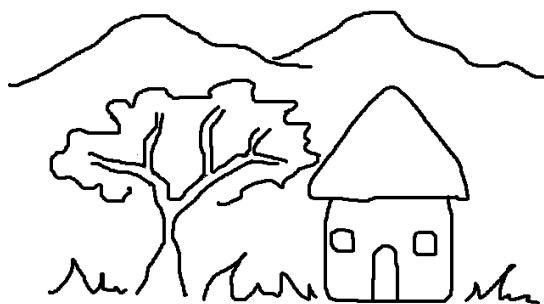


The African mama

A poem by Elisabeth D Svendsen

I'm getting old and losing my sight
And it's always hot in my hut at night.
In fact I can't see very much at all
And I have to be careful that I don't fall.

If you close your eyes you'll be like me
Please try now, then I'll have company.
It's amazing how we can shut out light,
Turn a wonderful day into darkest night.

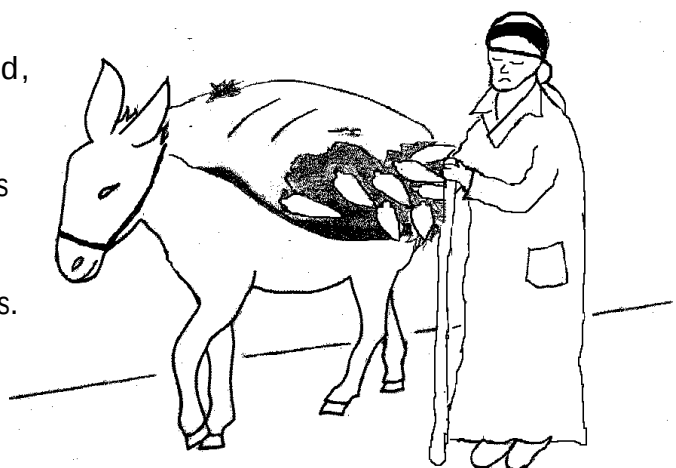


My donkey shows me the way to town
I hold onto her collar, she won't let me down.
I've managed to balance some corn on her back
But I'm not sure I've properly tied on the sack.

Disaster strikes as we walk on the road
I hear the noise as she loses her load.
I try hard to see, but the lorries raise dust
And I'm so very frightened, but find it I must.

I feel a touch, a hand on my back
'Here, let me help you. I'll pick up your sack.
Just move here with me to the side of the road,
I'll help your donkey and refix your load.'

'Your poor donkey's thin and covered in sores
Does she belong to you – is she yours?'
It's the kindest voice I've heard for years
And suddenly my eyes are just filling with tears.



As if in a dream I'm helped in a van
My donkey led in by the very kind man.
He is talking so gently, and giving her feed
And now he is asking me what I need.

A miracle has happened for donkey and me
He's arranged for a doctor to help me to see.
They've lent me a donkey until mine is strong
And they help working donkeys all the day long.

My life began changing from that very day
And now I can see, as I kneel and I pray,
And thank God for the wonderful gift of sight
For seeing the daylight instead of the night.