

Along *the Way*

The day this little boy and his family were forced to flee their home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will always be a memory he'll never forget. Sometimes he talks to his mother, Kimboti, about what happened. Yet, at the tender age of six, other times he can only cry, overwhelmed by fear.

One summer afternoon in 2022, a group of Islamic terrorists attacked the family's village. The young boy was at home with his mother and seven siblings while his father was away working in the fields. When the attack began, the frightened child and his family ran for their lives but were captured before they could reach cover.

As the militants bound their victims' hands and marched them into the jungle, the boy heard his mother begin to pray. She continued to pray with him and his siblings as they walked. All the while, he noticed that his mother was at peace despite the terrifying situation.

Deep in the jungle, the family was confined to a grass hut guarded by men with guns and machetes. During their captivity, they were deprived of food and water, and there was no way of knowing if the children's father had survived the attack.

The boy soon overheard the militants arguing with raised voices. They were deciding what to do with their captives. When one guard mentioned that he

was hesitant about harming the children, the others sneered at him and threatened his life instead.

As the family sat on the floor of the hut, the boy listened to his mother pray for their captors. Near the end of their second day in captivity, her prayers were suddenly answered when a guard secretly came to release the boy and his family. He showed them a path that would lead to a refugee camp and told them to run. The boy's mother knew that, through her prayers, God had changed the other guard's heart. As they fled, she prayed special blessings over the man, asking the Lord to watch over his life.

The boy then heard the militants shouting as they chased them through the jungle for hours. Exhausted from lack of food and water, the family finally stumbled upon the refugee camp, where they were

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warmly welcomed with blankets and clothes. Shortly after, the boy and his siblings were reunited with their father, who had fled to the camp in search of his family.

Despite the harrowing escape, the boy noticed that his mother, Kimboti, was full of joy. She had been invited to join a group of Christian refugees who survived similar attacks. As the believers met to pray and learn from God's Word, the Lord helped Kimboti heal from the traumatic experience. The young mother is hopeful that, in time, God will likewise help her children to recover from the attack.

In the meanwhile, she continues to praise the Lord and teach her children about His great love for them. "God has watched over us," she often reminds them. "His love has been demonstrated to us." They are all very grateful for the Lord's loving care and guidance, and also for the fact that He safely reunited them as a family at the refugee camp.

Reading Between the Lines

How well did you understand the story? Select answer **a** or **b** for each question:

1. What is the main idea of the story?

- a) Islamic terrorists capturing women and children.
- b) God's faithfulness during a horrifying incident.

2. Why did one of their captors choose to let them go?

- a) God told the guard to release them.
- b) The militant's heart was changed, and he had mercy on them.

3. When did Kimboti's children stop being afraid?

- a) When they escaped.
- b) They haven't yet, for the children are still coping with the traumatic ordeal.

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