

The Great Python

Once in a village in Africa, the Chief became very ill. The villagers were so concerned because they loved their Chief who was fair, and loving, and kind. The Chief tried everything to heal, but nothing worked. Finally, he brought his warriors together and told them, "The only thing that can heal me now is the Great Python. Go to his cave, tell him that I need him, and bring him here." The warriors and hunters left immediately, and traveled to the cave where the Python lived. They stood in front of the cave and called to the Great Python, "The Chief is very sick, come with us, and heal him." The Great Python slowly uncoiled his huge body and came toward the opening of the cave. When the hunters saw the huge snake they were afraid and turned and ran back to the village. The King was disappointed in them. Right away he asked for the children to be brought before him. He told them that he needed them to bring the Great Python back. He encouraged them not to be afraid and he told them to sing. Well, the children loved to sing and they loved the King, so they scampered off to find the Great Python, singing as they went. They knew where his cave was, but they had never ventured there because they were afraid. But whenever they felt their fear rising up from their chests to their throats, they began to sing louder. Soon they were laughing. When they got to the cave they called to the Python. "I am sure he is nice," said one child, "He is the Chief's friend so he is our friend too." Soon the Great Python began to emerge from the cave. He was huge. And yes, the children were afraid, but they remembered what the Chief had told them and they sang and smiled. The two youngest children brought a bowl of milk because the Chief said to offer some to the Great Python. The children slowly and carefully lifted the Great Python and let him rest on their shoulders. They carried him that way, with the smallest children in front carrying the bowl of milk, so the Great Python could drink whenever he was thirsty. When they got to the village they gently laid the Great Python in front of the Chief's hut. The Python went into the hut alone. The Chief greeted his old friend and thanked him for coming. The Python immediately got to work healing the chief. He licked the Chief from head to toe. Python saliva has magical healing qualities. When the Great Python was done, he left. The Chief healed completely. In a special ceremony the Chief honored the children of the village for their courage and their devotion to the duty of serving their Chief. He gave them all gifts and he sang with them. He expressed his pleasure that the future of the village was in the hands of such brave, honest, and loving people. And that is the story of the Great Python.