



The Archives of Fudgemore

A History of Truth Seekers

Volume 1 Issue 1: Grandfathers Bucket

by Bao Luo

Published by School of Unusual Arts

61 Adelaide Street, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada

Schoolofunusualarts.com

ISSN 2816-2781 (Online Version)

ISSN 2816-2773 (Print)

First Edition

Copyright © 2021 Bao Luo

All rights reserved.

For permissions contact: info@schoolofunusualarts.com

Artwork concepts: Bao Luo

Artwork design by @upillustrations

[Tell me more Stories](#)



Grandfathers Bucket

Ayobami sat on the doorstep carving a wooden bucket. It was Iffetayo's fifth birthday soon and as was the tradition in the village, the oldest man in the household would carve a water bucket for the five year old girl or boy. To the people in the village the bucket carried more than water. It carried images meant for that certain child. It carried village traditions from one generation to another, and it carried the water that sustained their lives. Grandfather thought of all this as he worked. But he was not satisfied.

On one side of the bucket was carved all kinds of trees and bugs and things, and on the other side a face and two hands holding a baby. The face and hands were his, and cradled in his hands was his precious granddaughter.



"I must finish the bucket" he thought. But he could not understand what was missing. He felt it, but he did not understand. After a long while sitting in the near darkness, he let out a sigh and the corners of his eyes became wet with tears. As if begging heaven for an answer he lifted his head and asked "What have I understood after all this time? According to my first nature I have done difficult work, and at times I lost my patience. According to my second nature, I have loved very deeply and at times have lost my patience. When I lived my best moments, I was patient, my mind was not elsewhere, and my work and my love were one. To truly live is nothing other than to work with love and to be in no other place or time, and this is how people create beautiful works." Then looking at the bucket again he asked himself "How shall I communicate to her when I am no longer by her side?"

Not bothering to wipe away his tears, he held the bucket up to the candle light, and turned it around. When he came to the carving of his own face he stopped and looked at the carving of himself as though looking in the mirror. Something was missing, and he understood what it was.



By the light of a candle, he fetched an old nail of just the right size. He made a small bow out of the branch of a nearby willow. He took a thin leather strap, wrapped it a few times around the nail and then used this to string the bow. Taking the bucket between his knees, looking at the image he had carved of himself, he placed the nail in the corner of one eye. Then he worked the bow back and forth until he had drilled a small hole just where his tears should flow. He did the same in the other eye. Next he took two porcupine quills, dipped them in a soft wax and plugged the holes. Now, he said, I will test my work.

He filled the bucket with water and felt to see that the holes did not leak. Then he emptied the water back into the water pot. Holding the bucket out at the level of his chest, he let it drop. Then he placed the candle in the bucket and looked at the face. Sure enough he could see a small speck of light where he had drilled the holes.

“my invention works” he said “ the wax let go and the quills have fallen out. If she is not careful with the bucket, it will happen again. And then she will remember. Tomorrow I shall put two new quills in the holes and my bucket will be ready for the day.



The day arrived. At a certain hour the old men of the village gathered in a circle, each one carrying a hand carved bucket. When it was Iffetayo's turn, Ayobami went to get her and they held hands as they walked to the center of the circle as others had done before them. With his other hand, Ayobami held out the bucket. "This bucket is for my granddaughter" he said aloud. Then he placed her hand on the handle of the bucket beside his own. Looking at Iffetayo he said "treat this bucket like your first baby, for your life and its life are one and the same, and this bucket carries your story and my story, and the story of our village, and it carries water which we need to live". Then he let go of the bucket and let go of her hand, and as proud as a peacock she walked out of the circle with her own bucket.

That was how simple and beautiful things were at that time. But there is more.



Ayobami sat at the same step. The sun was going down. He looked up and with tears in his eyes he said these words to no one in particular: " I am grateful for I have understood the threefold meaning of life. I had difficult work to do, and sometimes I lost my patience. I had others to love and I sometimes lost my patience. As long as I was living my life, I had patience and my work and my love took part in each other. To truly live is nothing other than to work with love and to be in no other place or time. This was the most important thing I have learned. Moreover, it is obvious to me now that this threefold meaning of life is true for all peoples throughout the world, though their customs and traditions be different. I am grateful that I took time every day to ponder my actions, and was able to contemplate my two natures, and develop the third. This is what I hope for my beloved granddaughter, Iffetayo. The bucket is good. It is done. It shall be my sunset today. And that day the one sun and the other set together just as he had said.

Some years later, when it was her time, Iffetayo took up her bucket and carried water from the well, and she did this every day for a year. I can tell you now that the lesson her grandfather prepared for her came to pass as he thought it would. But that is another story.



In part 2 of this special edition of The Archives of Fudgemore, Iffetayo discovers the lesson left to her by her grandfather and discovers something about the meaning of life.

Tell me more Stories

Special Edition

These stories are based on
The Philosophy of Meaning®

These stories present to readers images of heroic individuals of all ages, races, and times who provide us with an example of living a meaningful life.

They also point out that meaning transcends all cultural and racial barriers, and has the potential to heal not only an individual heart, but the heart of societies of humanity as a whole. The question of what meaning is and what it derives from will be fed by these stories.

Grandfather's bucket is part one of a two part story. In this story, an elderly grandfather makes a special bucket which could communicate a message meant for his beloved niece Iffetayo, long after he had passed away.