Tommy Has a Tummy Ache

Tomi disregards all advice he has been given about drinking clean, boiled water. He regrets it immediately as suffers terribly. Find out what happens to Tomi in this exciting story.

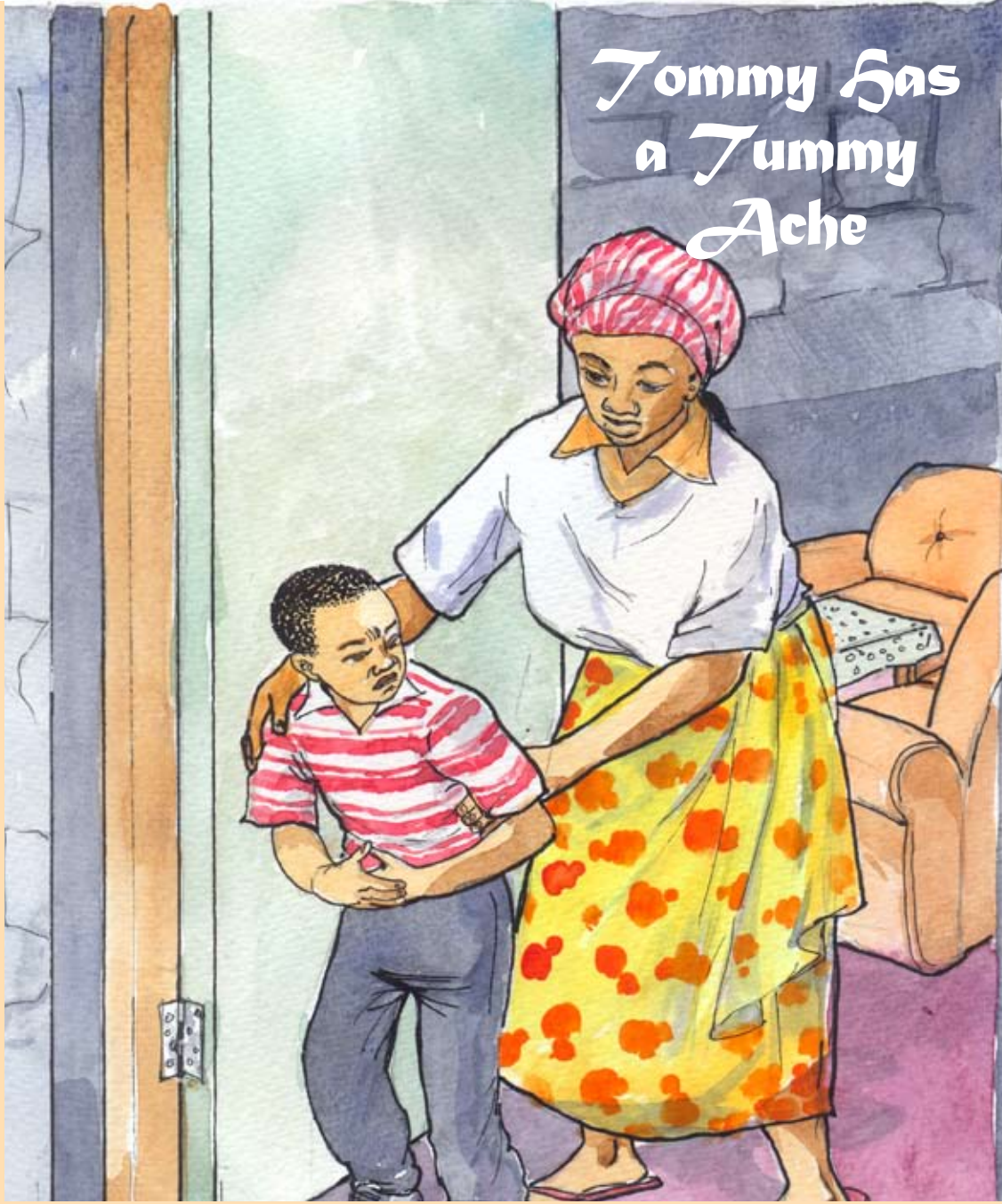


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TOMI HAS A TUMMY ACHE

UN-HABITAT
Series on Water and Sanitation
Lower Primary



Susi and Tomi are Mrs Paulo's children. They are twins. They go to school every morning. They are in Standard three. Every morning, Mrs Paulo wakes up early. She makes breakfast for her children. She packs lunch for them and fills two bottles with clean water. One bottle for Susi and the other for Tomi. She talks to the children about the water.



"This is good clean water. It is from the well. I boiled it last night. Then I kept it covered. You must not drink any other water."

"Yes mother," the children say.

"Remember to keep some to wash your hands before you eat."

"Yes mother," they agree.

They say good bye to their mother and go to school.

At lunch break, Susi and Tomi went and sat under a tree to eat their lunch. They washed their hands before they ate.

After lunch, they washed their hands well and drank some water. They put their bottles back into their bags.

After school, Susi and Tomi started walking home. It was hot.

Susi said, "I am thirsty. I shall drink some of my water."

Tomi said, "I am thirsty too. Let us sit by the road side and drink some water.



Susi and Tomi sat by the road and removed their bottles.

Susi drank some water from her bottle.

But there was no water in Tomi's bottle.

Tomi said to Susi, "I had water in my bottle. Now the bottle is empty!"



Susi looked at Tomi's empty bottle. Then she looked inside his bag. "Look at your bag," she said, "The bottom is wet. You did not close your bottle well. Your water leaked."

Tomi looked sad. He was thirsty. He said to Susi, "Please give me some of your water."

Susi held her bottle upside down. There was not even a drop of water.

"What shall I do? Tomi asked. "I am thirsty. I want to drink some water."

Susi said, "Let us go home. We shall find clean water to drink."

Tomi stood up. He looked all around him. He saw a little pool of water on the other side of the road.

"Look!" Tomi said pointing at the pool. "There is water over there," He ran to the pool.

"Stop!" Susi shouted. "That is dirty water."

"This is good water," Tomi said. "Rain water flowed into this little pool. Our teacher said rain water is good to drink."



“Rain water is good when it is clean. This water flowed on the ground. It collected dirt. Look! It has a bad colour. It has a bad smell too.”

Tomi did not listen to Susi. He knelt down. He held his hands together like a bowl and drank some water.

Susi looked at her brother. “How does it taste?” she asked. “Like water!” Tomi answered. “I can see your face,” Susi said. “You don’t like the water. It has a bad taste. Good water has no taste.”

After drinking the water, Tomi took his bag and they went home.



The next morning, Susi woke up early. Tomi was still in bed. "Wake up Tomi," she called to him. "You will be late for school." Tomi was awake. But he was not getting out of bed.

Susi was having her breakfast.

Mrs Paulo asked, "Where is your brother?"

"He is still in bed," Susi answered.

"What is the matter with him?" Mrs Paulo asked. "Tomi! Tomi!" Mrs Paulo called. You are going to be late for school."

Tomi heard his mother. But he did not get up. He had a tummy ache.



Mrs Paulo went to Tomi's room. Tomi looked sick.

"What is the matter Tomi?" she asked.

Tomi got out of bed. He was holding his stomach. "I have a tummy ache," he said. "I want to go to the toilet." He quickly ran out.

Susi had finished her breakfast. She was ready to go to school. But Tommy had not come back into the house.



Mrs Paulo went outside the house. She went near the latrine. "Are you alright Tomi?" She called. Tomi did not answer. She went and opened the latrine door. Tomi was not in the latrine.

"Tomi! Tomi!" she shouted, "Where are you?"

Tomi was behind a bush. He made a noise.

"I can hear you Tomi. Why are you hiding behind that bush? Come out."

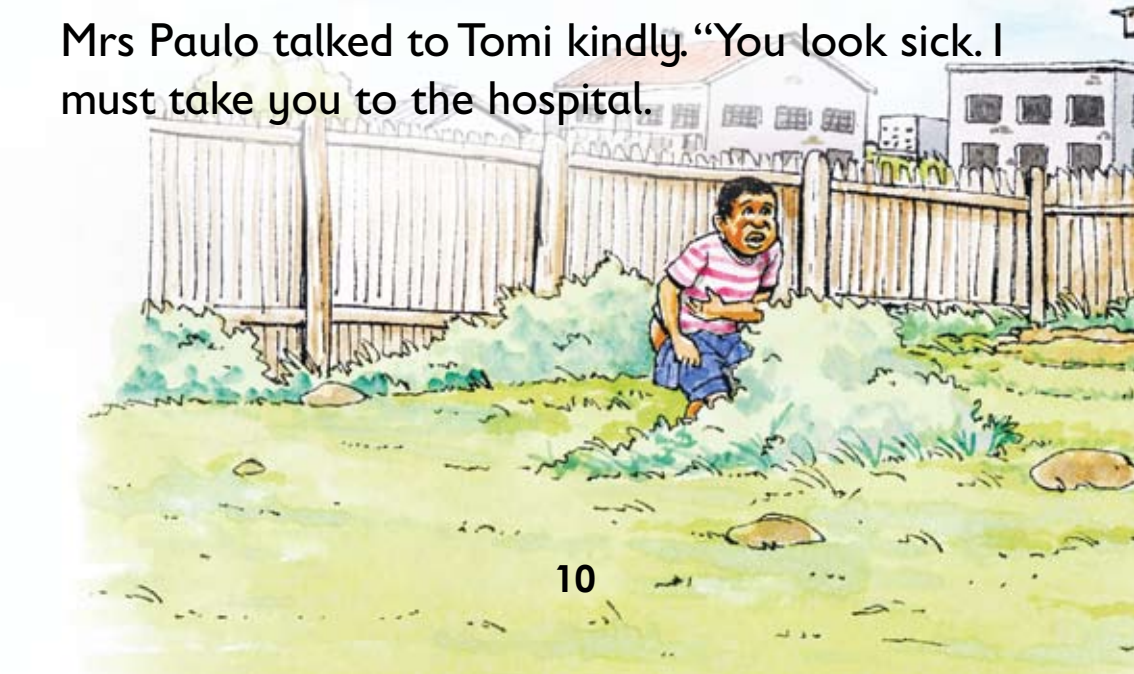
"I have a tummy ache, I needed to go to the latrine."

"But why are you behind the bush".

"I could not get to the latrine on time".

"You should use the latrine", Mrs Paulo said. "The bush is not a latrine." She was angry with Tomi. She had taught him to always use the latrine.

Tomi came from behind the bush. He looked sick. Mrs Paulo talked to Tomi kindly. "You look sick. I must take you to the hospital.



But first you have to wash your hands with soap and water".

Susi came out of the house and asked her mother what was wrong with Tomi.

"He has a tummy ache. I wonder what he ate yesterday," said Mrs Paulo.

"He drank water from a pool by the road," Susi said. "It was dirty water. I told him not to drink it."

"Oh dear!" Mrs Paulo said. "Why did you drink dirty water? I put some good water in your bottle."



At the hospital, the doctor asked Mrs Paulo what was wrong with Tomi.

"He has a tummy ache and diarrhoea. He drank water from a pool on the roadside."

"Diarrhoea is not a disease. It is a sign of a disease. The water Tomi drank had germs.

The doctor put Tomi on a bed. He checked him. Then he talked to Mrs Paulo.

"The water your son drank had germs. He has Cholera. Cholera is a very bad disease. He must stay in hospital until he is better.

The medicine I give him will kill the germs.



Diarrhoea removes water from the body. Having little water in the body can make your son very sick. We must put some water into his body."

Tomi stayed in the hospital. After five days, he was alright. His mother came to get him. She talked to the doctor.

"Thank you doctor," Mrs Paulo said.

The doctor said, "When it rains, water runs on the ground. It collects a lot of dirt. Sick people could have used the bush as a toilet. If they have Cholera, the water carries the germs. When rain water forms pools, all the germs stay in it. That is why people must not drink water from pools."

"Yes doctor," said Tomi.

"You must use the latrine. Do not use the bush. Always remember to wash your hands after using the latrine. Dirty hands can pass on germs when you greet each other."

"Yes doctor," Tomi said.



"And you must remember to wash your fruits and vegetables in clean water before you eat them. Vegetables must be cleaned and cooked well."

The doctor looked at Tomi. "You are better now. But you must not drink dirty water again."

"Yes sir," Tomi said. "I shall never drink dirty water again. I shall only drink boiled water. I never want to get sick again."