

Hannah Deniece Hoff

Grade 8

SENOW ACADEMY

Title: Is this what life is about!

A grumpy Deniece and her happy grandmother

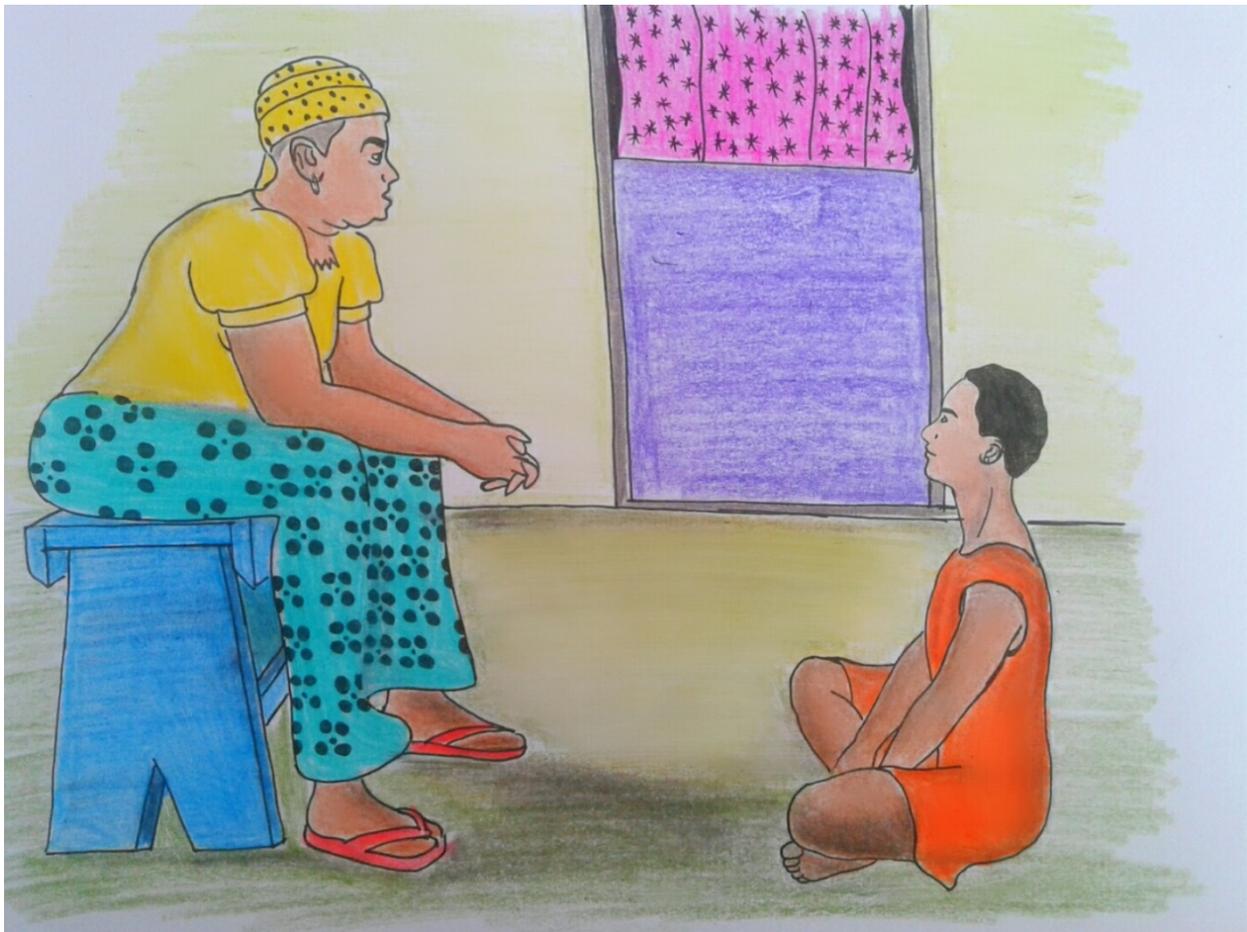


Once upon a time in Matadi, there lived a little girl called Deniece. She lived with her seventy-seven years old grandmother, Ma Yahyah. Deniece was not content with what she had. She was always restless and wanted everything for herself. She always complained that her family did not have enough food to eat, glamorous clothes to wear, and a beautiful and sizeable house to live in. She coveted other girls who came from rich families and she always wished she was part of

those families. Deniece did not understand why her grandma was always cheerful and content with the little they had. Her grandmother was always grateful to God for what they had.

One day Deniece asked Ma Yahyah, “why are you always happy and content with the little you have, and nothing seems to bother you?” Her grandmother looked at her and smiled. “Deniece”, she said, “I have seen and experienced lots of things in life but let me tell you an interesting story that will help you understand why I’m always content and happy with the little I have.” Deniece ran quickly and sat in front of the old woman and said, “Grandma, I want to hear the story.”

Grandmother telling Deniece a story



The guinea fowl



Ma Yahyah started the story; *There lived a guinea fowl who was always restless because he always wanted more of everything he had. While he was looking for what he wanted, he was also sought after by other bigger birds and snakes. While some hunters set traps for him, others also threw stones at him. He always thought his living condition was the worst and he could get something better out there.*

The guinea fowl on a tree and a rice farm below



One day, the guinea fowl went to look for food on an old rice farm. He climbed a tall tree to survey the farm before coming down to eat. He did this to ensure he does not become anyone's prey. While he was on the tree, something interesting caught his attention. He saw a little boy walking down the farm. The boy was carrying a uniquely designed basket on his shoulders. When the boy got to the farm hut, he opened the doors of the basket and some chickens came out of it.

The boy sprinkled some grains of rice on the ground for the chickens. Afterwards, he left them to scavenge for food in the farm. After the farmers had finished threshing the rice for the day, the chickens went to peck the leftovers from the ground. Later that evening, the little boy caught chickens, put them in the basket and sent them back to the village.

The boy catching the chickens and putting them in the basket



The guinea fowl watched the chickens for days and he was impressed with how they were treated. They were well fed and catered for and he wanted to be like them. He decided to meet the head of the chickens, the big rooster and ask to be part of their family. When the guinea fowl approached the rooster and informed him about his decision, the rooster looked at him and asked, “Is that what life is about?” The guinea fowl did not understand what the rooster was trying to tell him. So he accused the rooster of being selfish for not wanting to help him.

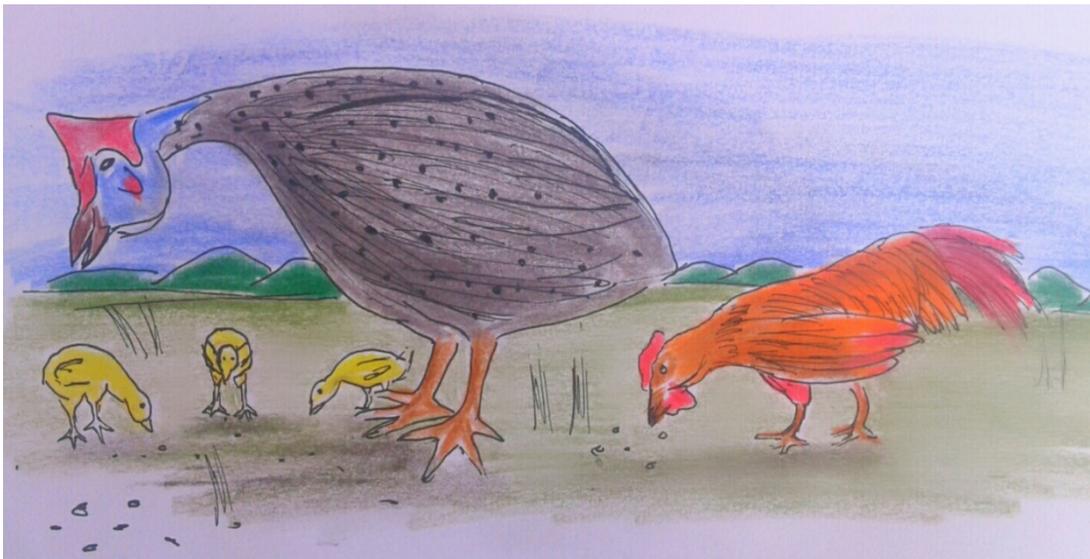
The guinea fowl said to the rooster, “Where I am from, nobody cares about me. I don’t have enough to eat like you and your family do. I have many enemies, they are always after my life; both hunters and wild birds want to kill and eat me. Your life here is safe; you don’t walk to search for food; you have someone who has been assigned to take care of you.”

The guinea fowl talking to the rooster



The rooster tried to talk the guinea fowl out of following them but he would not listen so he allowed him to follow them. The guinea fowl was very excited to join them. He shouted, “My life has change! Goodbye to sorrow and suffering!”

The guinea fowl eating with the chickens



The guinea fowl started acting like the chickens: he ate like them, walked like them and scratched the ground like them. He said to the rooster, “You see, this is the best day of my life. At home I don’t have this enough to eat.” When the boy’s mother was sifting her wheat and some fell on the ground, the chickens ran there and started eating again. The guinea fowl again said to

the rooster, “You see what is happening? I don’t usually see this at home. You are blessed here but you don’t want to admit it.” The rooster responded calmly, “Is this what life is about?” “Yes! This is all what life is about.” The rooster shook his head and replied, “You will understand what I am saying very soon.”

Soon it was evening, the little boy started catching the chickens again. The guinea fowl pretended to be one of them and got in the basket to experience how it felt, being in a basket carried on someone’s shoulder. The boy carried the basket with all the chickens in it and started swinging it gently. The guinea fowl was very happy. He intentionally went and stood at the door of the basket and enjoyed looking outside. When he saw the rooster was looking at him, he said, “In my house nobody rocks me like this.” The rooster looked at him quietly and shook his head again.

The guinea fowl in the basket



The little boy sent the chickens safely to the house. While they were resting, they suddenly heard some shouts of joy. Sumo, the eldest son of the farmer, Mr. Joe Kpoto had arrived from Monrovia to spend his vacation with his parents. Mr. Kpoto embraced his son and said, “Son, you came late... My trap caught a deer but today, but we ate all the meat so tonight we can’t make your favourite pepper soup.” Sumo said “Papa, don’t tell me all the chickens have been eaten too.”

Sumo being welcomed home with excitement



The guinea fowl was listening to the conversation between Sumo and his father and when he heard Sumo talk about chickens, the guinea fowl began shivering. Now, the rooster reached out to him and said, “So now you see, is this all life is about?” Before the guinea fowl could respond to the rooster, Mr. Kpoto ordered the little boy to kill one of the chickens to prepare some soup for his son.

The guinea fowl became very quiet when the little boy was coming to the chickens’ basket. Unfortunately for the guinea fowl, he was very close to the door of the basket so he was the one the boy could reach. The guinea fowl put up the best fight of his live. He started making some shrieking sounds, “Chi-chi-chi!” The guinea fowl was too strong for the little boy to pull him out of the basket so the boy reached out for another chicken for the soup.

The guinea fowl struggling with the little boy



That night, the guinea fowl couldn't sleep. His temperature rose and his heart kept beating till the following morning. The old rooster reached out to him again and asked, "Is this what life is about?" This time the guinea fowl replied, "No! No! No! This is not what life is about. You are all in a prison. I will just wait till day break and I will be the first to move out of this basket!"

The next morning, the little boy took the chickens again to the farm. When he was swinging the basket, the rooster asked the guinea fowl again, "Is this all life is about?" The guinea fowl replied, "I'm tired of your questions! Why didn't you just tell me about what happens to you chickens?"

The scared guinea fowl talking to the rooster



The guinea fowl started appreciating his former situation. He thought to himself, "I was a king. I controlled my own world but I was always not content. O' God forgive me for always complaining."

When the little boy got to the farm and opened the basket, before he started feeding the chickens, the guinea fowl run as fast as he could way from the farm. He went far away and never returned.

The guinea fowl running away from the farm



After Ma Yahyah had finished telling the story, she asked Deniece, "My little girl, is that what life is about? Deniece smiled and gave her grandmother a big hug. From that day onwards, she became grateful to God for what she had and she started appreciating every little thing she got.

Deniece and her grandmother hugging



The end