



Umntwana ongajwayelekile

Donkey Child

✎ Lindiwe Matshikiza

👤 Meghan Judge

💬 Zimbili Dlamini

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Ngibonani ngamehlo ami.

...

It was a little girl who first saw the mysterious shape in the distance.



Owesifazane okhulelwe ebambelele

...

As the shape moved closer, she saw that it was a heavily pregnant woman.



Umphakathi wamamukela ukuthi

...

Shy but brave, the little girl moved nearer to the woman. "We must keep her with us," the little girl's people decided. "We'll keep her and her child safe."



Ngabo lobo busuku wezwakala

...

The child was soon on its way. "Push!" "Bring blankets!" "Water!" "Puuuuusssshhh!!!"



Wabeletha umntwana oyimbongolo.

...

But when they saw the baby, everyone jumped back in shock. "A donkey?!"



Sizokwenzenjani? Abantu besho bemangala.

...

Everyone began to argue. "We said we would keep mother and child safe, and that's what we'll do," said some. "But they will bring us bad luck!" said others.



Babaleka bonke abantu. “Ngizokwenzenjani ngalomntwana oyimbongolo?” Kucabanga lo wesifazane.

...

And so the woman found herself alone again. She wondered what to do with this awkward child. She wondered what to do with herself.



Ekugcineni wazibophezela ukumthanda

...

But finally she had to accept that he was her child and she was his mother.



Umntwana oyimbongolo wakhula

...

Now, if the child had stayed that same, small size, everything might have been different. But the donkey child grew and grew until he could no longer fit on his mother's back. And no matter how hard he tried, he could not behave like a human being. His mother was often tired and frustrated. Sometimes she made him do work meant for animals.



Umama wakhe waphatheka

...

Confusion and anger built up inside Donkey. He couldn't do this and he couldn't do that. He couldn't be like this and he couldn't be like that. He became so angry that, one day, he kicked his mother to the ground.



Umntwana umbongolo wabaleka

...

Donkey was filled with shame. He started to run away as far and fast as he could.



Umbongolo wazizwa enomzwangedwa,elambile futhi ekhathele. Wagcina ezumekile.

...

By the time he stopped running, it was night, and Donkey was lost. "Hee haw?" he whispered to the darkness. "Hee Haw?" it echoed back. He was alone. Curling himself into a tight ball, he fell into a deep and troubled sleep.



Waphaphama sekumi indoda

...

Donkey woke up to find a strange old man staring down at him. He looked into the old man's eyes and started to feel a twinkle of hope.



Indoda yamthatha umbongolo

...

Donkey went to stay with the old man, who taught him many different ways to survive. Donkey listened and learned, and so did the old man. They helped each other, and they laughed together.



Esekhulile umbongolo, indoda

...

One morning, the old man asked Donkey to carry him to the top of a mountain.



Ngolunye usuku banyukela

...

High up amongst the clouds they fell asleep.
Donkey dreamed that his mother was sick and
calling to him. And when he woke up...



Umbongolo waphaphama

...

... the clouds had disappeared along with his friend,
the old man.



Umbongolo wayekhathazekile. Waphindela

...

Donkey finally knew what to do.



Umbongolo wayehamba ezibuza, Ngabe nguye umama wami lo.

...

Donkey found his mother, alone and mourning her lost child. They stared at each other for a long time. And then hugged each other very hard.



Wamthola umama wakhe, bahlala kahle ndawonye.
Lapho umama wayegibela kumntwana wakhe
bazulazule endaweni yangakubo.

...

The donkey child and his mother have grown together and found many ways of living side by side. Slowly, all around them, other families have started to settle.



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