



LARABA

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Display each illustration where indicated in text, laying volume aside when the story line continues beyond the picture.



Show Illustration #1

Laraba clutched two coins in her hand as she hurried along the narrow road. The warm sun bent toward the west and Laraba knew she must go quickly if she was to complete her errand before it was dark.

“Laraba,” her father began. “It’s important that you get this money to my friend at the other end of the village. If you play on the way and lose it, I will give you a beating.”

These were not idle words. Laraba knew her father demanded obedience. She trembled at the thought of another beating. She started running as fast as her legs could carry her. Then she heard excited voices shouting, “Laraba! Laraba!”

Turning, she saw some of her friends playing beneath a large tree.

“Come and join us,” they called.

“I can’t,” she answered, squeezing the coins tighter in her perspiring fist.

“Just one game,” they begged.

She glanced at the sun. *One game will not hurt, she thought. I can still get to the edge of the village and back before dark.* So hiding the money in her clothing and forsaking her father’s orders, she ran laughing and shouting to the other children.

When the game was finished the sun had disappeared. As Laraba ran back to the road, she felt for the coins. But there was only one! The other must have fallen where she played. Returning to the big tree she searched the grey shadows which crept across the rough ground. Soon it was too dark to see, and Laraba headed home, frightened and heavy-hearted.

Her father waited at the door.



Show Illustration #2

After telling him the whole story, she cried, “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to lose it.”

“But you disobeyed. And what did I tell you I would do if you lost the money?”

Laraba sobbed harder than before.

“I must keep my promise,” her father said as he reached for a cornstalk. She

moaned when he brought it down across her back. Again and again it fell.



Show Illustration #3

When the beating was over, Laraba whispered through her tears. “Baba (Father), I am sorry I disobeyed. Please don’t be angry with me any more. I promise not to do it again. I’ll work until I can repay the lost money. Only forgive me.”

“Of course, I forgive you,” he answered, patting her face gently. “And I do love you, my child.”

It was a tired, thoughtful girl who lay down on her mat that night. Laraba knew what forgiveness meant. As she closed her eyes she remembered something a missionary had told her. “When we disobey God,” he had said, “He punishes us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Not many days later her father called Laraba and said, “Next time I go to the city, I am going to buy you a beautiful headcloth.”

“Oh Baba!” she exclaimed.

“I know you have been disobedient and do not deserve a gift. But I want you to know that I love you.”



Show Illustration #4

“Thank you! Oh, thank you!” she said and hurried outside to tell her friends the good news.

“Baba is going to get me a new headcloth when he goes to the city,” she told them. “Isn’t that wonderful? It will be such a beautiful cloth!”

“How do you know?” a boy asked.

“Baba said so.”

“But you don’t have it yet. There is nothing to be excited about.”

“But Baba said so,” Laraba answered as she ran down the road to tell others.