

Njoku & Bombambo

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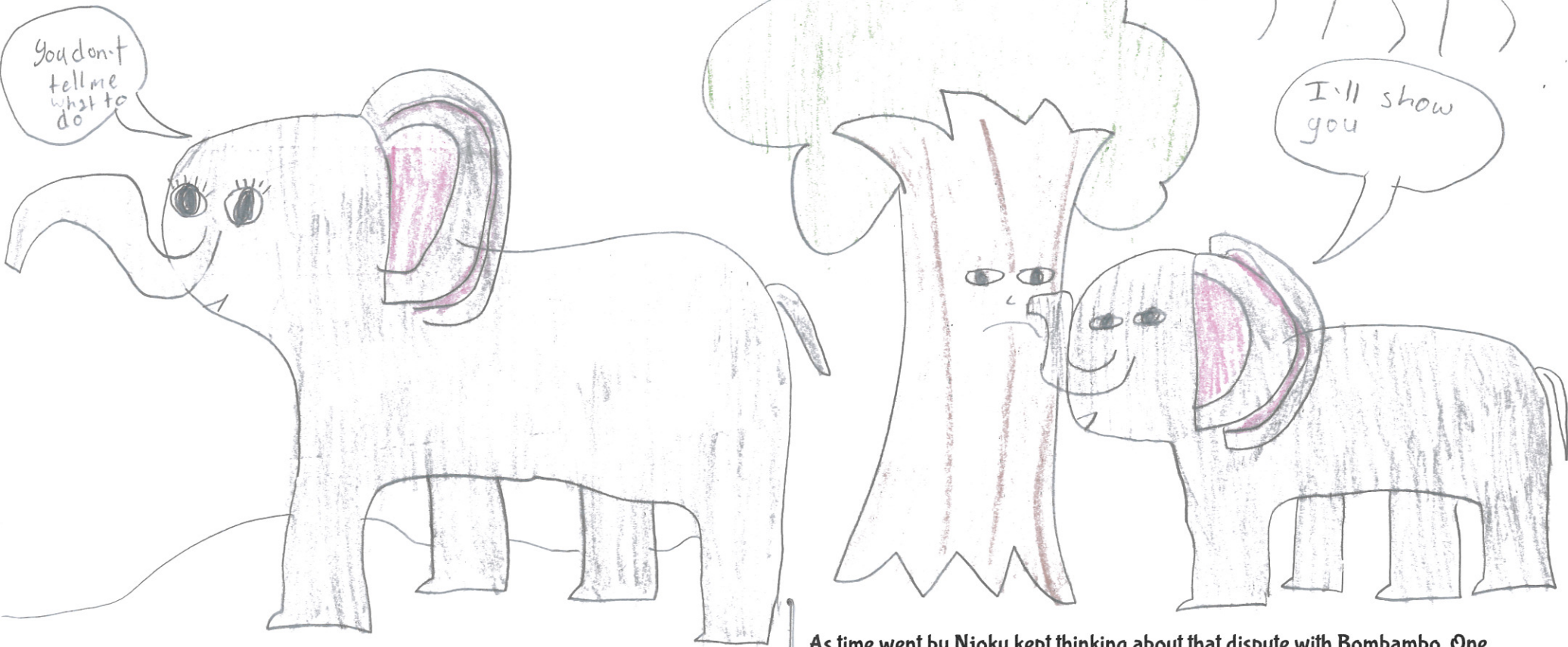
Bombambo the tree saw that Njoku the elephant was an exceedingly destructive animal. When feeding in the early morning he would dig up every vegetable in the garden. He would crush the manioc or the bananas or the plantains. In less than no time he would ruin things that had taken months to grow ripe.



Njoku carried on like this for months, but the rest of the trees never scolded Njoku about his constant destruction. They were afraid, thinking "We are just trees, how could we stop an elephant as big as Njoku?" But one day Bombambo said to Njoku, "When you go about destroying things, don't you ever touch me."

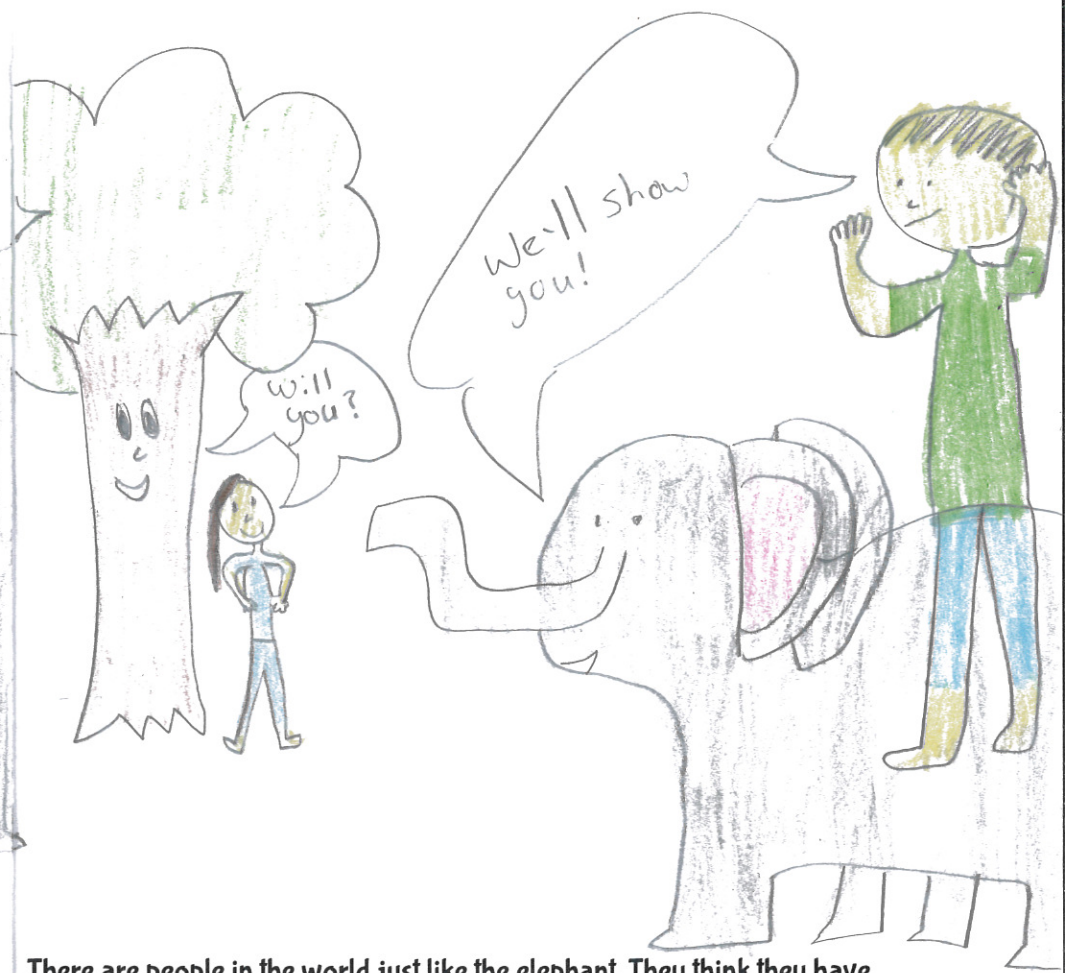
Angry at that audacious remark, Njoku replied, "You are a little strip of a tree, and you tell me that I am not to touch you!"

Bombambo did not deny that he was weak, but he said: "You are not to touch me. The day you do you will have great trouble."



As time went by Njoku kept thinking about that dispute with Bombambo. One day he decided he would go and show him who was master. Njoku did not know that Bombambo was different from other trees; that when he was struck or cut he made a strange noise, loud and mournful.

When Njoku ran hard into Bombambo and Bombambo cried in a loud voice, "Bao, Bao." The people in the village, awakened by Bombambo's voice, said, "Oso wete njoku aoya nda jisala (that noise is the elephant come into the garden." They hurried out as fast as they could to chase Njoku out of the garden.



There are people in the world just like the elephant. They think they have superior force and that they can do just as they please. Because they are so strong or because they have been born with certain rights, no one may scold them or stop them in their evil ways. They think that the simple people of the world are weak, just like the bombambo tree; that they have no rights and no strength for self-defense. They forget that God hears these weak ones when they cry out.

The story Njoku & Bombambo was crafted by Enkumo Lot, a Congolese Disciples, to share the lessons of the Bible in a way that followed traditional Congolese storytelling. Stories like this one are still told to this day in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

