


ARTISTS FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA AND HACHETTE AUDIO PRESENT

NELSON MANDELA'S FAVORITE AFRICAN FOLKTALES

AN AUDIOBOOK BENEFITING CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA ORPHANED AND IMPACTED BY HIV/AIDS



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HUGH JACKMAN • SAMUEL L. JACKSON • LATANYA RICHARDSON JACKSON • SCARLETT JOHANSSON • DEBRA MESSING • HELEN MIRREN • PARMINDER NAGRA
SOPHIE OKONEDO • CCH POUNDER • ALAN RICKMAN • JURNEE SMOLLETT • CHARLIZE THERON • BLAIR UNDERWOOD • FOREST WHITAKER • ALFRE WOODARD

WITH A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU
MUSIC BY JOHNNY CLEGG AND VUSI MAHLASELA • DIRECTED BY ALFRE WOODARD • UNABRIDGED SELECTIONS ON 3 CDs WITH BONUS MATERIAL



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Gabon
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Uganda
Kenya
Rwanda
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Tanzania
Democratic Republic of Congo
Angola
Malawi
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Namibia
Botswana
Zimbabwe
Mozambique
South Africa
Lesotho
Swaziland

MEDITERRANEAN SEA
RED SEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
INDIAN OCEAN

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27



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Foreword

*“We do not really mean, we do not really mean,
that what we are going to say is true.”*

These are the words with which Ashanti storytellers begin their stories, and perhaps they are a fitting introduction for an anthology such as this one, since the majority of the stories have undergone many metamorphoses over the centuries. They have acquired frills and tails and sometimes defected from one people or ethnic group to another.

Because a story is a story; and you may tell it as your imagination and your being and your environment dictate; and if your story grows wings and becomes the property of others, you may not hold it back. One day it will return to you, enriched by new details and with a new voice. This particular characteristic of folktales is illustrated in the traditional conclusion of the Ashanti narrator: “This is my story which I have related, if it be sweet or if it be not sweet, take some elsewhere and let some come back to me.”

In this anthology, some of the oldest African tales, after their travels for many centuries in far-flung places, are given back, with new voices, to the children of the world. This collection offers a handful of beloved stories, morsels rich with the gritty essence of Africa, but in many instances universal in their portrayal of humanity, beasts, and the mystical.

Children will discover again a variety of favorite themes in African tales, or perhaps unearth them for the first time. There is that cunning creature that manages to outsmart everyone, including much bigger opponents: Hlakanyana of the Zulu and Xhosa, and Sankhambi of the Venda; the hare, sly little rascal that he is; the cunning jackal, most often in the role of a trickster; the hyena (sometimes associated with the wolf) in the role of underdog; the lion as ruler and distributor of gifts to the animals; the snake, which inspires fear, but is also a symbol of healing power, often in conjunction with the power of water; magic spells that bring either doom or freedom; people and animals undergoing metamorphoses; gruesome cannibals who terrorize both great and small.

The collection also includes some new stories from different parts of South Africa and the continent to supplement those ancient treasures.

It is my wish that the voice of the storyteller will never die in Africa, that all the children in the world may experience the wonder of books, and that they will never lose the capacity to enlarge their earthly dwelling place with the magic of stories.

Maudela

Biography

Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela is one of the world's most beloved and admired heroes. Born in South Africa in Mvezo, a small village in the remote Transkei, on July 18, 1918, he is from the royal family of the Thembu, who are part of the larger Xhosa people. Later, the family moved to another village called Qunu, where the elders told young Mandela about the history and folklore of the African continent, recounting stories of resistance and valor against white colonialism.

After obtaining his B.A. degree at the University of South Africa in 1941, Mandela was drawn to the politics of the African National Congress (ANC), whose strategy was to fight the minority rule with nonviolence. Organizing a campaign in the early 1950s to end the pass system, which required black South Africans to carry passes wherever they traveled, Mandela was arrested on charges of treason, but he was acquitted after a five-year trial.

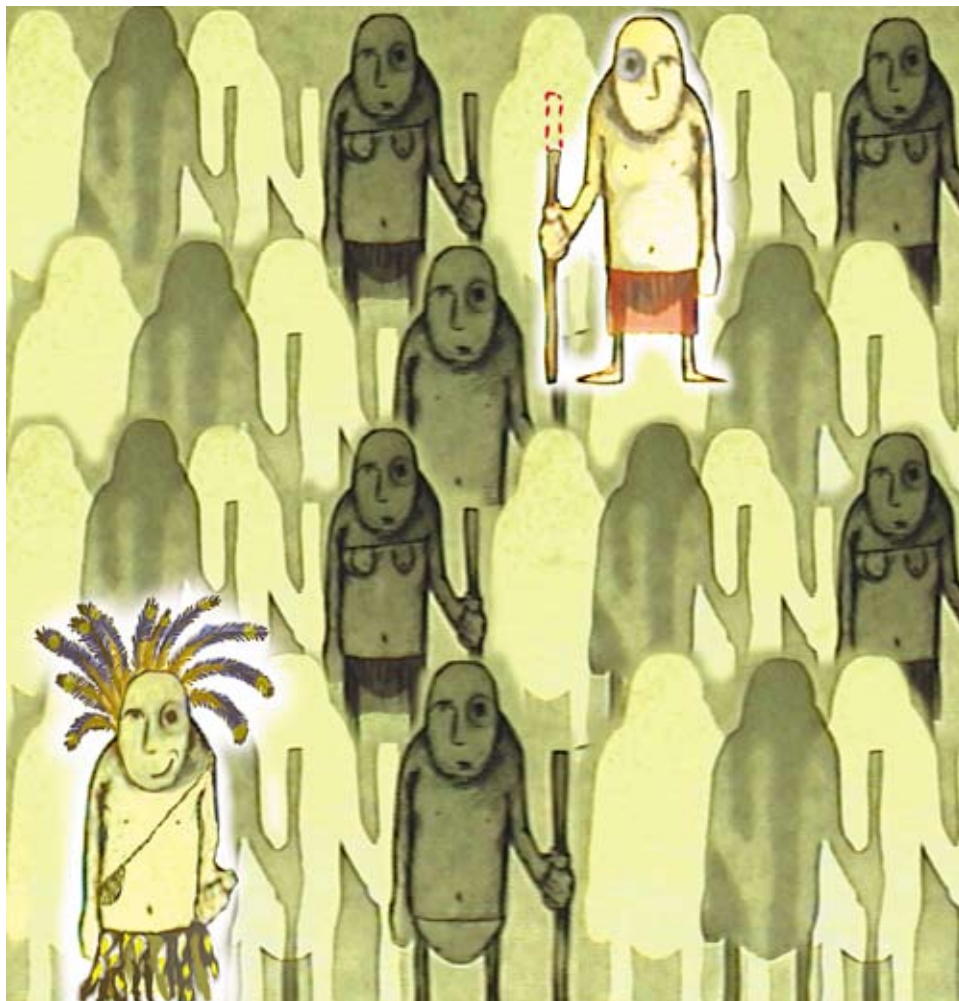
In 1962, he was arrested again, this time on charges of sabotage and conspiracy. Commenting at his trial, Mandela said: "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Found guilty, Mandela soon became the world's most famous political prisoner, embarking with his fellow inmates on a system of self-education that earned the Robben Island prison the name of "Island University." While incarcerated, Mandela started a negotiation process with the government for the transformation of South Africa from an apartheid state into a democracy. After spending twenty-seven years in prison, Mandela was released in 1990.

Just three years later, in 1993, Nelson Mandela shared the Nobel Peace Prize with former president F. W. de Klerk for their dismantling of apartheid. In 1994, the majority of black South Africans participated in a democratic election in which Mandela became the first black president of the country. He was inaugurated in May 1994 and served as president of South Africa for five years. Today, he lives with his wife, Graça Machel, in Johannesburg.

The Folktales

“To the children of the world, with love from Nelson Mandela.”



The Ring of the King

This freewheeling tale by children's book specialist JAY HEALE carries with it echoes of mythical African kingdoms such as the magnificent, fabulous Monomotapa.

Illustration © by Neels Britz. Read by Alan Rickman.



Asmodeus and the Bottler of Djinnns

A latter-day tale by ALEX D'ANGELO about the olden-days Cape, in which the listener meets the luckless Asmodeus, a junior fiend who has been dispatched from hell to set up a regional office at the Cape.

Illustration © by Geoffrey Walton. Read by Whoopi Goldberg.



Mpipidi and the Motlopi Tree

A Tswana tale from Botswana, retold by early childhood specialist
JOHANNA MORULE, about the heart's desire of a little boy.

Illustration © by Judy Woodborne. Read by Matt Damon with music by Vusi Mahlasela.



Natiki

This Namaqualand story, with its echoes of the European Cinderella tale, is retold by GLAUDIEN KOTZÉ, who heard it as a child from a much-loved Nama storyteller called Tryntjie Koekas. Kotzé describes her as a “masterly storyteller.”

Illustration © by Nikolaas de Kat. Read by Parminder Nagra.



The Mantis and the Moon

The praying mantis, also called Kaggen, is one of the most important figures in San folklore. This mantis story is by children's book author and novelist **MARGUERITE POLAND**.

Illustration © by Marna Hattingh. Read by Forest Whitaker.



How Hlakanyana Outwitted the Monster

The trickster Hlakanyana is one of the most important mythical figures in Zulu folklore.

But characters similar to Hlakanyana are found also in the stories of other indigenous language groups. For this retelling JACK COPE, who had grown up hearing these stories being told around the evening fires in Zululand, drew on the oldest recorded accounts of Nguni folklore.

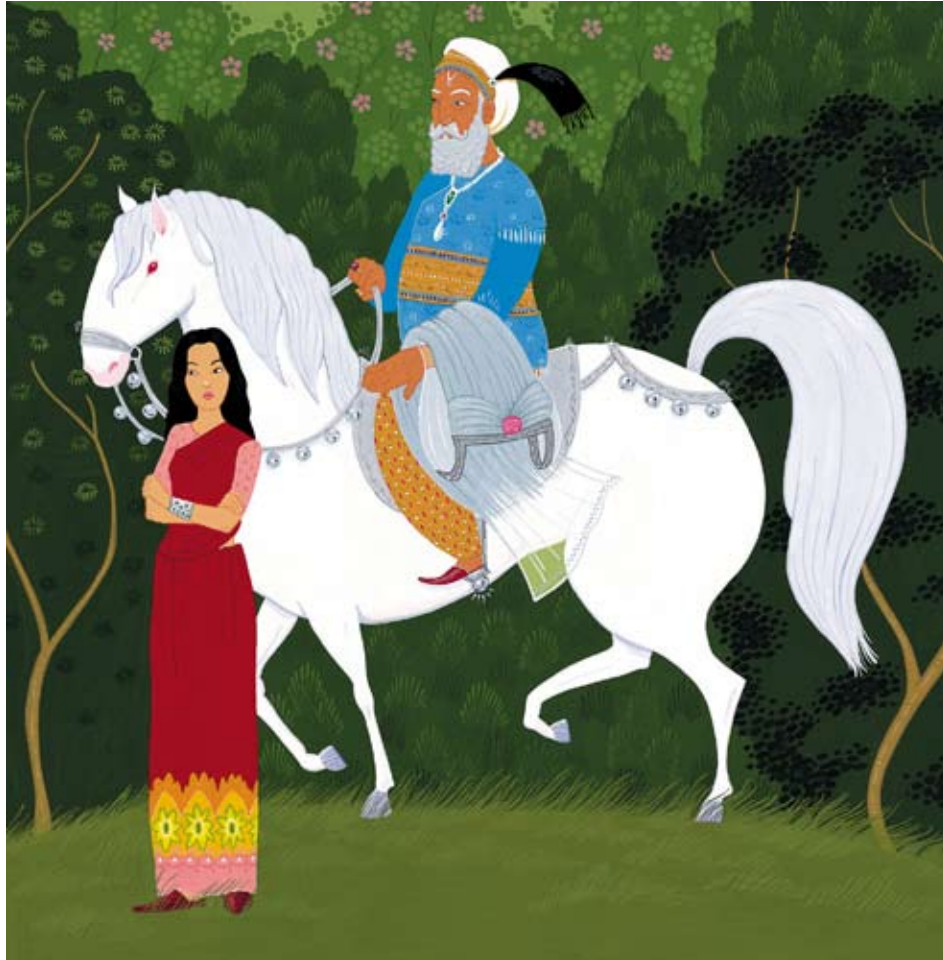
Illustration © by Neels Britz. Read by Sean Hayes with music by Vusi Mahlasela.



The Message

A Nama variation on the theme of how death came into the world, retold here by poet, novelist, and short-story writer GEORGE WEIDEMAN, who heard it from Grandma Rachel Eises. In the countless versions of this ancient tale the message is sometimes brought by the chameleon and the lizard, while sometimes the hare bungles the message all by himself. In this variation Tick and Hare are the messengers.

Illustration © by Robert Hichens. Read by Charlize Theron.



The Wolf Queen

An unusual story of Malay-Indian provenance, as recounted by the Malay people of Cape Town and recorded by DR. I. D. DU PLESSIS, who dedicated many years of his life to the preservation of this unique cultural heritage.

Illustration © by Natalie Hinrichsen.
Read by Benjamin Bratt with music by Vusi Mahlasela.

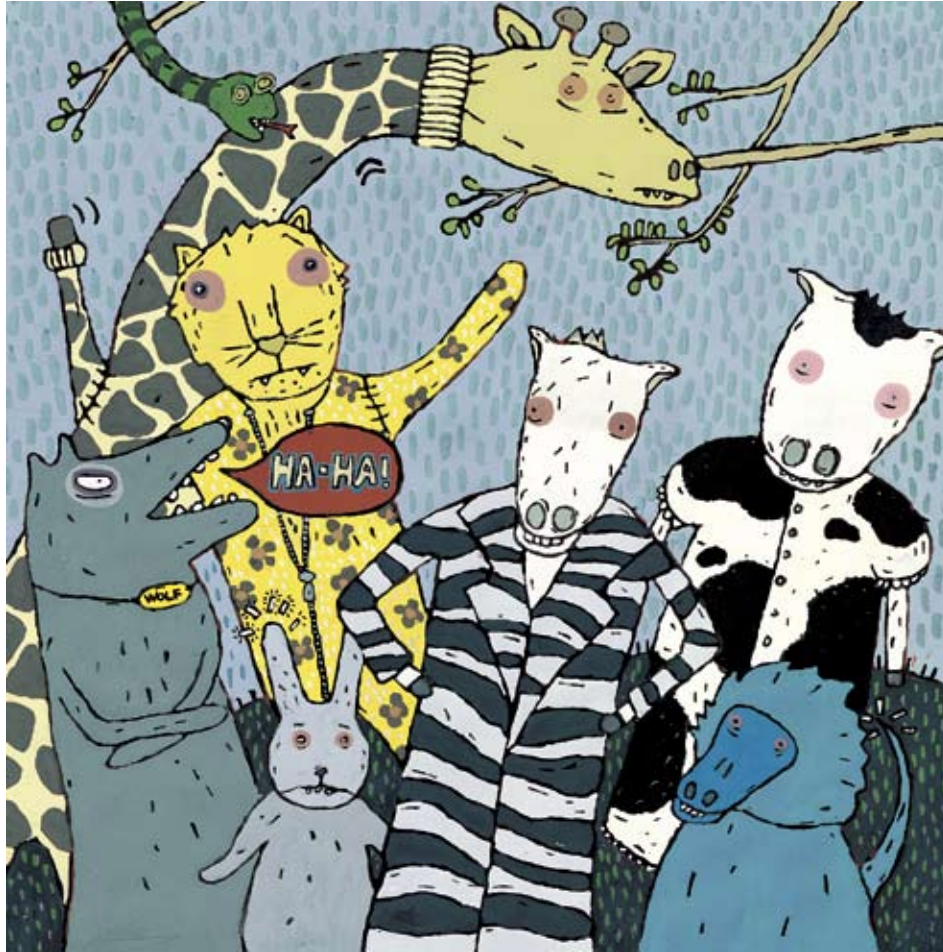


The Snake Chief

The folklorist DIANA PITCHER grew up in Zululand and heard this story from Miriam Majola, a wonderful storyteller. Later she found that the theme of a young girl who breaks a curse through her steadfastness often appears on the West Coast of Africa. The snake in a mystical role is an equally popular motif in African tales.

In this retelling the story has been set in Zululand.

Illustration © by Baba Afrika. Read by Scarlett Johansson with music by Johnny Clegg.



King Lion's Gifts

A Khoi narrative in which the first animals receive tails, horns and hides from King Lion, retold here by PIETER W. GROBBELAAR.

Illustration © by Marna Hattingh. Read by Ricardo Chavira.



Words As Sweet As Honey from Sankhambi

Sankhambi plays a prominent role in many Venda tales – he is the equivalent of Hlakanyana in a previous story. Sometimes he is quite small, like a tortoise; sometimes big and strong. All are on their guard against him, however, for wherever Sankhambi is, trouble is brewing. This retelling is by children’s book specialist LINDA RODE.

Illustration © by Véronique Tadjo. Read by Debra Messing.

Sakunaka, the Handsome Young Man

A Shona tale from Zimbabwe, originally told
to HUGH TRACEY in the Karanga tongue.

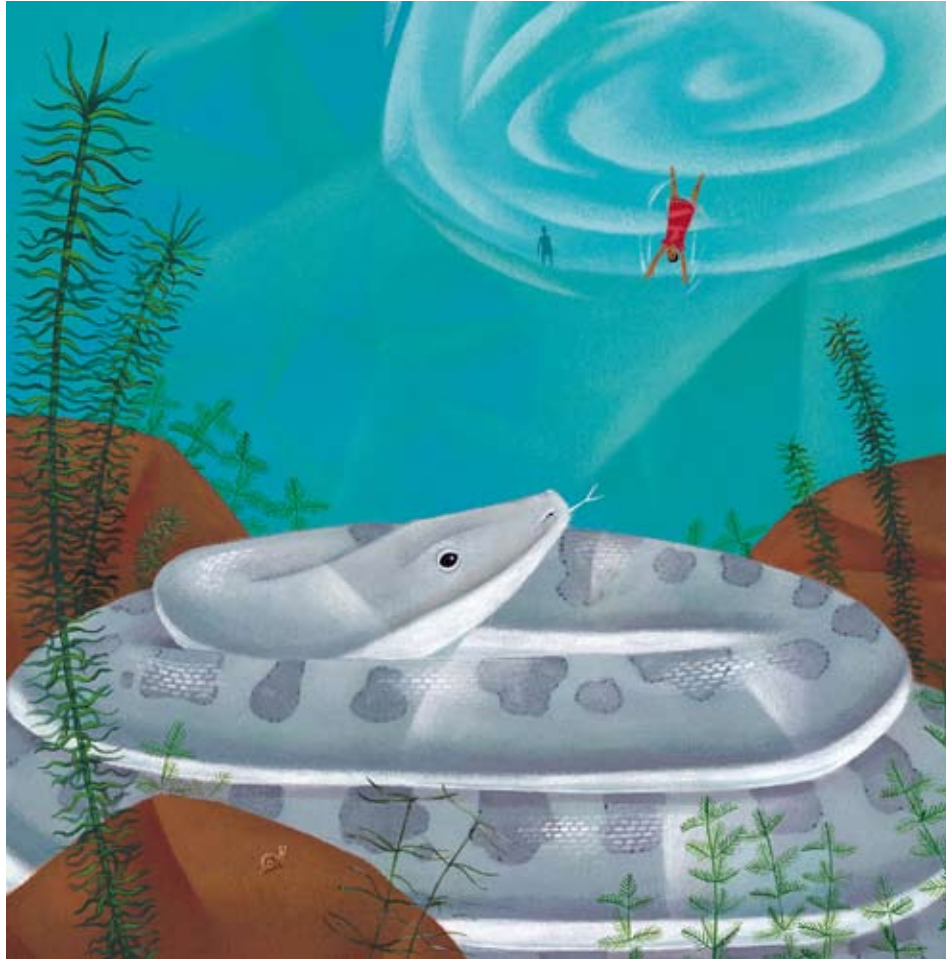
Read by LaTanya Richardson Jackson with music by Vusi Mahlasela.

Wolf and Jackal and the Barrel of Butter

South Africa's wolf-and-jackal stories have their origin in the old Flemish tales of Reynard the Fox, but over the centuries they have become so thoroughly acclimatised in South Africa that they are perceived as being part and parcel of the indigenous folklore.

This retelling is by PIETER W. GROBBELAAR.

Read by Hugh Jackman with music by Johnny Clegg.



The Guardian of the Pool

A story from Central Africa in which the healing abilities of the snake are portrayed - another familiar theme in the folklore of Africa. The story is retold here by DIANA PITCHER, who has given it a Zululand setting.

Illustration © by Tamsin Hinrichsen. Read by Gillian Anderson.



Sannie Langtand and the Visitor

Another Cape tale by ALEX D'ANGELO, about Sannie Langtand, the tough old witch from Kalk Bay, Boggom, her dogsbody-baboon, and their friend, Slangbek, the treasure-loving dragon with the fiery breath who can travel through time.

In this story, narrated by Boggom, they travel to foreign parts.

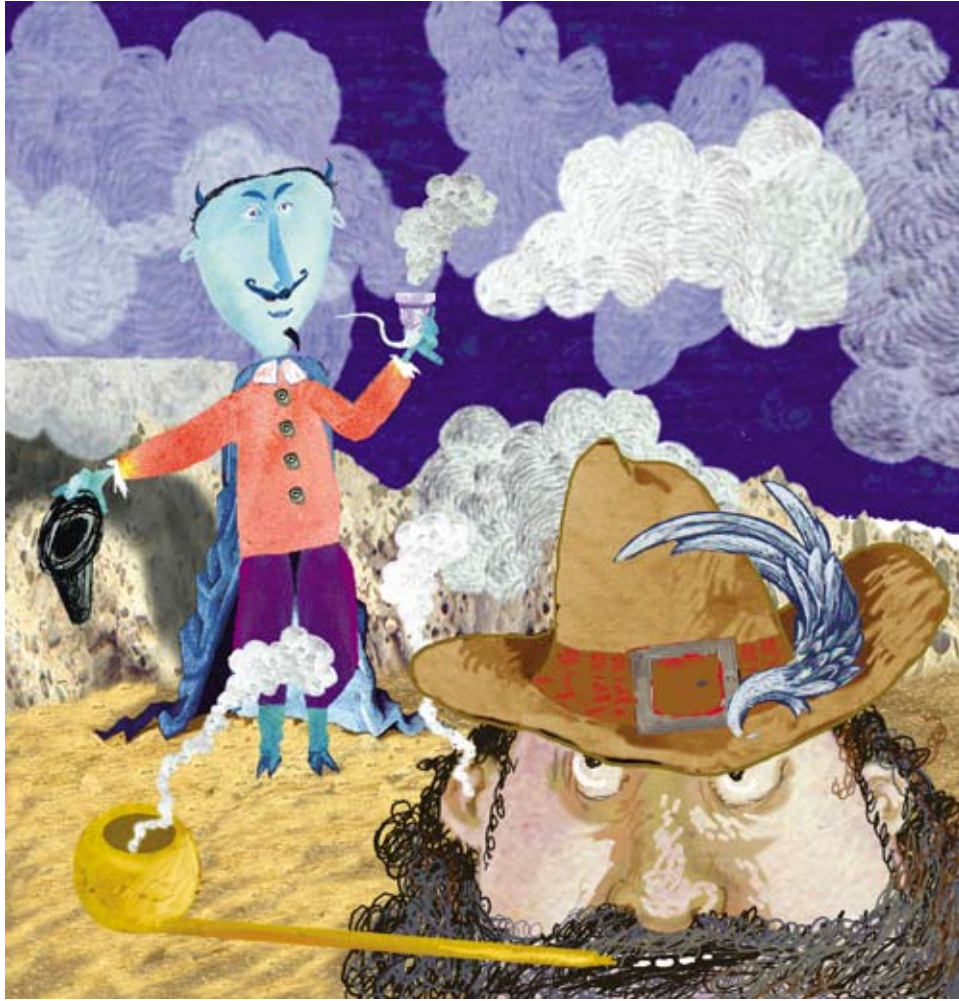
Illustration © by Jo Harvey. Read by CCH Pounder.



The Sultan's Daughter

Tales about riddles that first have to be solved before someone's heart's desire can be fulfilled are found the world over. In this Malay-Indian story, recorded in the Malay quarter of Cape Town and retold by DR. I.D. DU PLESSIS, the chief protagonist must also solve three riddles before he gets his reward.

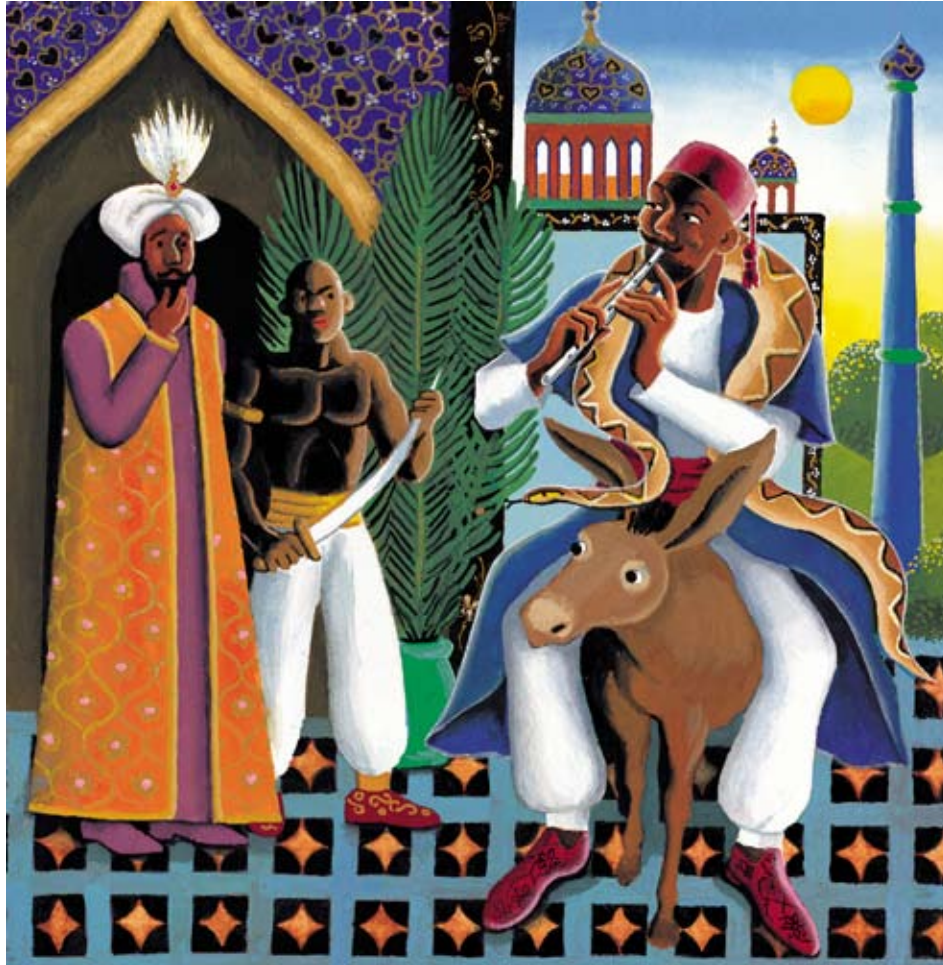
Illustration © by Robert Hichens.
Read by Blair Underwood with music by Johnny Clegg.



Van Hunks and the Devil

This is another version of the well-known tale concerning Table Mountain's blanket of clouds, known as the white tablecloth. This story originates from the early years when the Cape of Storms was still circumnavigated by sailing ships and the settlement at the Cape was a Dutch colony. It is retold here by ANNARI VAN DER MERWE.

Illustration © by Diek Grobler. Read by LeVar Burton with music by Johnny Clegg.



The Clever Snake Charmer

From Morocco comes this entertaining story about a clever snake charmer who knows how to push his luck. Once again there are three riddles that have to be answered.

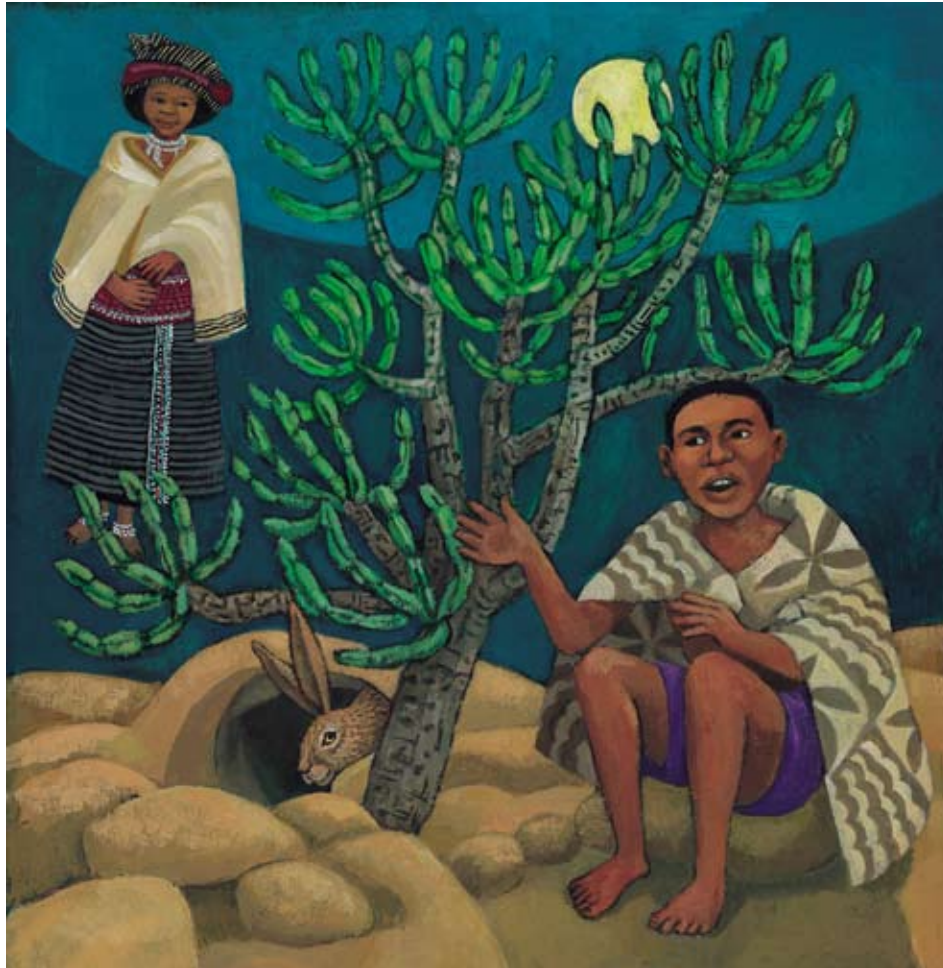
Illustration © by Jean Fullalove. Read by Samuel L. Jackson.



The Enchanting Song of the Magical Bird

This East African story about the innocence and power that children possess was recorded at the beginning of the twentieth century in Benaland, Tanganyika (now Tanzania), by Pastor JULIUS OELKE of the Berlin Mission Church.

Illustration © by Piet Grobler. Read by Jurnee Smollett.



The Hare and the Tree Spirit

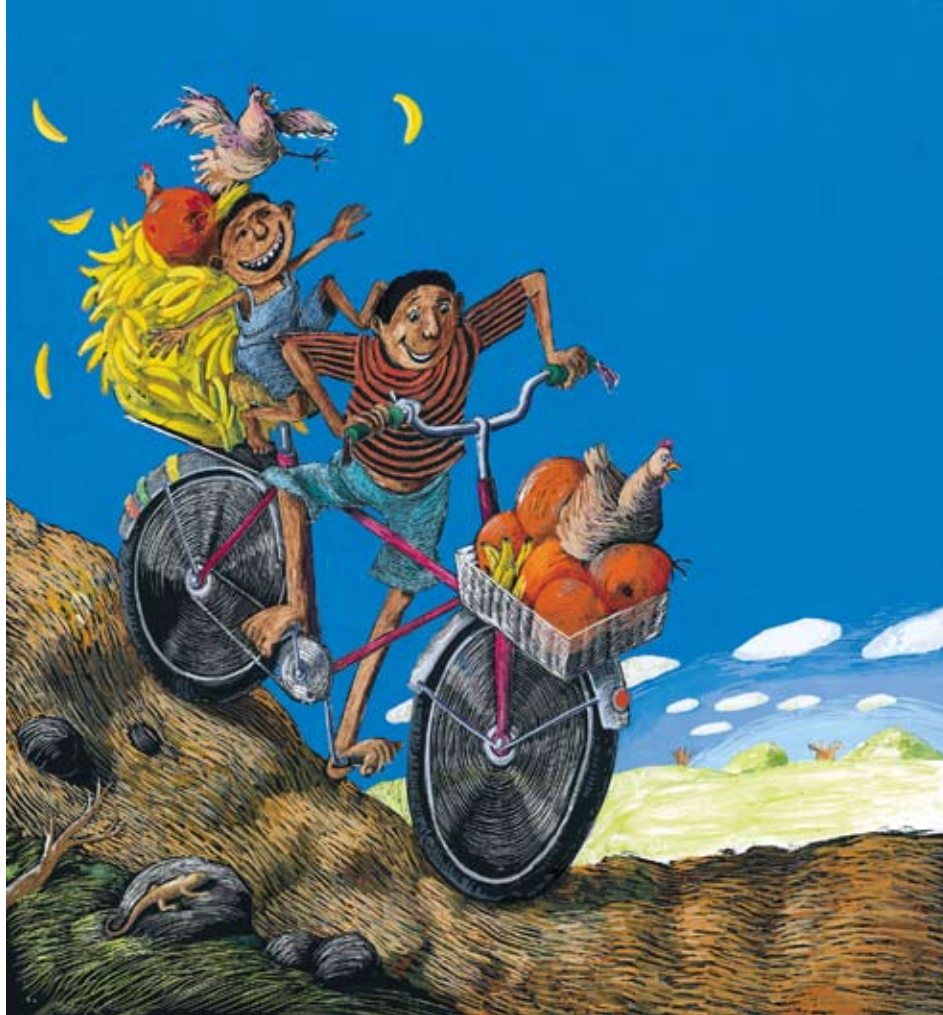
The hare, usually a cunning, impish character, features in countless African tales, with such diverse names as Kalulu, Sunguru and Mvundlazana. In this Xhosa story, retold by PHYLLIS SAVORY, the hare – unusually for him – does someone a favor.

Illustration © by Lyn Gilbert. Read by Sophie Okonedo.

The Mother Who Turned to Dust

This new creation myth from Malawi, written by children's book author and storyteller KASIYA MAKAKA PHIRI, reminds us how precious Mother Earth is.

Read by Helen Mirren with music by Vusi Mahlasela.



Fesito Goes to Market

A market story set in Uganda, by children's book author and novelist CICELY VAN STRATEN. The theme is universal: a triple reward for three good deeds.

Illustration © by Diek Grobler. Read by Don Cheadle.



The following illustrations are for folktales available by download.

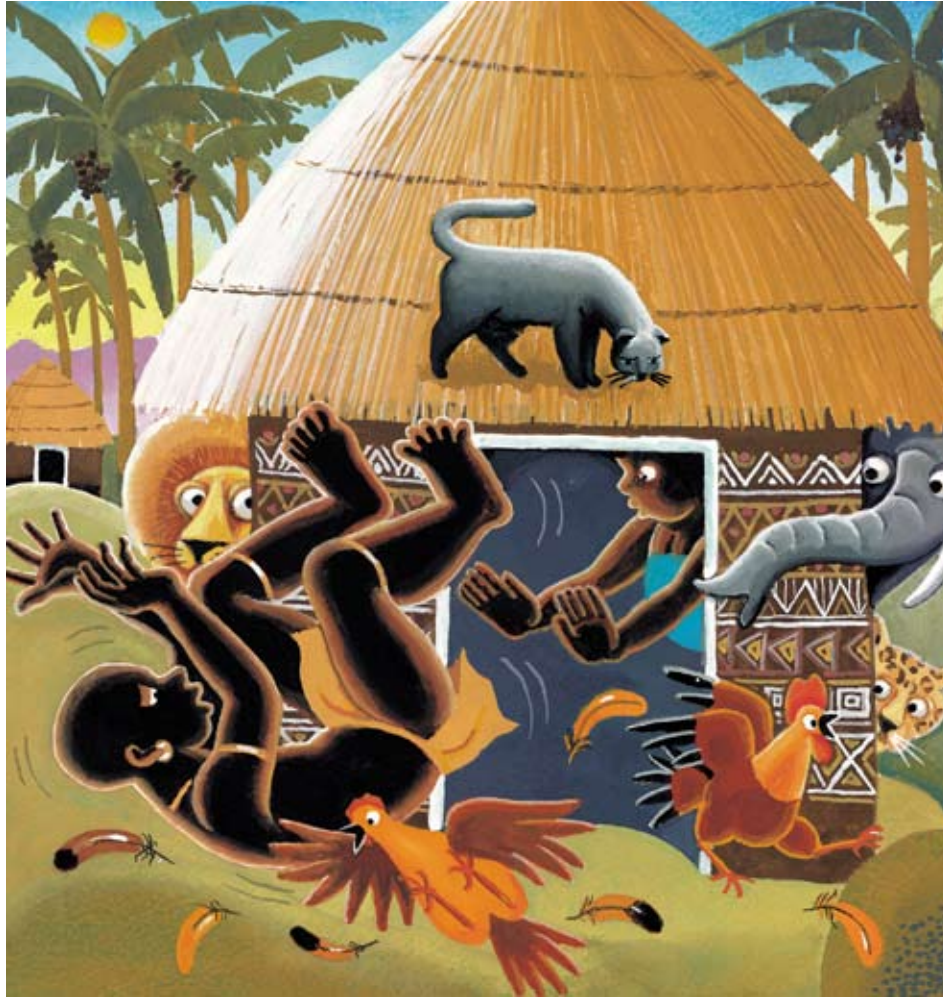
For more information visit:
www.MandelasFavoriteFolktales.com.



The Cloud Princess

In this Swazi tale, retold by PHYLLIS SAVORY, the hare is magically transformed into a human being – an unusual event in hare stories.

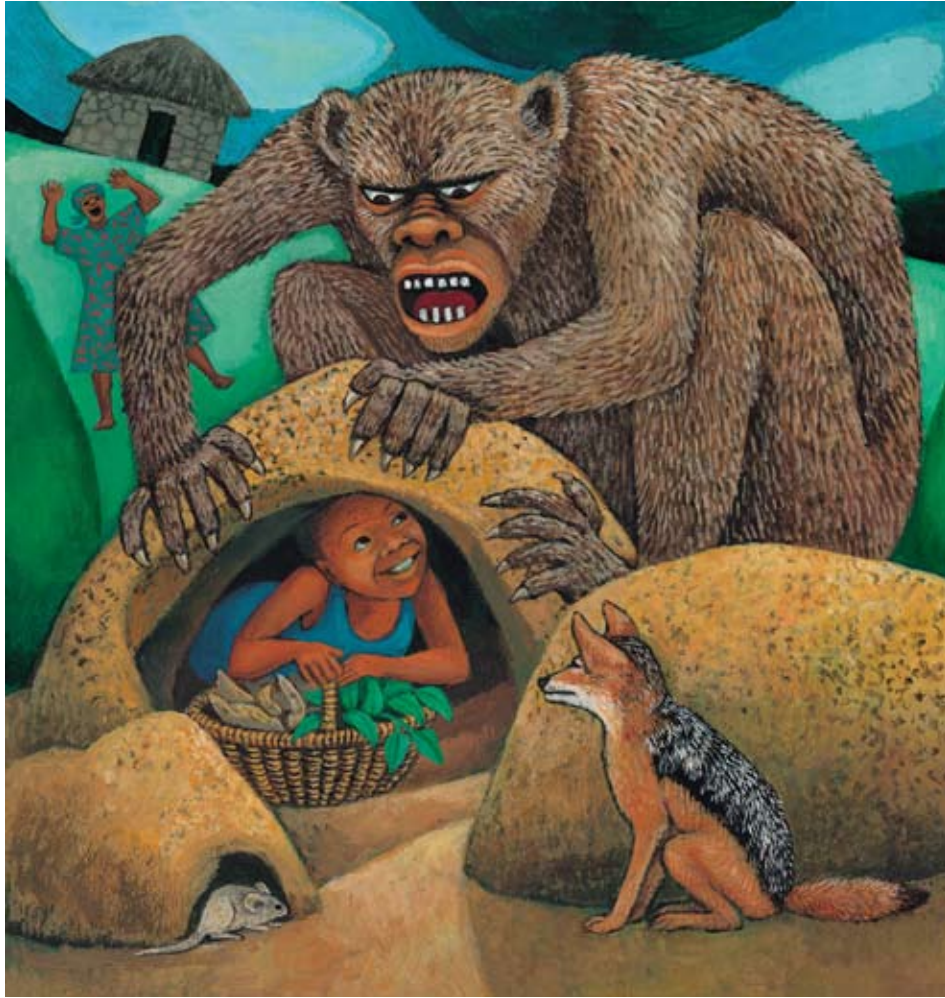
Illustration © by Piet Grobler. Read by Matt Damon.



The Cat Who Came Indoors

There are quite a number of stories explaining how dogs were tamed, but this Shona story from Zimbabwe, originally told to the musicologist and folklorist HUGH TRACEY in the Karanga tongue, explains how cats became cherished inhabitants of human homes.

Illustration © by Jean Fullalove. Read by Helen Mirren.



Mmadipetsane

In old tales found both in Africa and across the world, children are sometimes warned very specifically against disobedience. This story from Lesotho, retold here by folklorist MINNIE POSTMA, is no exception.

Illustration © by Lyn Gilbert. Read by Alfre Woodard.



Spider and the Crows

The spider plays a dramatic role in many African stories. He is often exceptionally resourceful – as is evident in this Nigerian folktale. In the stories of the Ashanti he is known as Kwaku Anansi. Illustration © by Véronique Tadjo. Read by Don Cheadle.



The Lion, the Hare, and the Hyena

In this story from Kenya, retold to PHYLLIS SAVORY by Gwido Mariko, the hare and the hyena again try, as they so often do, to outwit each other.

Illustration © by Tamsin Hinrichsen. Read by Alan Rickman.

About the Authors

Born on a farm in Zululand, South Africa in 1913, *Jack Cope* grew up with an intimate knowledge of the Zulu language and culture. During his life he published numerous novels, as well as volumes of poetry and short stories, and was the recipient of various literary prizes, both in South Africa and abroad.

Alex D'Angelo came to South Africa with his parents at the age of nine. He obtained a master's degree in medieval English and a degree in librarianship and information science from the University of Cape Town, where he is at present working in the Art Library.

I. D. du Plessis, born in 1900, is chiefly known as an Afrikaans poet. For the greater part of his life he had close ties with the Muslim community at the Cape, the so-called Cape Malay people of South Africa. After finding that the Cape Malay "troops" singing and dancing their way through the streets of Cape Town at New Year were the only people who still knew the old Dutch and Afrikaans folk songs, he was instrumental in founding the Cape Malay Choir Board. His retellings of the Cape Malay legends, folktales, and ghost stories were published in several volumes during his lifetime.

Pieter W. Grobbelaar is well known as a collector and recorder of indigenous folktales and verse. He started his career as a journalist, went into publishing, and later became a lecturer in Afrikaans cultural studies. He has had countless books published and has received numerous awards for his story collections.

Jay Heale came to South Africa as a young man to teach. He is well known as a storyteller, writer, compiler of anthologies, critic, and children's book specialist. He is secretary of the South African Children's Book Forum and president of IBBY's Hans Christian Andersen jury.

Glaudien Kotzé was born on a farm in Namaqualand, South Africa in 1921 and grew up there, hearing the stories of the Nama people of that region as a child. She studied at the University of Stellenbosch and spent the greater part of her life as a schoolteacher and educational librarian.

Johanna Morule had a long and active career as an educator, first as a schoolteacher, then as head of a primary school in the Rustenburg area of South Africa, and eventually as an educational planner for the Bophuthatswana Department of Education. She wrote several school readers and served on the Setswana Language Board.

About the Authors

During the turn of the previous century, *Julius Oelke* worked as a missionary of the Berlin Mission Church in what was then Tanganyika and is now Tanzania. He did important literary conservation work by writing down in German the African stories he heard in Kibena, thereby ensuring that these little-known stories from the oral tradition are available today in written form.

Kasiya Makaka Phiri was born in then Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, in 1948 and grew up in Malawi. His interest in writing started at the age of thirteen, and he had his first success in 1969 as the author of a radio drama. His poetry has been published in magazines in Malawi, Canada, the United States, India, South Africa, Nigeria, and the UK. Since 1983 he has been living in the United States, in Arkansas, as a political exile.

Diana Pitcher was born in Natal, South Africa in 1921 and graduated from the University of Natal. She became a schoolteacher and worked in Natal, Zimbabwe, England, and Europe. She is best known for two collections of African folklore entitled *The Calabash Child* and *The Mischief Maker*, both of which were published in eight African languages.

Marguerite Poland grew up on a smallholding just outside Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. She studied Xhosa and anthropology at Rhodes University and then obtained a degree in Xhosa from Stellenbosch University, an M.A. in Zulu folklore from the University of Natal, and finally a doctorate in Zulu literature from the same university. She has published numerous children's books and three adult novels to great critical acclaim and has twice received the prestigious Percy Fitzpatrick Award for Children's Literature. She lives in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Minnie Postma grew up on a Free State farm near the Lesotho border of South Africa. As a child she could speak Sesotho just as well as Afrikaans and avidly listened to the stories told around the dung fires in the evenings. She made such a thorough study of this particular storytelling tradition that she was later able to create her own tsono (stories) in the Sotho idiom. *Tales from the Basotho*, a translated selection of her stories, was published in 1974 by the American Folklore Society.

About the Authors

Linda Rode is well-known as a compiler of anthologies for younger children as well as high school pupils. She is even better known as a translator of numerous children's books, and her extensive knowledge of folklore and fairy tales has stood her in good stead in the many projects she has undertaken for South African publishers.

Phyllis Savory was born in 1901 on a farm in what was Zimbabwe. As a child she listened with her playmates to the stories told around the evening fires, the start of a lifelong passion for African folklore. During her sojourn in various countries in Africa she collected many stories, concentrating specifically on stories about the hare. She only started writing at the age of sixty and then published nineteen volumes of stories in the space of thirty years.

Hugh Tracey came to what is now Zimbabwe as a young man of eighteen to farm. He learned the local language, Karanga (one of the dialects of Shona), and was amazed to discover what a wealth of music there was amongst the local populace. He made it his life's work to record, preserve, and propagate the music and folklore of Southern and Central Africa. In 1954 he founded the International Library of African Music, which falls under the auspices of Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa.

Annari van der Merwe was a children's book editor at the South African publishing house Tafelberg before starting up Kwela Books. She has written a volume of children's verse, as well as various articles and photo-articles in magazines.

Cicely van Straten was born in Alice in the Eastern Cape of South Africa but grew up in Kenya and Uganda – hence her countless stories with an East African background. She has a master's degree in folklore, and her long and very successful career as a writer began with her writing stories for her own children.

With numerous volumes of poetry, short stories, dramas, novels, and children's books to his name, *George Weideman* is one of the most versatile Afrikaans authors, and his work has been awarded numerous prizes. After a long career as a lecturer in Afrikaans, he is now writing full-time.

The Illustrators

ART DIRECTOR: ANN WALTON

Baba Afrika: *“The Snake Chief”*

Neels Britz: *“How Hlakanyana Outwitted the Monster,” “The Ring of the King”*

Nikolaas de Kat: *“Natiki”*

Jean Fullalove: *“The Cat Who Came Indoors,” “The Clever Snake Charmer”*

Lyn Gilbert: *“The Hare and the Tree Spirit,” “Mmapdipetsane”*

Diek Grobler: *“Fesito Goes to Market,” “Van Hunks and the Devil”*

Piet Grobler: *“The Cloud Princess,” “The Enchanting Song of the Magical Bird”*

Jo Harvey: *“Sannie Langtand and the Visitor”*

Marna Hattingh: *“King Lion’s Gifts,” “The Mantis and the Moon”*

Robert Hichens: *“The Message,” “The Sultan’s Daughter”*

Natalie Hinrichsen: Front Cover, Back Cover and Sleeping Monkey Illustrations, *“The Wolf Queen”*

Tamsin Hinrichsen: *“The Guardian of the Pool,” “The Lion, the Hare, and the Hyena”*

Véronique Tadjó: *“Spider and the Crows,” “Words as Sweet as Honey from Sankhambi”*

Geoffrey Walton: *“Asmodeus and the Bottler of Djinn’s”*

Judy Woodborne: *“Mpipidi and the Motlopi Tree”*