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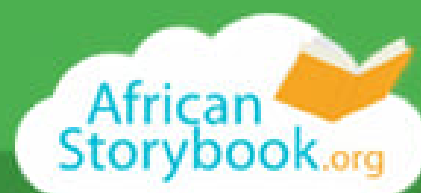


# My First Day at the Market

Timothy Kabare

Catherine Groenewald

English



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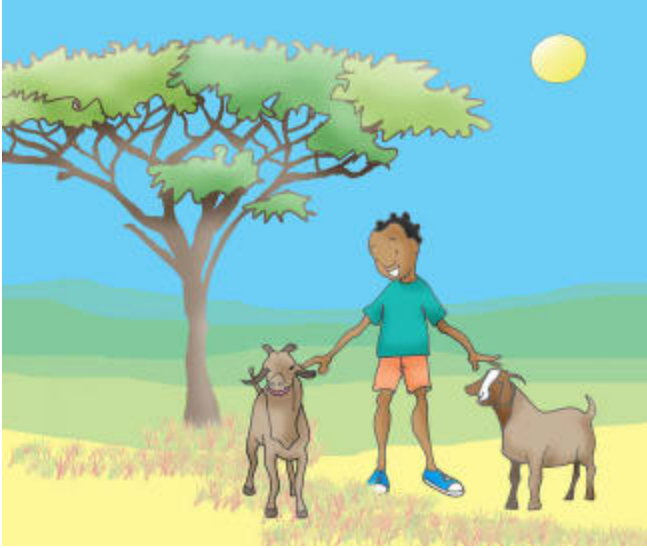
# My First Day at the Market

Timothy Kabare

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English





I live in Kakuma village, a very hot dry place, full of thorny trees, and more goats than people. Even the market place is quiet, with only a few small shops. Most people use bicycles for transport.



One morning my mother called me and said, "Etabo, today you turn six years old. We have a present for you." "What is it? What is it?" I asked eagerly. "Tomorrow we're going by bus to the market in Eldoret," she replied, "And we're taking you with us!" My first visit to the city! I was so excited that I could hardly sleep that night.



The next day at the Kakuma bus stop, I stood between my mother and my aunt. I wore my new pair of blue jeans and a red t-shirt. I felt very small between my tall slender mother and my big round aunt.



The bus was very full, so I had to sit on my mother's lap. Tired from the heat and excitement, I slept the whole way and saw nothing.



The sun was just rising when we reached Eldoret market. At the entrance was a woman selling grains. Over in one corner there were two men getting ready to lay out their sweet potatoes. Over in another corner was a woman holding a shiny blue helicopter. "Mother, mother, look at that helicopter!" But mother pulled me away.



In the middle of the market, there was a large stall that sold different types of fruit. Some of them I had never seen before. "What are the names of these fruits?" I asked my mother. She pointed, "These are oranges, and these are guavas." I turned around and said, "And these?"





Of all the fruits at the stall, I liked the apples most. I liked their shape and colour. I wondered how they tasted. I turned to mother and said, "Could you buy one for me?"



As soon as she gave me the apple, I let go of my mother's hand, took the fruit with both hands, and bit into the juicy flesh. I had never enjoyed a fruit the way I enjoyed that apple. All I cared about was my apple.



When I finished the apple, I looked up to talk to my mother. But she was not there! My mother and aunt had gone. I looked to the right, then to the left. But they were nowhere to be seen. "Have you seen my mother?" I asked the women selling potatoes nearby. They took no notice. I started to cry.



A while later, a woman took me by the hand and led me to a place where there were other children. A big man with a thick beard asked, "What's your name, boy?" "E-ta-bo," I replied through my tears.



I wondered if children were also sold at the market. I stopped crying and looked around to see if anyone would buy the children in the room. Soon a woman came in and picked up one of the children. "I will be the next one to be taken away," I thought. "And then I'll never see home again!" I started crying once more.



When I heard the big man with the thick beard saying, "Where is Etabo?" I cried even harder. "I do not want to go with you!" I sobbed. I hid away from him.



When my mother and aunt heard my name, they rushed to the room.  
"Etabo, Etabo!" a familiar voice called. It was my mother.



As I got up to hug my mother, my aunt said, "Etabo, we were looking for you to give you your birthday present." And from a big bag, my aunt pulled out a shiny blue helicopter. "It's yours!" she said.



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