



THE TALE OF TWO COOKING POTS

Each day, before the crack of dawn and the burst of the morning chorus, Kisimba would begin her long trek down to the banks of the Molopo River.

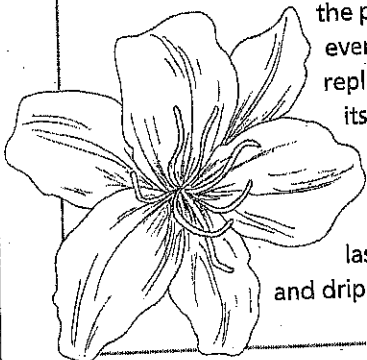
Although the many years had made this woman look frail and helpless, nothing could be further from the truth. For Kisimba was, in fact, as strong as an ox and as wise as a kilio bird and thought nothing of covering the great distance for her daily water - life in the Kalahari had made her that way.

Over her shoulders, on each end of a long wooden pole, she would faithfully carry two earthenware cooking pots; and while at the river fill each to its brim. And as dawn began to break she would return to the corrugated tin shack she affectionately called home.

Yet, despite all her efforts, when she finally arrived at her doorstep she possessed only one and a half pots of water. For one of the two cooking pots was cracked and was unable to contain all that it had been given.

"Just look at the state of you, how pathetic!" moaned the perfect pot. "You're leaking everywhere! Perhaps we should replace you with a pot that can fulfil its duties. You're fit for nothing but the scrap heap".

The cracked pot sighed and one last drop of water ran down its side and dripped onto the dry African soil.



"Perhaps he's right. Perhaps you should replace me with a newer pot".

Kisimba's smile glowed radiantly as she gently stroked the pot. Her words were warm and kind, like the butterflies that were beginning to visit the morning's garden.

"Why do you think the air smells so sweet and the birds and the bees and the butterflies all sing and dance around us? I'll tell you why. You see I always knew you were a leaky cooking pot, so down one side of the lane I decided to plant many flowers. And as we passed, your imperfection gave way to a most wonderful canvas. Look...."

And as the old cooking pot turned around he saw before him splashes of colour speckling the red earth that surrounded them.

"Don't you see? It was you and you alone who helped me to bring colour and life, laughter and love into an otherwise barren land. Do you really think I would consider replacing you when you bring me so much joy?"

