



Martha

LEARNS TO LISTEN

Martha learns to listen

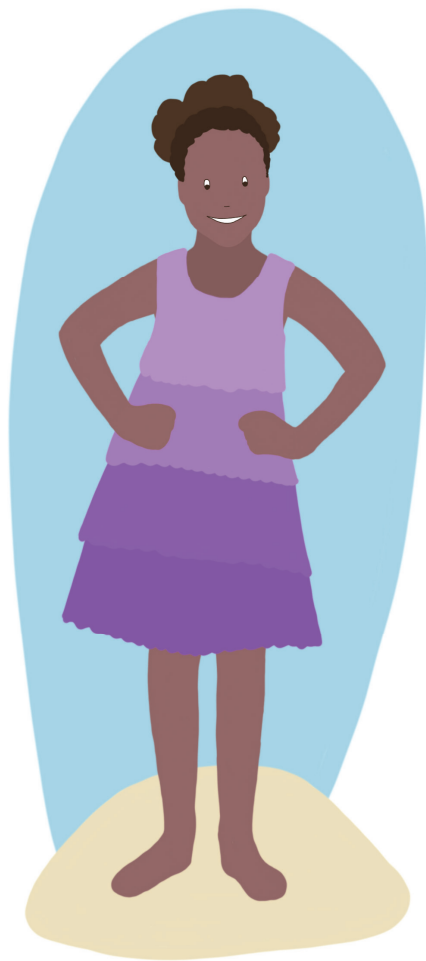
Book 6 in the "Children Of The Village" Series

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Published in 2025





This is Martha.

Martha lives in the village with her grandpa, her grandma, and her cousin Victor.





Martha loves to play with her friends Glory and Blessing. They like to play house under the fig tree in front of Blessing's house. They set up buckets upside down for chairs and they use leaves from the tree for plates and bowls.

Martha's grandma sells fried plantain on the side of the road. She has a stove where she fries the plantain and when people buy it, she wraps it up in a piece of paper for them. It is so good when it is hot and fresh!





Tonight, Grandma asks Martha to go home and make the jollof rice before Grandpa and Victor come home. Grandma tells Martha to make sure she rinses the rice very well before she cooks it so it will be clean and not have bugs in it. She also tells Martha to make sure she par-boils it so it will not be sticky.

Martha nods her head, but she is not thinking about what Grandma is saying. She is thinking that she would rather play a little longer with Glory and Blessing. She does not want to spend time making rice.





On the way back to the house Martha stops to talk to her friends. She talks to them for too long and it is starting to get late when she finally goes back to her house.

She realizes she must hurry if the rice is going to be ready on time. Quickly she dumps it into the pot and pours in the tomatoes and the water. She does not rinse it like Grandma had told her and she does not par-boil it. She forgets what Grandma had said.





Martha had not been listening very carefully to Grandma. She looks at the rice and wonders if she must put anything else in the pot, but she cannot remember. Soon there is no more water in the pot, but the rice does not look very good.

Grandpa and Victor come into the house together. They seem tired and hungry. They had to go to the market today to buy more plantain for Grandma.





Grandma comes in a few minutes later. She has a little bit of leftover dodo to eat with the jollof rice.

Everyone sits down on the mat on the floor. Grandma starts to put the rice on the plates. But she gets a very funny expression on her face. "Martha," she asks, "What happened to the rice?" Everyone looks at the rice. It is all sticky and lumpy and the inside of the pot is all dirty.





The rice does not look good at all. It is not like the rice when Grandma makes it. Martha looks at Grandma and she looks at the pot. She suddenly begins to remember what Grandma had said to her outside by the plantain stand.

"Oh Grandma," Martha says sadly, "I forgot that you had told me to rinse the rice first. That is why the pot is so dirty. And I forgot I had to par-boil it so it would not be so sticky and lumpy."



Grandpa and Victor put their bowls down. "We cannot eat dirty rice with bugs in it. We will just have to eat the dodo tonight." There is not very much dodo left. After they have finished eating everyone is still a little bit hungry but there is nothing else to eat.



Grandpa pulls his Bible and opens it to read to the family. Tonight, he reads from Proverbs chapter 4. He reads these words; "Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and give attention to know understanding." Then he reads another verse in Proverbs chapter 12:15: "He who heeds (or listens to) counsel is wise."



"What do you think this means?" Grandpa asks Victor and Martha.

Victor answers first. He says we must listen carefully when an older person is trying to tell us something or teach us something.

Then we will know later how to do things properly. Martha says if we listen things

will turn out better in the end, not

like the rice that was

not good.



"Yes," Grandpa says, "We must learn from Grandma how to make rice properly. But we also learn from the Bible how to live properly, and we must listen to what the Bible says. If we do not follow the instructions in the Bible, we will have many problems in our lives that could have been avoided if we had listened to what the Lord tells us in His Word.





A few days later Grandma took Martha to a seamstress's house. "Martha," she told her, "You can spend the day with the seamstress. I want you to learn how to sew dresses and you will start today to make a simple dress for yourself."

Martha is so excited. She and Grandma had already bought some very pretty yellow and green fabric to make into a dress for her. there is enough fabric the lady will also make a shirt for Victor.



The lady measures Martha carefully and then they draw the pieces on the fabric. First the front of the dress, then the back and then the two sleeves.



After Martha cuts out the pieces the lady shows Martha where to sew on the first sleeve. But Martha is not listening very carefully again. She is thinking about how nice she and Victor will look in their new clothes.





When the lady stops talking Martha picks up the fabric and walks over to the sewing machine. She has to push the foot pedal up and down with her foot to make the machine go. It is hard work, but Martha can do it. She sews the sleeves onto each side of the dress.

But when she
holds up the
dress the
sleeves are at
the bottom of
the dress. They
are not where
they should
be.



The lady comes and looks at what Martha had done. "What happened," she asks? Martha has tears in her eyes and she tries not to cry. "I was not paying attention when you told me how to do it," she says. "I am sorry, I ruined the dress."



"No," said the lady, "You did not ruin it. You can take the sewing out and do it over. It will take more time but this way you will learn to listen carefully and then you will learn to do it right."





Martha takes the small scissors and carefully cuts out the thread the way the lady showed her. Then she carefully pins the fabric together the right way before she sews it together.

After she sews
the pieces
together,
she holds
up the
dress.
This
time it
looks
just
right.





A few days later, Grandma is working late again selling plantain. She asks Martha to go inside and start cooking the rice. This time, Martha carefully rinses the rice to get all the dirt off it. Then she dumps it in boiling water for just a few minutes and rinses it again. Afterwards she cooks it again with the tomatoes and peppers the way Grandma had told her.

When everyone is sitting down for supper Grandpa prays and thanks the Lord for the food. Grandma scoops the rice onto the plates. Everyone tastes the rice, and everyone looks very happy. It looks just right, and it is delicious. Martha is so relieved that this time the rice is good. Now she knows how important it is to listen carefully, especially to the Word of God.



HEAR, MY CHILDREN,
THE INSTRUCTION OF A
FATHER AND GIVE
ATTENTION TO KNOW
UNDERSTANDING.

PROVERBS 4.1



ALSO
AVAILABLE:



BRIGHT
LEARNS TO
BE KIND



GLORY
LEARNS TO
OBEY



BLESSING
LEARNS TO
SHARE



GREAT
GETS A
CLEAN
HEART



VICTOR
LEARNS TO
BE HONEST

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