



# Magical rainbow river

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Three siblings, Ada, Ardo and Eran listened to the music of the rain. They wanted to dance in it. They wanted to touch the rainbow that arrived in the sky. Mother said, "No."

They cried, hoping to change her mind. It didn't work. Eran even tried to sneak out of the house to visit the rainbow.



Mother caught him before he could go. She raised her voice so that Eran and his sisters would hear too.

"You could catch a cold," she said. "You don't like pepper soup and you would have to eat some, if you caught a cold," she added with a smile.



Hoping that they would ask for a story, she said, "The rainbow is a magical river with healing powers. But it is so high up in the sky that you can't reach it. If you catch a cold, the rainbow can't help you."

The children thought about this.



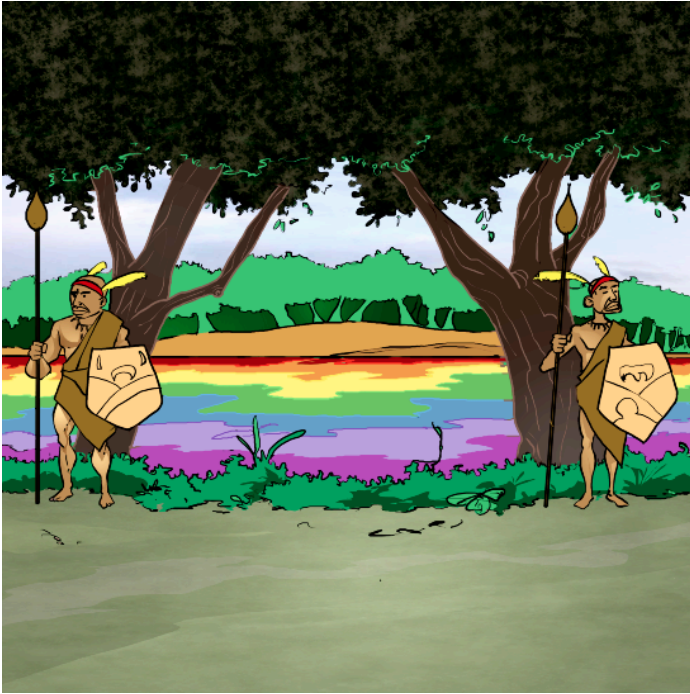
"Mother, please tell us our rainbow story," said Ardo. "Yes, please mother, I want to hear it too," Ada chimed in. "Me three," Eran begged, lifting up three little fingers.

"Well, let me see, mmmm," she said playfully. "Okay lovelies, gather round. Mother, the storyteller is here!"



Ardo ran for the naha, the stirring stick they used as their totem. She handed it over to mother. Eran got the headgear for mother to wear. It never failed to put her into character.

They all sat quietly to listen to the story they had heard many times. Ada blew the whistle, telling mother to start. Then the story began.



"Once, the rainbow was a magical river. It was hidden inside the green woods of Musanze. Because it had healing powers, it was guarded.

If you were sick, you drank the water. The rainbow was always happy to share. But it didn't like badly behaved people."



"Because of the river's magic, there was ice cream along the banks! Everyone who came to drink the water also enjoyed the ice cream, especially children."

The ice cream from the river was red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple and indigo."





"One day, a naughty old woman called Mbom came from the land beyond. On arrival, she met with a guard. He did not know her and he felt a strange feeling. But he did not listen to his feelings.

He pointed the way into the woods and told her to respect the river. Mbom agreed and went to the water."



"She took a drink and was healed.  
Then she looked around to make sure  
she wasn't being watched.

Mbom picked up a stone and threw it  
in. She watched as it rose, and spread  
into a ripple. Pleased, she picked up a  
stick. She threw it in. The same thing  
happened."



"Mbom jumped right into the water! She hoped to get everlasting life. As soon as she jumped, the river rose up. It shot high into the sky, never to return to Musanze. But sometimes the rainbow follows after the rain, to feel like a river again.

And there my story ends," said mother.



"So my lovelies tell me, why do you love this story so much?" asked mother. "You often ask me to tell it."

"I love it because it reminds me to pay attention to my feelings," Ada smiled. "It helps me to remember the colors of the rainbow," added Ardo.



Eran tried to push his luck, "I love it because it reminds me of ice cream! Can I have some now, pleeeeaase?"

"Mmmm. It's cold now, let's eat ice cream tomorrow. Shall we?" mother says. Then she adds, "Next time, I will tell the tale of the end of the rainbow."

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