

SAVING A FRIENDSHIP

A tale from Zimbabwe

Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: Hunting bush and trees in the mountain wilderness of Africa

Characters:

Narrator

Farhani: a newly married man

Zuri: the blind brother-in-law of Farhani

Narrator: Zuri had been blind since birth. Soon after his sister's marriage, he decided he would like to go hunting with his new brother-in-law, Farhani.

Zuri: Farhani, it would give me great pleasure to go hunting, but it is impossible since I am blind.

Farhani: Let me help you. I shall be your eyes. Yes?

Zuri: Yes! That would be wonderful. Let us go.

Narrator: The next day, Farhani and Zuri went off into the hunting grounds. The bush was very thick so Zuri held onto Farhani's arm.

Farhani: We must walk slowly, Zuri, because the bush and trees grow very close to each other. That is the perfect place for animals to hide.

Narrator: Because Zuri was blind, he had a great ability to hear the noises made by the animals in the bush and in the trees.

Zuri: Ahhh... I can hear the warthogs close by. Yes, over to our left. And there goes a bird up in that tree on the right.

Farhani: Zuri, pay more attention to where you are walking. We will soon arrive at the place where we will set our traps.

Narrator: At last they were ready to place their traps.

Farhani: Zuri, come here by the water's edge. This is the best place for your trap.

Zuri: Where will you place your trap?

Farhani: Just a little distance away from yours. (placing a disguise on his trap) It will take me just a few minutes to set the trap perfectly.

Narrator: Farhani did not bother to disguise Zuri's trap because it was very hot and he was anxious to get home to his new bride.

Zuri: (thinking) This is strange. I wonder if Farhani disguised my trap? How silly of me to wonder. I'm sure he did.

Narrator: Early the next morning, the men returned to their hunting place.

Farhani: (loud whisper) Be quiet Zuri! You will scare all of the animals away!

Zuri: (very excited) I can hear the birds in the traps! Yes, we've caught some birds!

Narrator: Farhani walked to his trap. There he found a small bird, released it from the trap and put in his pouch. Then he walked over to Zuri's trap and found a most beautiful bird with marvelously colored feathers.

Farhani: (thinking jealously) Oh, these rainbow colored feathers would make a perfect gift for my bride! Zuri's bride will never know.

Narrator: Then Farhani knelt down and took Zuri's bird from the trap. Quickly, he switched the birds and handed his small bird to Zuri.

Farhani: You made a fine catch!

Zuri: Give me a moment while I hold the bird in my hands. I want to feel it carefully. Now - I can put it in my pouch.

Narrator: After walking awhile, the men sat in the shade of a tall tree to rest. They shared many ideas and enjoyed talking with each other.

Farhani: I am troubled by people fighting, Zuri. Why do you think people fight one another?

Zuri: That is a powerful question Farhani. Let me think a few moments.

Farhani: Have you come up with an answer?

Zuri: I think so. I think people fight each other because they do what you have done to me.

Narrator: In shock and filled with shame, Farhani took the beautiful bird from his pouch and gave it to Zuri.

Zuri: Are there any more questions you'd like to ask me?

Farhani: Yes. How do men become friends after they fight?

Zuri: They do what you have just done, my friend.