

LETTER TAPORI

N°457

Tapori brings together groups of children who, through games, activities, and moments of reflection, discover that they can be actors of change, helping to make the world a fairer place. Together, they learn how to make sure no one is left out.

GENEROSITY

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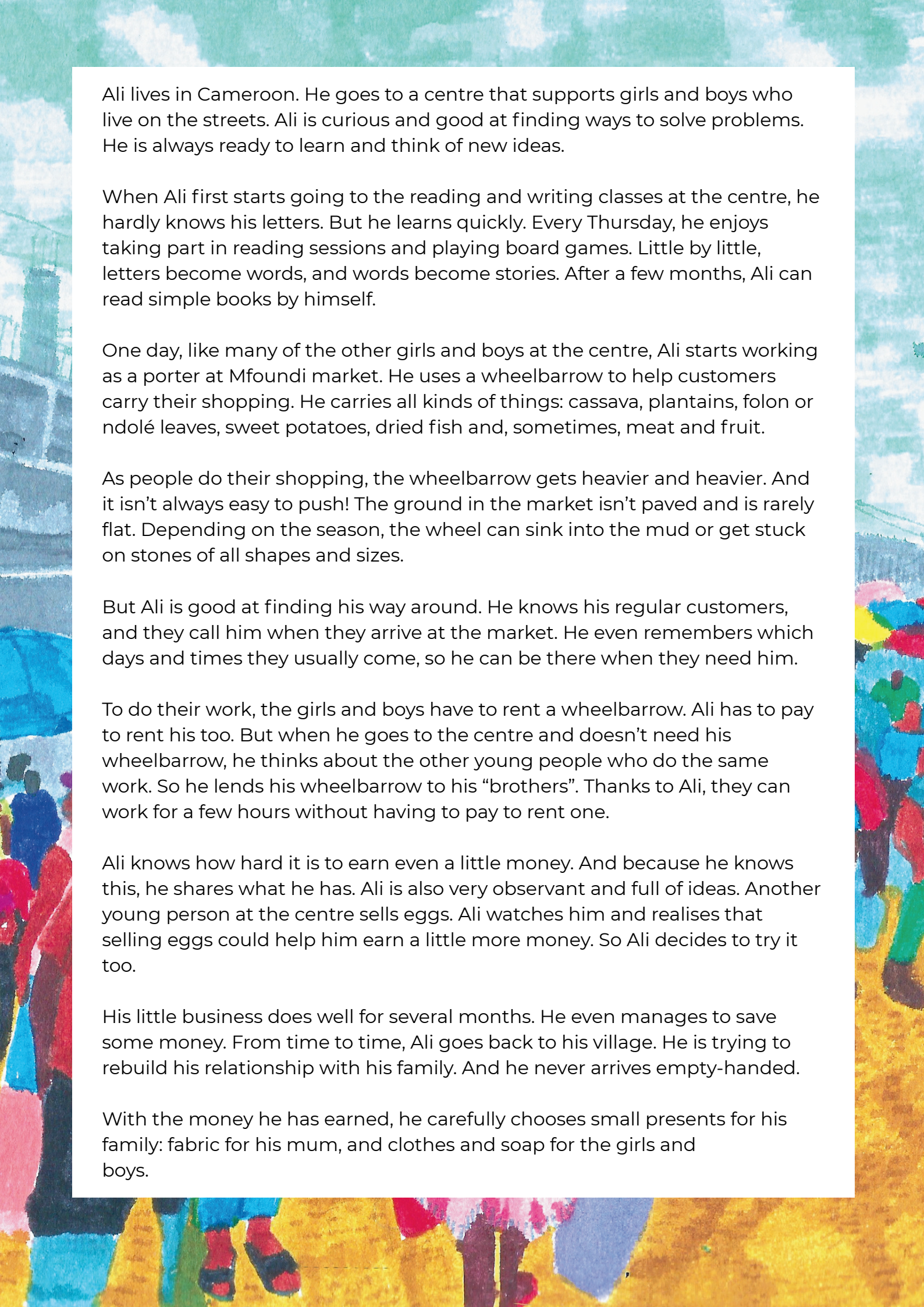


We are often encouraged to think about what we want and what is best for us. Generosity means noticing what other people need and sharing what we have with them. Children show us that when we look after one another, share and make room for everyone, we can build stronger friendships and relationships and open the way to a fairer world.



TAPORI

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Ali lives in Cameroon. He goes to a centre that supports girls and boys who live on the streets. Ali is curious and good at finding ways to solve problems. He is always ready to learn and think of new ideas.

When Ali first starts going to the reading and writing classes at the centre, he hardly knows his letters. But he learns quickly. Every Thursday, he enjoys taking part in reading sessions and playing board games. Little by little, letters become words, and words become stories. After a few months, Ali can read simple books by himself.

One day, like many of the other girls and boys at the centre, Ali starts working as a porter at Mfoundi market. He uses a wheelbarrow to help customers carry their shopping. He carries all kinds of things: cassava, plantains, fonio or ndolé leaves, sweet potatoes, dried fish and, sometimes, meat and fruit.

As people do their shopping, the wheelbarrow gets heavier and heavier. And it isn't always easy to push! The ground in the market isn't paved and is rarely flat. Depending on the season, the wheel can sink into the mud or get stuck on stones of all shapes and sizes.

But Ali is good at finding his way around. He knows his regular customers, and they call him when they arrive at the market. He even remembers which days and times they usually come, so he can be there when they need him.

To do their work, the girls and boys have to rent a wheelbarrow. Ali has to pay to rent his too. But when he goes to the centre and doesn't need his wheelbarrow, he thinks about the other young people who do the same work. So he lends his wheelbarrow to his "brothers". Thanks to Ali, they can work for a few hours without having to pay to rent one.

Ali knows how hard it is to earn even a little money. And because he knows this, he shares what he has. Ali is also very observant and full of ideas. Another young person at the centre sells eggs. Ali watches him and realises that selling eggs could help him earn a little more money. So Ali decides to try it too.

His little business does well for several months. He even manages to save some money. From time to time, Ali goes back to his village. He is trying to rebuild his relationship with his family. And he never arrives empty-handed.

With the money he has earned, he carefully chooses small presents for his family: fabric for his mum, and clothes and soap for the girls and boys.

But then bird flu arrives, and Ali has to stop selling eggs. Ali needs to find another way to support himself. He doesn't want to sleep on the streets any more because he has been attacked several times. So he makes an agreement with a woman who runs a small video game shop. Ali helps with cleaning and looks after customers in the evenings. In return, she lets him sleep there and gives him one meal a day.

This gives Ali a little peace of mind. He continues to go to the centre regularly. He can also start "keeping his money" again, as the girls and boys say when they leave their small savings at the centre to keep them safe.

As Ali saves some money, he starts thinking about his future. He would like to buy a small herd and hopes that, one day, he will be able to return to live in his village.

But then his mum becomes ill.

Ali uses some of the money he has earned to help her. While she is ill, he regularly sends her money so that she can buy the medicines she needs. He keeps helping her until she gets better.

Ali has never had much. But whenever he has had something to share, such as a wheelbarrow, some savings or a little money from his work, he has found a way to share it with others.

This is generosity too. Even when we have very little, we can think of something we can share, so that someone else can move forward too.



CAN A SMALL GESTURE HELP MAKE THE WORLD FAIRER?

When we listen to girls and boys, we can learn how they understand generosity and how they show it in their everyday lives. They show it through the things they say, the choices they make and the small things they do.

When they share, help, listen or make room for others, they show us that even small acts of generosity can bring people closer together and help make sure that no one is left out.

When we listen to their experiences and take their ideas seriously, we can see how small acts of kindness and generosity can grow and help build a world that is fairer and more caring.

