

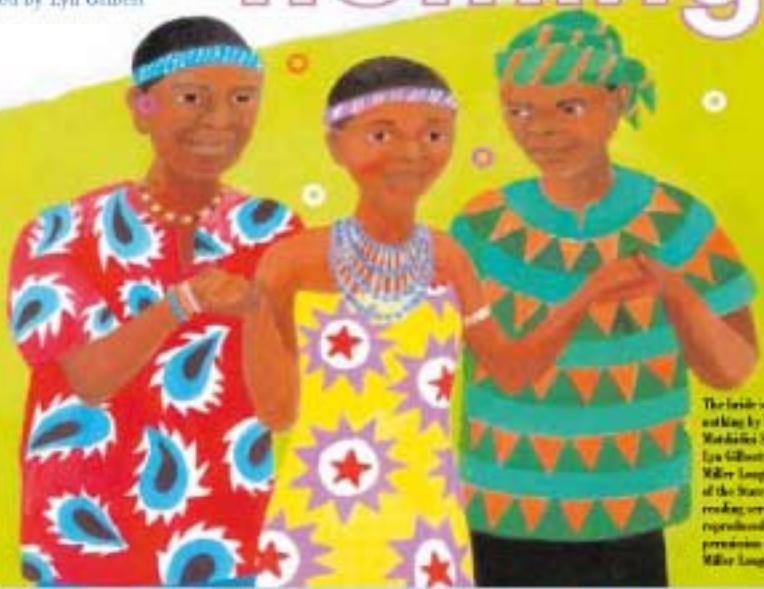
The bride who had nothing



2.

There was once a man who loved his daughter very much. One day she married the son of a chief. But the man did not want his daughter to leave his home to go and live with her husband's family.

By Selimah Motshidi Sefako
Illustrated by Lyn Gilbert



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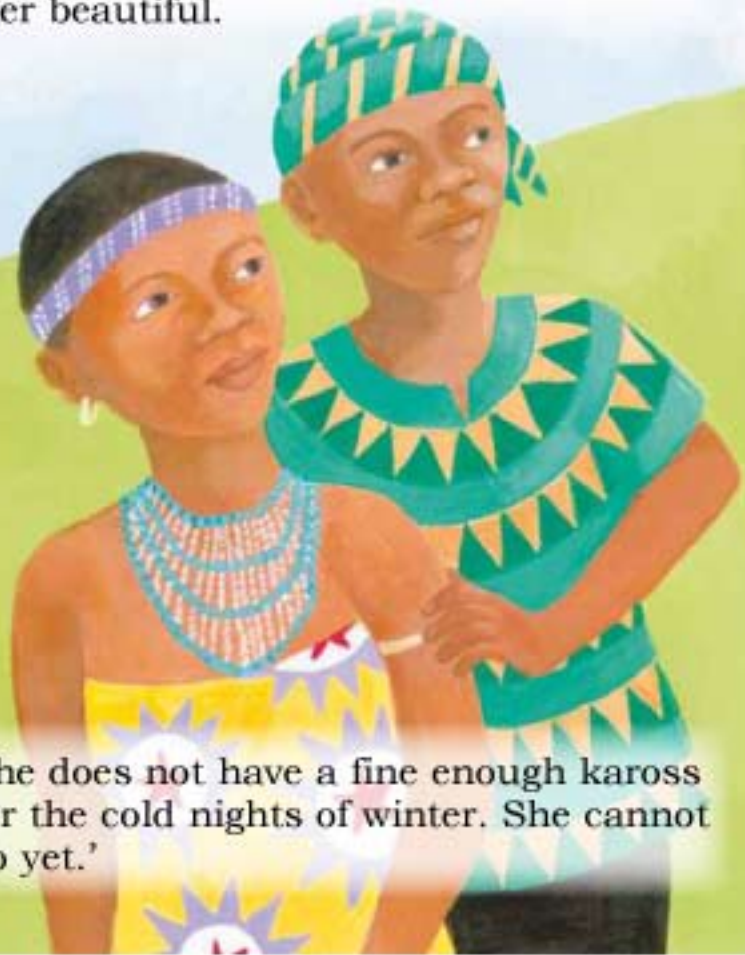
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3. 'She cannot go yet!' the man said. 'She does not have enough baskets and clay pots for her new home. She does not have enough blankets for her new family. She does not have enough beads to make her beautiful.



She does not have a fine enough kaross for the cold nights of winter. She cannot go yet.'

So the bride stayed and she stayed.

4.



She stayed until her baby was born.



She stayed until her mother had made her a fine kaross.



She stayed until she had many blankets



and baskets and clay pots



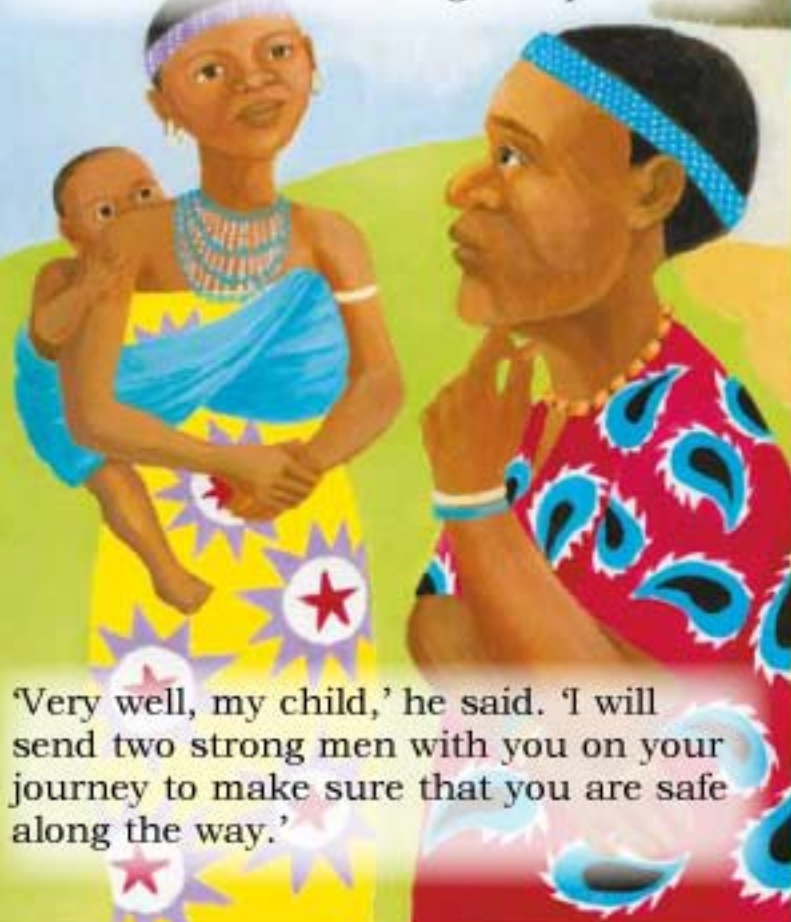
and fine necklaces of beads to wear,



and she stayed until her child was one year old.

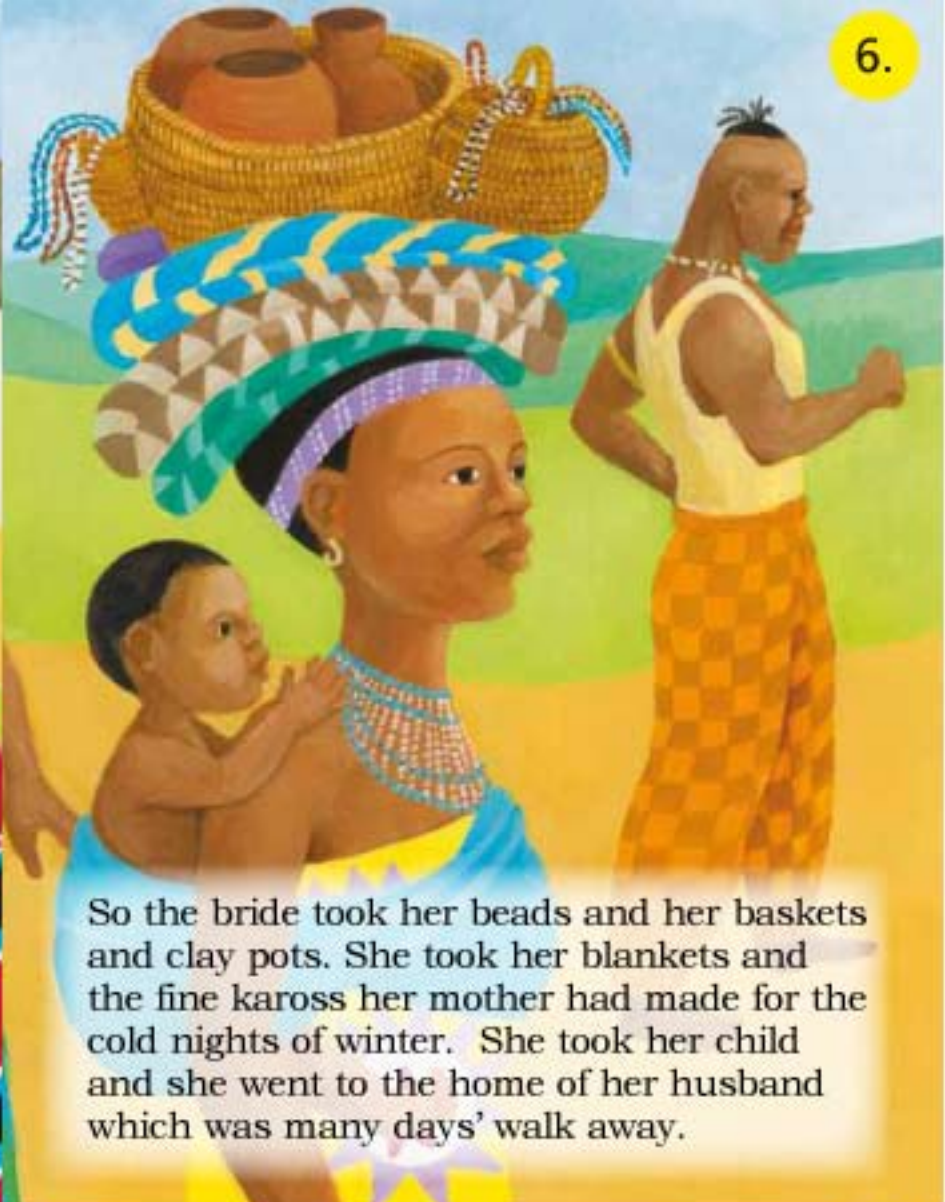
5. 'Now,' she said to her father, 'I must go to my husband's home.'

Her father was very sad when he heard these words, but he saw that she must go and that he could no longer stop her.



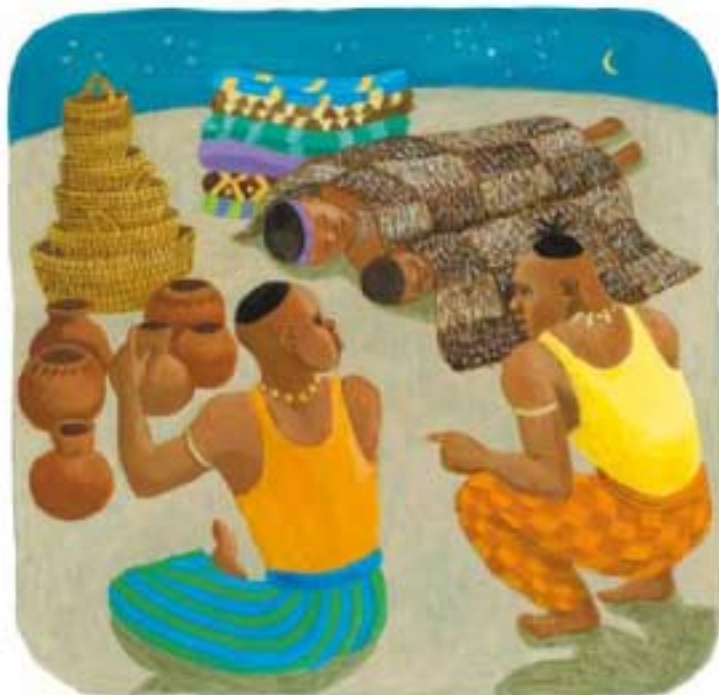
'Very well, my child,' he said. 'I will send two strong men with you on your journey to make sure that you are safe along the way.'

6.



So the bride took her beads and her baskets and clay pots. She took her blankets and the fine kaross her mother had made for the cold nights of winter. She took her child and she went to the home of her husband which was many days' walk away.

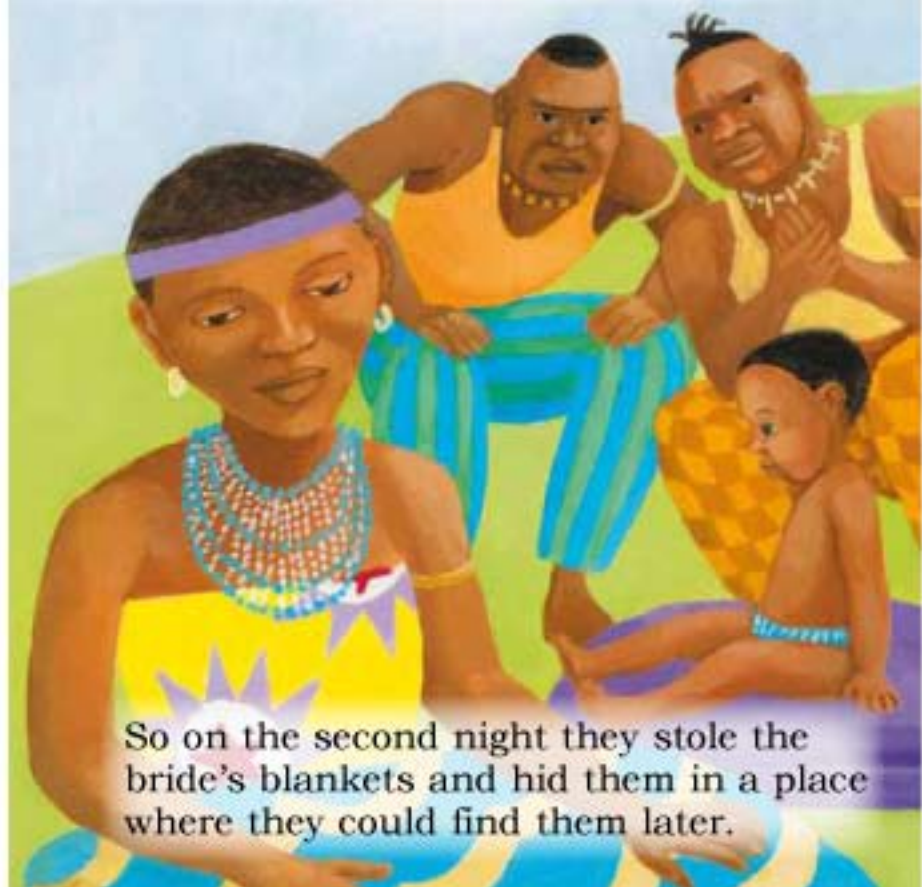
7. The strong men that her father sent with her saw the many baskets and calabashes that the bride had. They were jealous.



'Why should she have so many of these things?' they asked each other. 'Why should we not take them for ourselves?' So on the first night they stole the bride's baskets and clay pots and hid them in a place where they could find them later.

8.

The next day the strong men noticed that the bride had many warm blankets that she was taking to her new family. 'Why should she have so many warm blankets?' they asked each other. 'Why should we not take them for ourselves?'

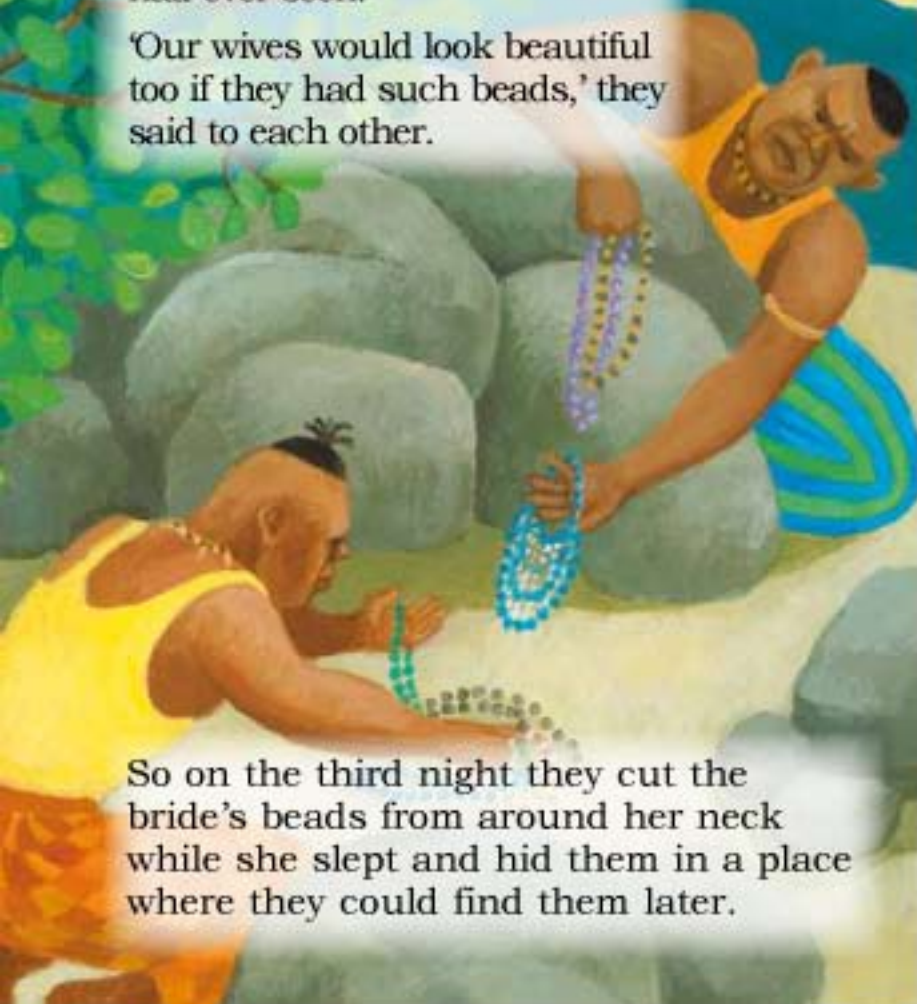


So on the second night they stole the bride's blankets and hid them in a place where they could find them later.

9.

On the third day the strong men noticed that the bride had the most beautiful beads that they had ever seen.

'Our wives would look beautiful too if they had such beads,' they said to each other.



So on the third night they cut the bride's beads from around her neck while she slept and hid them in a place where they could find them later.

10.

All that the bride now had left was the fine kaross that her mother had made for her and her child.

On the fourth night when the strong men talked together they decided to steal the fine kaross.

'It's not fair that she should have it,' they said to each other. 'We too are cold in the winter nights.'

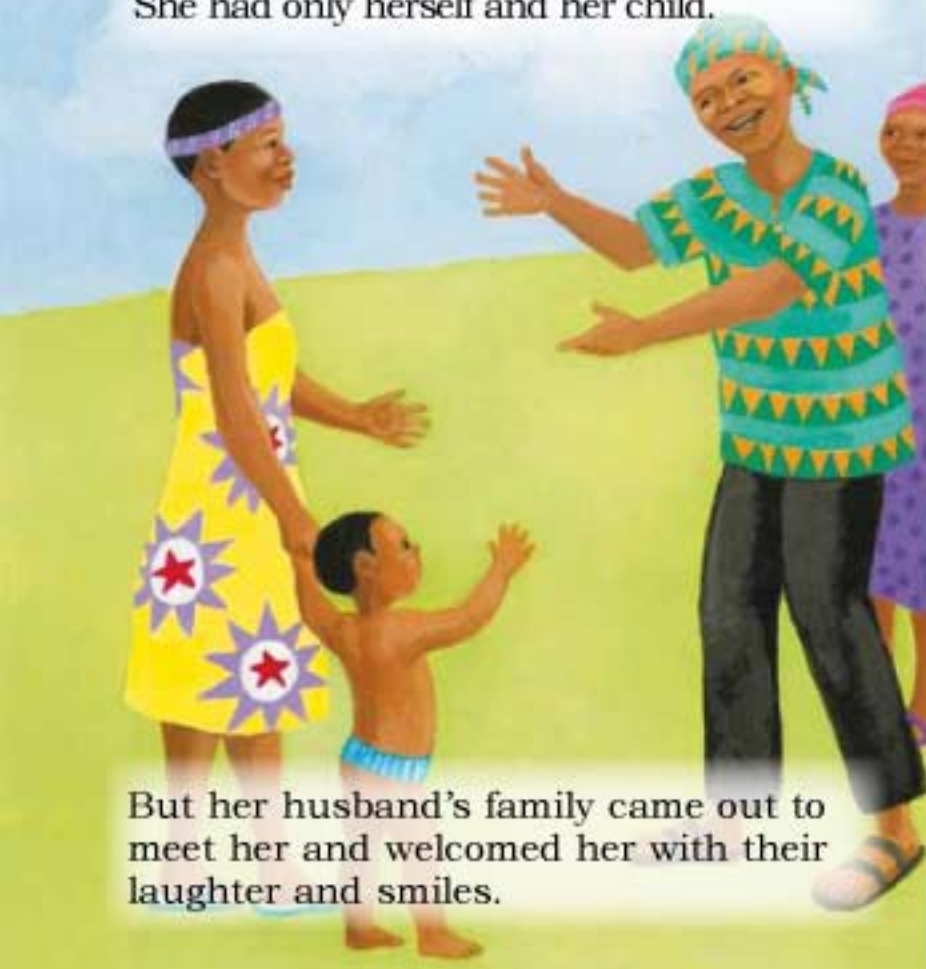


Late on the fourth night, when it was very cold and very dark, the two strong men stole the bride's kaross while she slept.

Then they ran away as far and as fast as they could, and left the bride with nothing at all.

11.

So it was that on the fifth day when the bride came at last to the home of her husband's family, she had no baskets and clay pots. She had no blankets and beads. She had no fine kaross to keep her warm in the winter nights. She had only herself and her child.



But her husband's family came out to meet her and welcomed her with their laughter and smiles.

12.

And her husband was glad to see her and took her at once in his arms and held her close.

'At last you have come!' he said. 'At last you are here. And that is all that I have ever wanted.'

