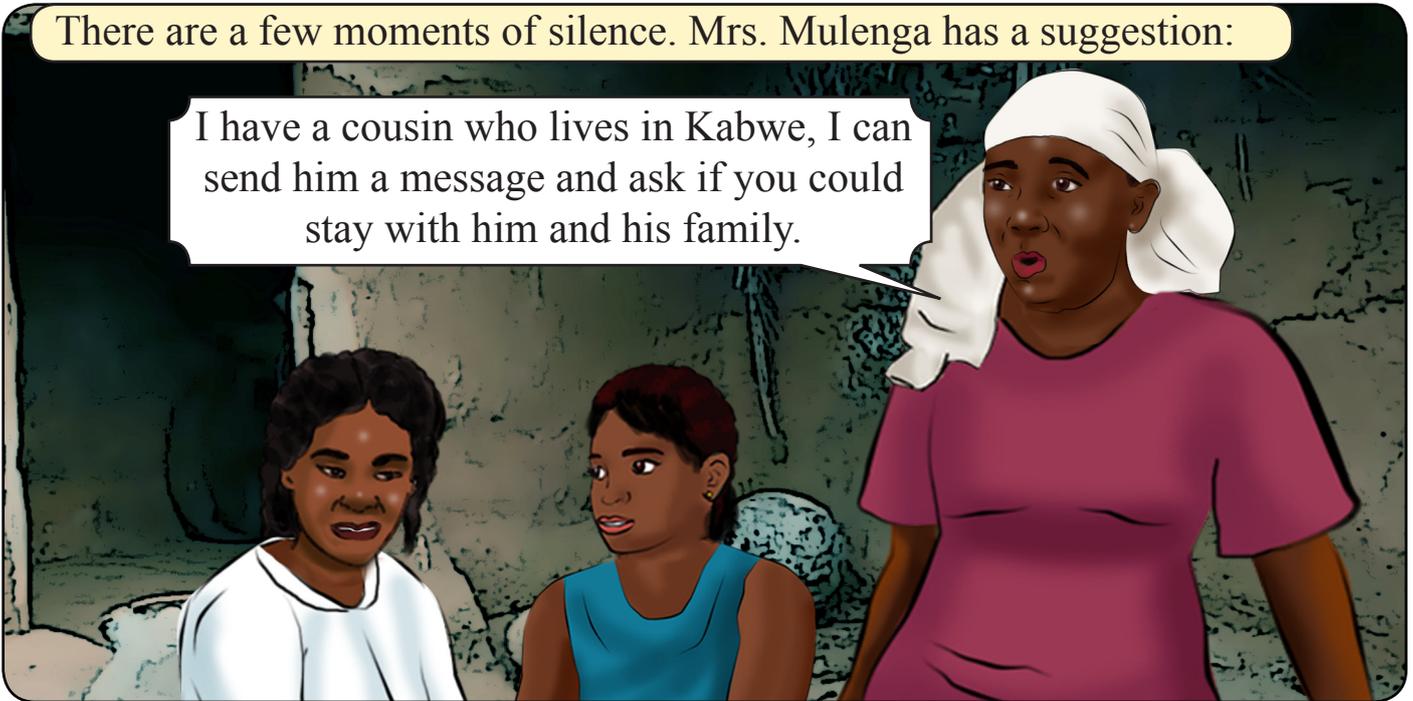


He gladly accepts the invitation. That night after dinner, the family sits by the fire. As everyone talks, Godwin notices that Chishimba is not saying much, he asks:



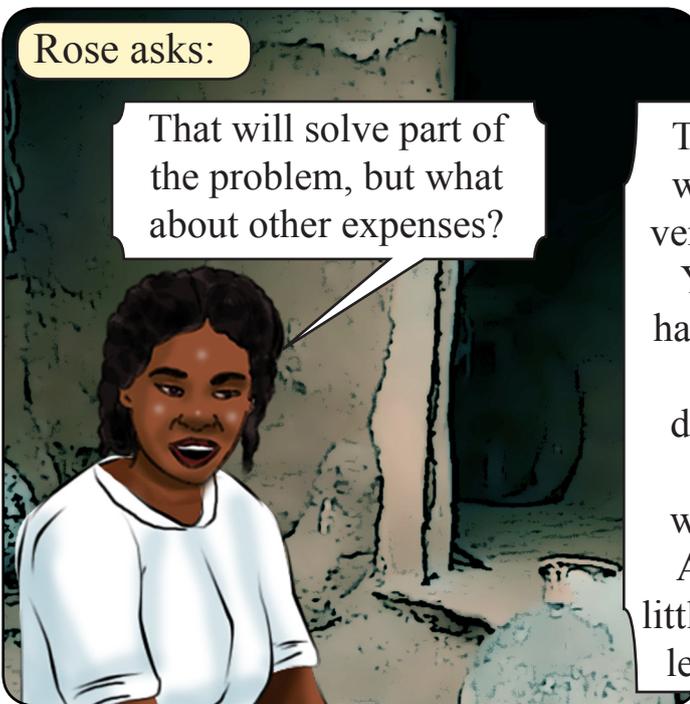
There are a few moments of silence. Mrs. Mulenga has a suggestion:

I have a cousin who lives in Kabwe, I can send him a message and ask if you could stay with him and his family.



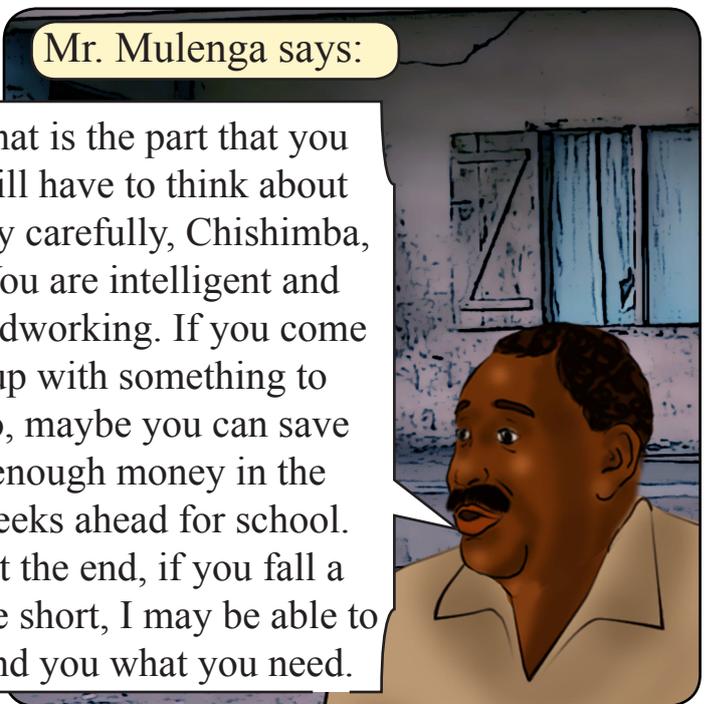
Rose asks:

That will solve part of the problem, but what about other expenses?



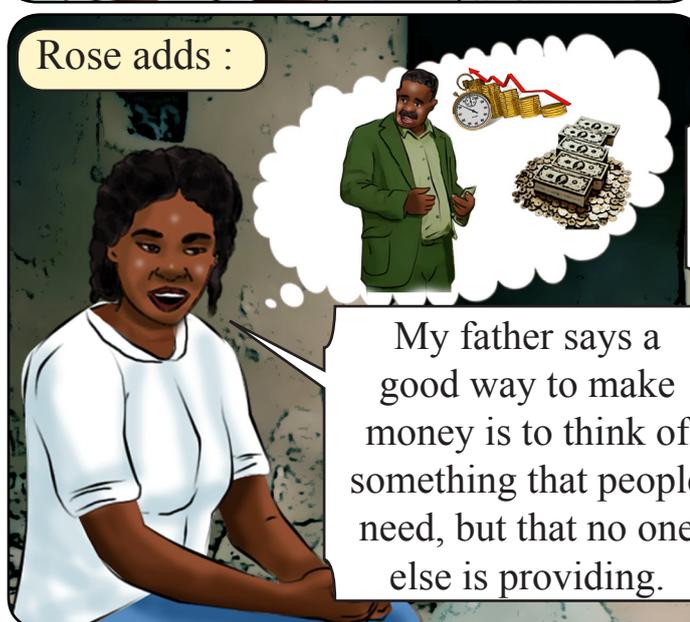
Mr. Mulenga says:

That is the part that you will have to think about very carefully, Chishimba, You are intelligent and hardworking. If you come up with something to do, maybe you can save enough money in the weeks ahead for school. At the end, if you fall a little short, I may be able to lend you what you need.



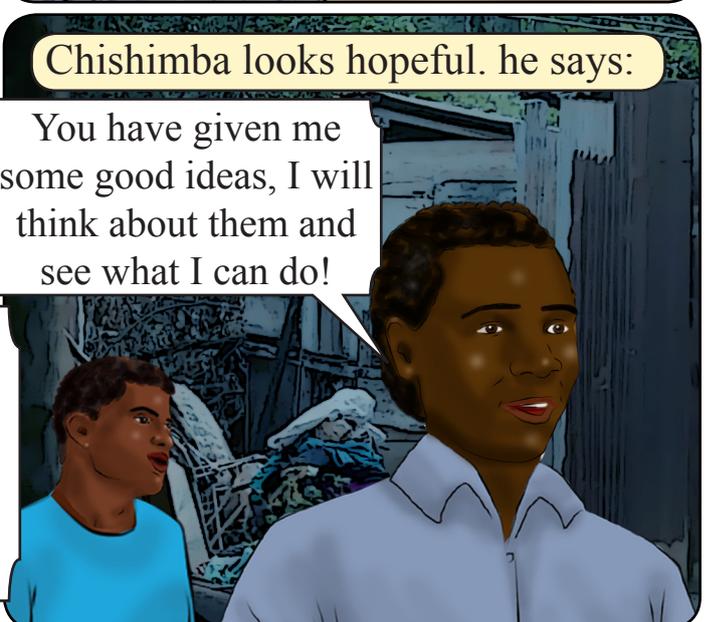
Rose adds :

My father says a good way to make money is to think of something that people need, but that no one else is providing.



Chishimba looks hopeful. he says:

You have given me some good ideas, I will think about them and see what I can do!



Confirmation



One morning Chishimba is on his way to the market to buy fish for his mother. He has been thinking for days about how to earn money for school. He thought of growing a crop to sell, but the planting season is over. He thought about selling charcoal at the roadside, but many people are doing this. «*Try to do something that no one else is doing,*» he remembers Rose saying. When he arrives at Mrs. Musole's stand to buy the fish, he finds out that she is not there. The woman in the next stand says to him:



Chishimba knows that Mr. Chiyesu also goes to town sometimes to buy car parts. This gives him an idea. «*Maybe I could offer to go to town for people,*» he thinks to himself, «*and bring the things they need. By staying and working then, they would not lose money.*» That night at home Chishimba consults with his parents, and they like the idea.

So the next day he returns to the market and talks with Mrs. Musole and Mr. Chiyesu:

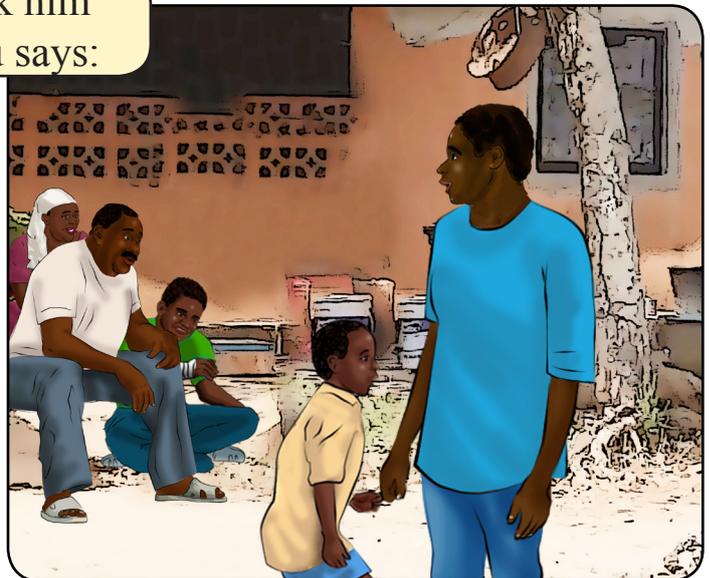
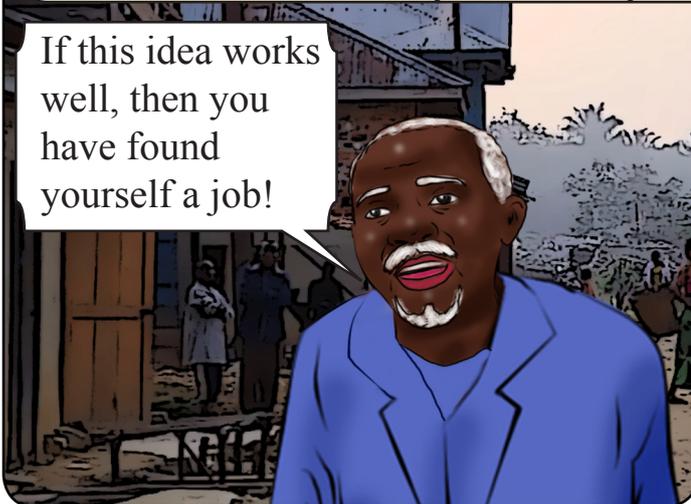


If you both pay me the money you would normally spend on bus fare, I will use half of it to go to town and bring you what you need. The other half I will save for school.



They agree that it is worth a try and ask him to come back in two days. Mr. Chiyesu says:

If this idea works well, then you have found yourself a job!



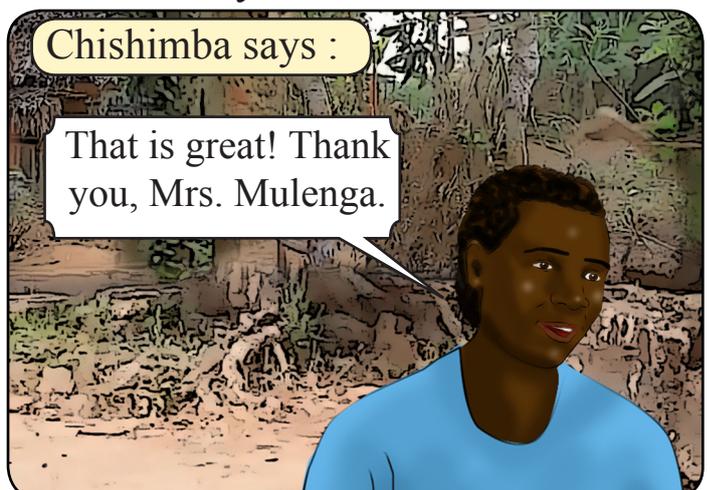
On his way home to tell his parents the good news, Chishimba stops to see Godwin and his family. He is eager to share his plan with them. After listening to his story, Mrs. Mulenga gives Chishimba some more good news. She explains that Mr. Mulenga had to go to Kabwe the day before and spoke to her cousin. He said that Chishimba was welcome to stay with him and his family, about one kilometer from the school. she says:

In exchange for meals and a place to sleep, you can help in their fields.



Chishimba says :

That is great! Thank you, Mrs. Mulenga.



Mr. Mulenga says :

Chishimba, It seems that you will soon be making some money. You will have to make sure that you save it for school,

even though sometimes that may seem difficult. Don't be tempted to spend it on silly little things.



Chishimba replies, his face beaming with a smile:

Don't worry, Mr. Mulenga. I promise I will not let that happen.



As he waves goodbye and turns to leave, he looks over at Rose and Musonda and says:

Doors are opening!



Promising Futures



The holidays are coming to an end. It is time for Rose to go home and start school again. As she prepares to leave, she and Musonda talk.

Musonda says :

I wish you did not have to go

Rose says :

Me too, It was really a wonderful holiday. I cannot believe all the things that have happened.

Musonda says :

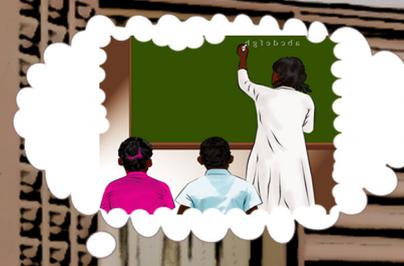
Yes, Look at Godwin. He liked his job so much that now he is talking about getting technical training after he finishes school.

And Chishimba's idea really worked well. He ended up with so many clients that he was going into town almost every day!

Rose says:



And look at us, working at the health clinic was a great experience. I am even more convinced that I want to be a teacher.



My village council arranges weekly classes for children of different ages, and almost all the children go.

This year I plan to offer to teach one of the classes!

Musonda says:

And I will try to keep working at the clinic, I can't go on Mondays anymore because of school,

but maybe I can help out some afternoons. You know, Rose, that first day we talked about «confirmation»!

I couldn't have imagined how important it was and how understanding it would change our lives.

Rose agrees:

It is true, look at how much we have all changed because we learned about making effort and expecting confirmations.

Musonda smiles she says :

I am really going to miss you, Rose,

The girls give each other a hug . Mrs. Mulenga calls from outside:

It is getting late, We need to start walking!

The girls appear outside where the others are waiting. Musonda asks:

Where is Chishimba?

Godwin says :

He told me that he had something to do this morning, so he will meet us at the bus stop,



He picks up Rose's bag, and they all start walking. Mrs. Mulenga and the younger children walk ahead, while Rose, Musonda and Godwin talk about this and that. When they arrive at the bus stop, the passengers are already boarding. They look around for Chishimba and see him running and waving from a distance.

he says breathlessly just before she gets on the bus:



On the way back home, Musonda asks if she can go down by the river. She runs to her special place, climbs on the rock and lies on her back, looking up at the sky. Many thoughts are going through her mind. She thinks about the school holidays and wonders what the coming year will bring. It is a windy day, and she remembers the yellow bird. «*Whatever I try,*» she whispers to herself, «*God will help me.*» As she gets up to leave, the wind blows against her back and gives her strength.



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