

My Little



Ghost

## My Little Ghost

Very young children like to feel safe. They like the same things to happen every day; they like the same people around them. They like what they know, and are often afraid of what they don't know.

Avusi is worried. Why does his mama work in a house full of ghosts - white ghosts?

I live in a small village on the coast in Papua New Guinea. My name is Avusi. My Mama, she works in town, looking after somebody's children. Every morning I wake up to the sound of my Mama getting ready for work, and I am filled with a feeling of sadness.

'Mama, can I come with you?'

'No, my brave little man, you cannot come.'

'But I don't want to stay here by myself,' I cry.

'Your Bubu will be here to look after you, and you have all the other children in the village to play with.'

I watch unhappily as my mother goes down the wooden steps of our hut and disappears into the morning fog.

That night, while my mother was putting me to bed, I asked her about her job.

'Mama, is it true there are lots of ghosts where you work?'

'Why? Who told you a story like that?' she asked.

'Bubu Man said you work in a house full of white ghosts.'

'Don't listen to that old man. One day he'll frighten you to death. I don't work in a house of white ghosts, is that clear?'

'Yes, Mama.'

'So, I guess that means you're not coming with me to work tomorrow... because you think I work in a house full of ghosts.'

'No, I want to come, I want to come, please!' I said.

'OK, OK, you can come,' she laughed.

Next day I got up at the same time as the sun.

'Mama, Mama, wake up!' I called, running into my mother's room. 'You're going to be late for

work.'

'If you're not ready soon, I'll have to leave you,' said my Mama.

I turned round to find her all dressed and ready. I ran out of the room realizing that I had woken up late.

We climbed into a PMV and drove away into town. This was only the second time I had been in a PMV. We got off in front of a big white house. Inside the gate there was green grass and beautiful flowers of so many colours - it was like walking through a rainbow. I asked my mother the question that had been in my head all the way there.

'You said that there are no ghosts?'

'No ghosts,' she said. 'Sure as the day you were born.'

As the door opened, my mouth fell open too. In front of me was the biggest room I had ever seen. It was a palace.

'Maria, Maria!' It was the voices of children. Running towards us were two little white ghosts. I held on to my mother's dress, shaking with fright. But my mother picked up the little white ghosts and held them in her arms. Then around the corner came a larger white ghost, the same size as my mother, but with long golden hair and carrying a little white baby ghost.

'Good morning, Maria,' the big ghost said. 'And you must be Avusi.'

She put out her hand to touch me, but I moved away.

'Don't be afraid, honey, it's OK,' said my mother. 'They're not ghosts.'

'Ghosts?' laughed the big ghost. 'Here,' she said, putting the baby down on the floor.

The baby made a baby kind of noise and smiled, then came towards me and grabbed me round the waist. I shut my eyes, hoping and hoping that the ghosts would go away. But after a while I realized that this baby ghost felt like me. I opened my eyes just a little bit, and looked down.

'He's smiling at me... he likes me.'

'Yes, he does,' smiled the big white ghost.

So I put my arms round the little white ghost, who was called Brandon. There and then I learnt that not everyone had the same skin colour as me. I knew I had made a friend, and it didn't matter what crazy story my grandfather had told me - this ghost was my friend. He was my little ghost.

- THE END -

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