The Child Who Ate Berries
HABIHIRWE Patrick

Pre-reading questions:
• Do you always obey your parents?
• If you do not obey your parents, what happens?

There was a man and his wife who had one child named Budori. The child was very fat, his father was tall, and his mother was very thin and short. When Budori was four years old, his father died. Five days later, Budori and his mother went to the field to farm and then came back home. On the way, Budori saw berries. He picked them and started eating. His mother asked him, “Budori, can you give me some?”

Budori said, “I can’t.”

His mother said, “Let’s go.”

Budori refused and said, “I will not go with you.”

The mother went home alone.
As night was coming, Budori was still on his way home. He met a dog, who asked him, “Where are you coming from, and where are you going?”

Budori answered, “I went to the field with my mom, and I found ripe berries. I picked and ate them. My mom told me to give her some. I didn’t. She asked me to leave, but I wouldn’t go.”

The dog told him, “Go along and you will meet another man.”

Budori continued his journey and met a leopard, who asked him, “Where are you coming from and where are you going?”

Budori answered, “I went to the field with my mom, and I found ripe berries. I picked and ate them. My mom told me to give her some. I didn’t. She asked me to leave, but I wouldn’t go.”

Then the leopard took him and put him in a bag. The following morning, the leopard took the bag and went to where Budori’s mom was growing plants. He
said, “I can sing for you, but you will need to give me food.” Budori’s mom accepted.

The leopard started biting its bag, saying, “My bag, sing. My bag, sing.”

Budori started singing, “I went to the field with my mom, and I found ripe berries. I picked and ate them. My mom told me to give her some. I didn’t. She asked me to leave, but I wouldn’t go.”

The mother recognized the voice of her son, Budori, and told the leopard, “Put your bag here and go fetch me water. Then I will give you food.”

The leopard went. The mother took Budori from the bag and put stones in the bag. The leopard came back and ate the food, took its bag, and left.

Along the path, the leopard found a man who was digging and said, “I am going to sing for you, and you will give me food.”
The man accepted, and the leopard started biting the bag, saying, “My bag, sing. My bag, sing.” But the bag did not sing, because Budori was not inside it.

The leopard went home, saying, “Because you refused to sing, I am going to eat you today.” When he arrived home, the leopard took a knife and opened the bag and found it full of stones.

Translator: UWAMAHORO Julienne

HABIHIRWE Patrick is ten years old. He wishes to become a judge. He likes to study English and science. He plays soccer. He likes milk.