

Kande's Story

How a community can love and care for
people affected by AIDS

Learner's Book

SIL Africa Area (for English)

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Or

(Highlighted portions for translation only)

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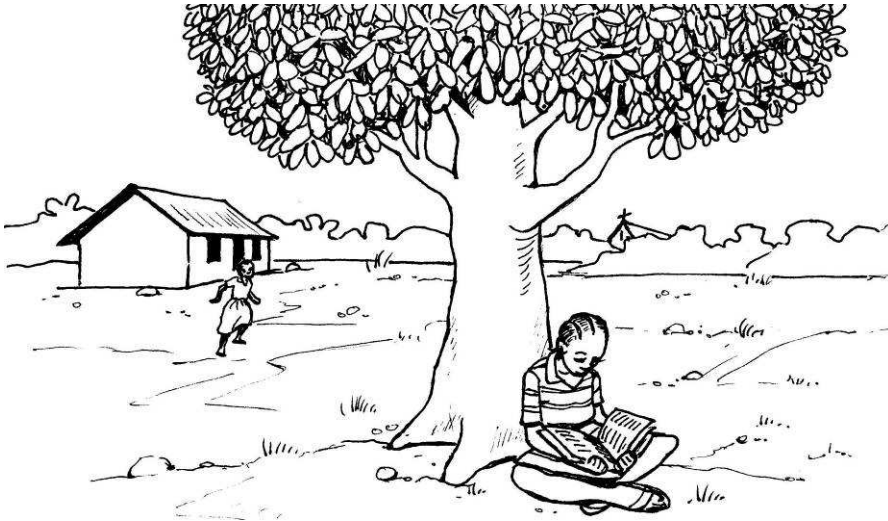
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Chapter 1

Mama's Secrets



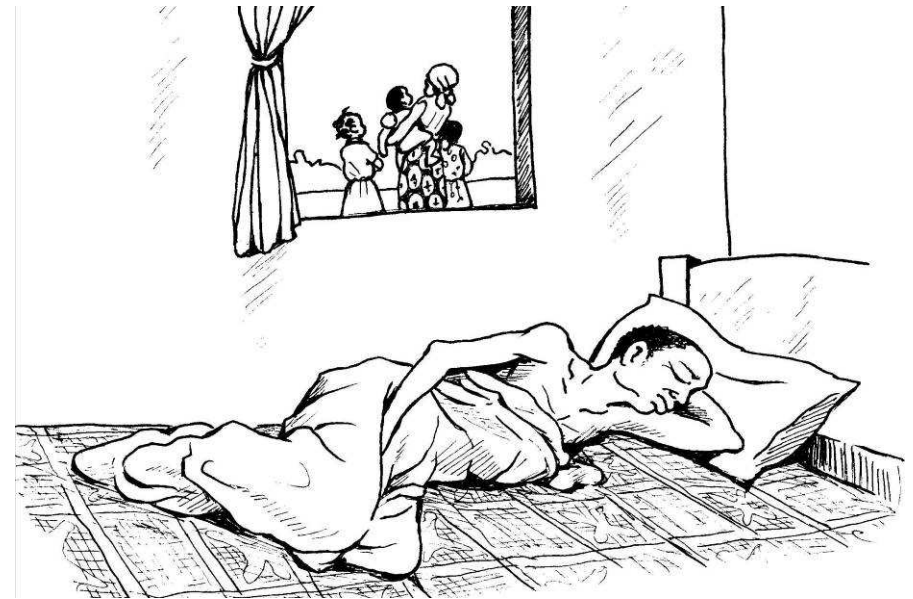
This is the story of Kande.

One day, Kande sat under a tree reading. Her sister Teshi came running. “Kande, Kande! I heard the women talking. They said Mama has a secret! What can it be?” “I think I know, little sister,” said Kande. “Let’s go talk to Mama and find out. I’ll race you!”



Kande and Teshi arrived home laughing and out of breath. Their sisters Falala and Iniko and their brother Jumoke came to see what the excitement was about. Mama hushed them. 'Be quiet and let your Papa sleep,' she said as she herded them away.

Teshi asked, "Mama, do you have a secret?" Mama put her hand on her middle and said, "Our family is growing bigger."



Four-year-old Iniko said, "I'm going inside to tell Papa!" Mama picked her up before she could get to the door. "He already knows, little one. Let him rest," Mama said.

Iniko frowned. She loved to climb on Papa, but lately she had hardly been allowed to go near him. For a long time he had been lying down, never working. He had gotten thin and was very weak. He had a bad cough. The whole family worried about him.



One day Kande was at the market. She was telling her friends that her mother was having a baby. A boy walked by and jeered, "That baby is going to have AIDS just like your father!" Kande did not know what he meant. "Surely Papa doesn't have AIDS", she thought, "or does he?" "Don't listen to that boy!" her friends said.



Later that night Kande asked her mother, "Does Papa have AIDS? I'm old enough to know." Kande's mother looked away. Kande could see that she was crying. She answered, "Yes he does. I am sorry that you heard it from somebody else first."

What will we do if Papa dies?" Kande asked. "How will we get food and money in order to live?" "God will help us," Mama said. They cried together for a while.



Just before the rainy season started, Kande's father died. Friends and relatives came and mourned for him.

Kande asked herself, "Why didn't they visit when he was so sick and so lonely?" The church leader had been the only visitor Papa had before he died.



Some months later Kande and her mother were out gathering firewood. Mama was breathing hard, and she looked very weak. Kande took her hand, and they sat down to rest. Mama said, "Sometimes I feel like I don't have the strength to do anything anymore."

Chapter 2

More Trouble for Kande's Family



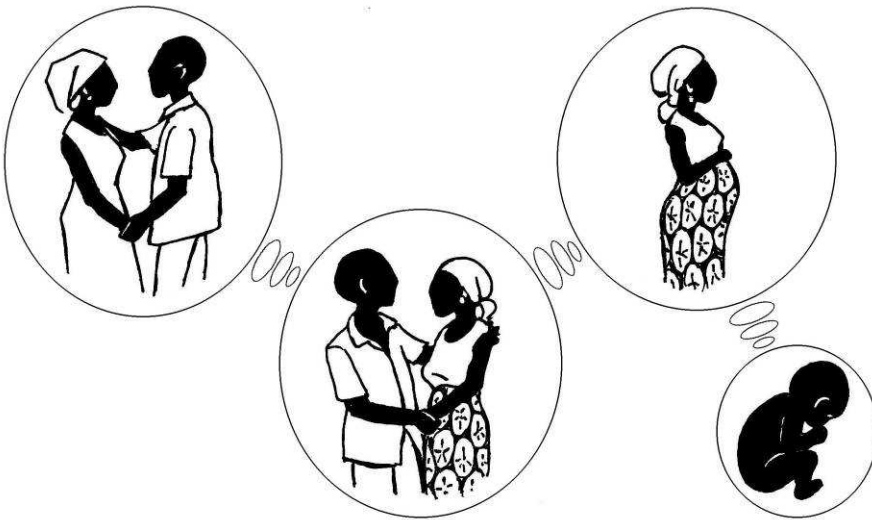
Kande and her mother sat under the tree. Mama didn't look well, and she was so tired, Kande had to help her up.



Kande's father had died, and with her mother pregnant and feeling weak, the children had to work much harder. Kande scolded them when she thought they weren't working hard enough. Mama didn't like that. She said, "Listen Kande, don't scold your sisters, they are doing their best."

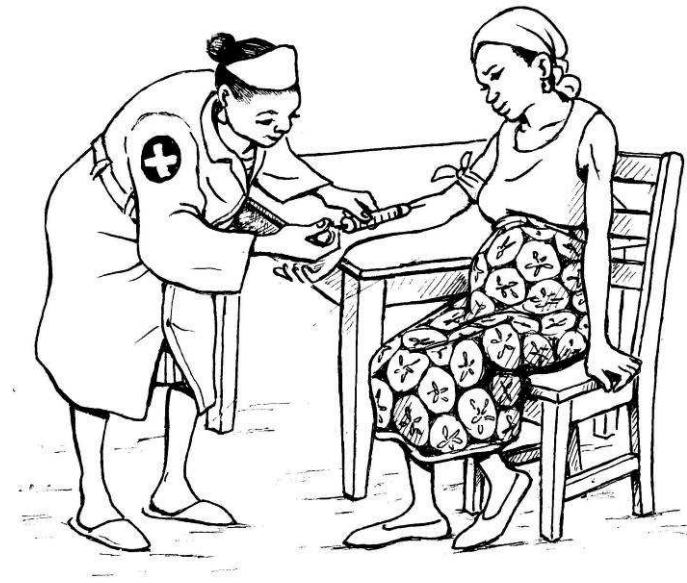


Then two women from the local church came to visit. One was a health worker; the other was a great story teller. They started coming over often. They brought food and did a lot of Mama's work. They joked and told stories. Kande was happy to see her mother laughing more often now.



Kande overheard the health worker talking to Mama. She did not understand everything they said, but she learned that her papa had been unfaithful to Mama. He must have caught HIV, the germ that causes AIDS, from that other woman.

Papa didn't know he had HIV, so he didn't do anything to protect mama. Mama must have caught HIV from Papa, and now the baby could get it from Mama. "You must come to the clinic to get tested for HIV," the health worker told Mama.



Mama went to the clinic. The health worker drew blood from her arm. Soon Mama had the results. The next day, Mama told Kande the terrible news. Mama was infected with HIV. The baby might be also.

Later the health worker told Mama that she must eat fruits and vegetables to make her body strong. She gave Mama some medicines to treat some of her sicknesses. But the strong medicines called ARV that fight HIV were not available in their community. Mama was worried. Where would she get the ARV medicine to help stop the baby from getting HIV too?



Mama began to get sicker. The HIV infection grew and soon Mama had AIDS. She got sores in her mouth and on her skin.

“Will I get AIDS from touching Mama?” Kande asked the women from the church. “No, you will not get AIDS from touching your mother. Besides she needs your love and your hugs!” said the health worker. She showed Kande the best ways to take care of Mama and taught her the best foods to give her. Kande felt better, now she knew how to care for Mama.



The baby was born. Mama was very weak. She held the new baby and cried out, “Yatima, orphan!” Mama died a few days later and Kande named the baby Yatima.

Kande took the baby in her arms and sat down under the tree. “I won’t let you be an orphan,” she said. “You are my baby now.”

Chapter 3

Dangers for Kande's Family



Kande sat under the tree feeding her baby sister, Yatima. Kande wished that someone would have breastfed the baby, but since Mama died of AIDS, people were afraid they would get it from the baby.

Some people from the church helped Kande get milk powder. They showed her how to use boiled water to prepare milk to feed the baby .

Kande was so glad that Yatima was doing well.



One day Kande's younger brother, Jumoke, came to talk to her. "I want to stop going to school just like you and Teshi did."

"No, first you need to finish school," Kande said. "Then you can help the rest of us. Listen Jumoke, at school you must be careful not to make friends with the boys who drink alcohol or run after girls. Do you know when you drink alcohol, you are not able to think clearly. If you have sex with those girls you might get HIV from them."

Jumoke said he would study hard. He promised he would not run after girls or drink alcohol.



One day Kande's relative visited. "By tradition, this land belongs to me now that your father died," he told her.

"But we have nowhere to go," cried Kande. "Well that is not my concern!" he said. "Soon I will want this house. For now, I want half of all the food you grow."



That night Falala asked Kande, “Will we have to move away?”

“No, our relative said we could stay here for now. But we do need to give half of all the food we grow to him.”

“That doesn’t leave enough for us,” cried Falala. “We will have to do something else to get enough food and money to live!”



One morning, Kande and Teshi were carrying the baby to the health clinic for a checkup. Teshi pointed to a man near the market. “He is the man who gave me this bracelet. Maybe he can help us get what we need to live,” she said.



The healthcare worker said that the baby was doing fine but they must wait for some months before testing to see if the baby had HIV. She also talked to Kande and Teshi about important issues for girls and boys their age. "Because you are orphans, there are some men who might try to give you food and presents to persuade you to have sex with them. Do not let them trick you. There is too much risk of getting pregnant, or of getting HIV and other diseases that come through sex. "



Teshi said, "I wonder if the man who gave me this bracelet might be trying to get me to sleep with him?"

Kande, Teshi and Falala promised each other that they would stay virgins until they were married.

Chapter 4

Kande Finds Hope



Kande and her family lived through some hard times. Her parents had died of AIDS, and taking care of her younger siblings was difficult for her. Some days they went hungry, but Kande always worked hard for them, and she tried to be like a mother to her baby sister.



One day Ajani, a friend of Kande's family, came to visit her. Ajani was a kind boy who respected God. He brought his little brother with him, "Come to church with us." Ajani would say.

"Not this time," Kande always said. "There is too much work to do."



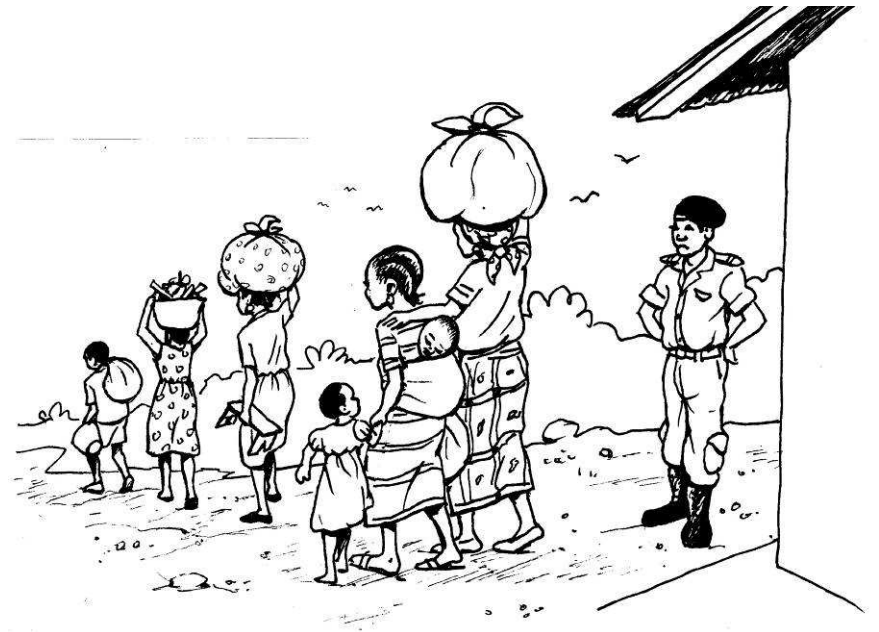
Ajani went on asking until one day Kande's sister Falala said, "I'll go. Maybe I'll learn something." Teshi said, "I'll go, too. Maybe I'll make some new friends."

"Take Iniko and Yatima with you, then," said Kande. "Jumoke and I will stay here and get some work done!"



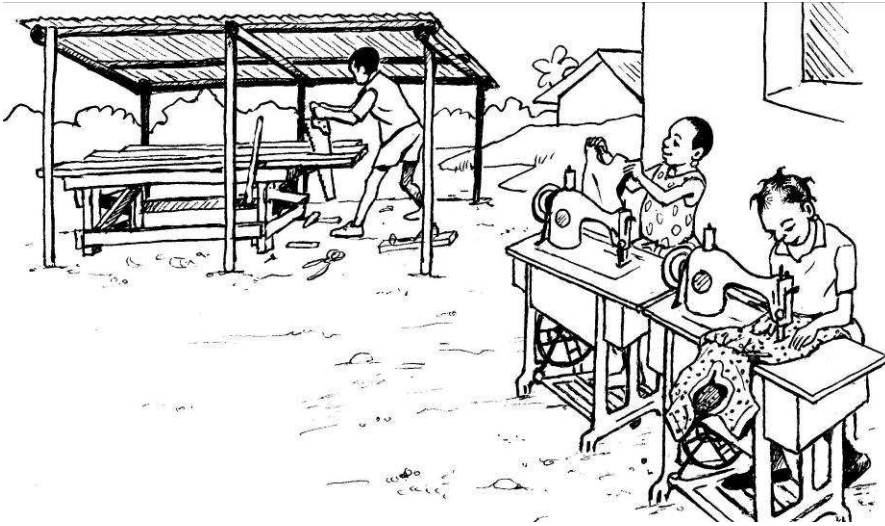
Later, when her sisters returned and told her about the church's community farm, Kande decided to get involved. The church leaders let them work on a large plot, and they were allowed to keep all the food to eat or trade at the market.

Now they worked very hard, but they were making a better living than before. Soon Teshi returned to school.



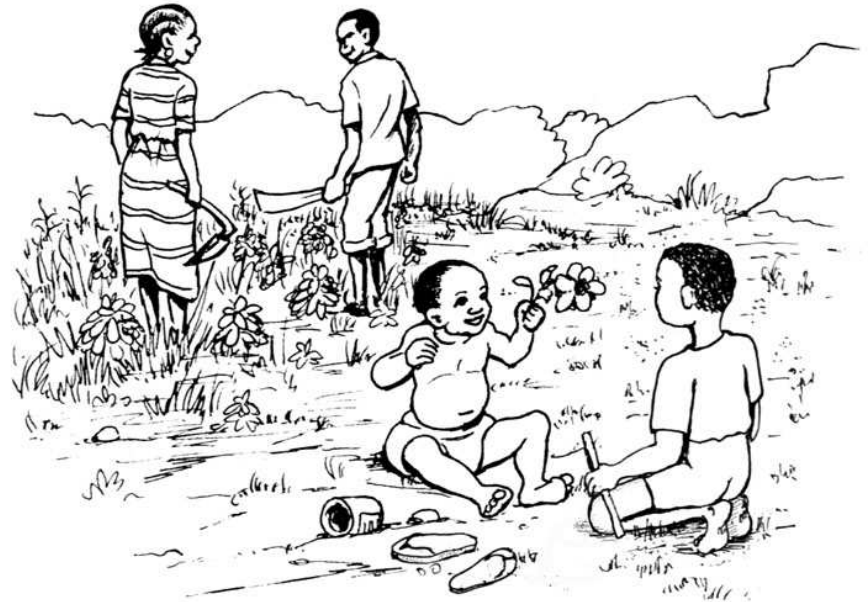
One day Kande's relative sent a message to her. He said that it was time now for Kande and her siblings to leave their father's house and farm. Kande was very sad.

A woman from the church invited the children to come and live with her. She had helped them when their mother was sick. She lived next to the church and the church farm. The children moved in with her, and their relatives took back the old home and farm.



Kande and the whole family, even Iniko, worked in their new farm plot at the church. Teshi and Falala also learned to sew, and the church let them use a sewing machine. Jumoke learned carpentry in the church's workshop.

Kande started going to the church meetings with her siblings. There the pastor read to them from the Word of God about a new way of life. Soon they began to follow it.

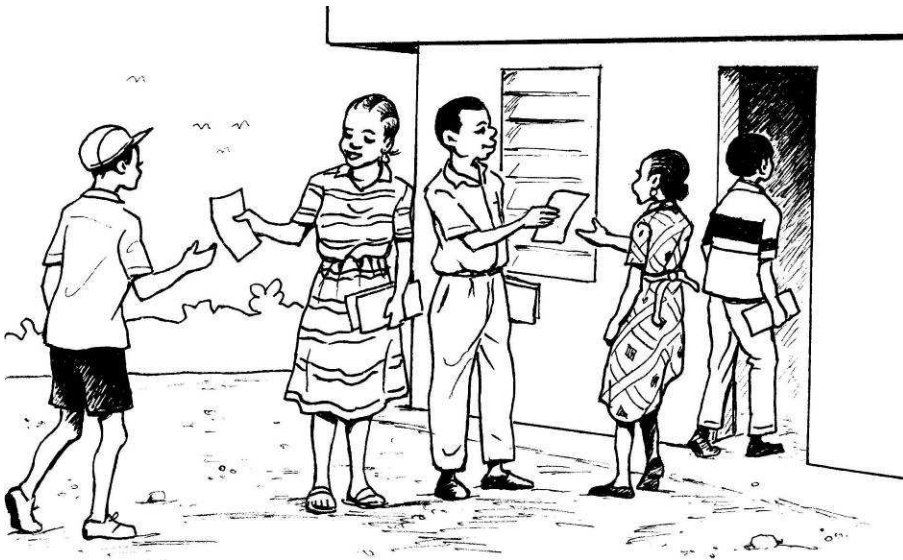


Kande was glad that Ajani often helped her in the farm while the little brother and Yatima played together.

Kande told Ajani, "When my parents died, I thought our whole family would die, too. Life is still hard, but now God has given us a hope for the future."

Chapter 5

Kande's Community Learns about AIDS



One day, about a year later, Kande talked to Ajani. “The church has helped us so much! They have let us grow crops on their land. They have taught us to make a good living, and they have been friends to us in so many ways. How can we ever repay the good they have done to us?”



Soon after that, the church hosted a large meeting on AIDS prevention. Trainers and learners came from all around. Kande, Teshi, and Falala attended. They brought their brother Jumoke. Ajani came too.



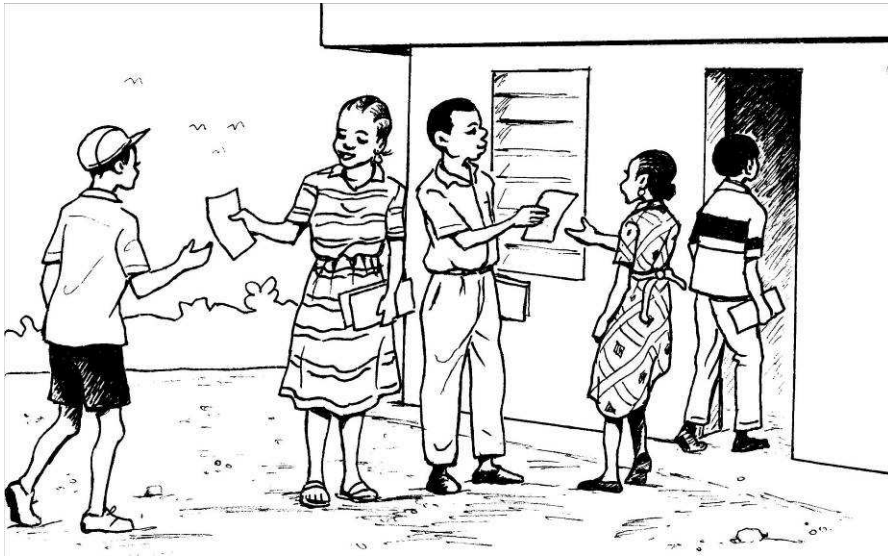
One of the meeting leaders approached Kande. “Would you and your siblings help teach people how to avoid getting AIDS? You know better than anyone the need to prevent AIDS! And you all read well. People know that you know the facts about HIV and AIDS.” They accepted happily.



Teshi started right away, helping to teach classes. With her enthusiasm and easy laugh, she made people listen to the hard facts about AIDS. She soon became a trainer in her community and lots of people went to her classes.



Falala began drawing pictures for the AIDS lessons. Jumoke translated the lessons into their own language. They made books that explained how to avoid getting HIV and how to care for people sick with AIDS.



Kande and Ajani helped by inviting people to the classes and making sure the trainers had the supplies they needed. They made a special effort to invite their friends.

Kande and Ajani's friendship grew. When Ajani told his family he wanted to marry Kande, they were very happy.

Ajani let their friends know that he and Kande promised to stay pure until they got married and then to remain faithful to each other.



Kande and Ajani got married, and later they had a baby. One day, their large family gathered under Kande's favorite tree. "I used to sit here and talk with Mama," she said.

Iniko, who had been very young when her parents died, said "I miss Mama and Papa, but I think they would be proud of us now."