

Story 20: The Masquerade Spirit

Story shared by: *Daniel*

Representing: *Nigeria*

The Story:

In the past years, in a small nigerian village, people believed that when someone died, their spirit could come back as a masquerade during special festivals. They thought the masquerades were not just people in costumes but the spirits of their ancestors, returning to visit the living.

In this village, there was a man who was kind and loved by everyone. He passed away, but two years later, during the masquerade festival, a particular masquerade appeared and behaved exactly like him. It walked like him, acted like him, and everyone believed it was his spirit coming back.

The villagers were happy to see him again, even in this form. They gave the masquerade gifts like bananas and fruits to show respect, thanking him for being a good person when he was alive. The elders told the children, "This is your uncle. Because he was kind, he came back as a masquerade. If you want to be like him, you must be good too."

Hearing this, the children started behaving better. They listened to their parents, helped others, and were kind, hoping that one day they could come back as a respected spirit, like their uncle. But after a few months, they began to forget and went back to their old, stubborn ways.

As the children grew older, they realized the truth. The masquerade wasn't really their uncle's spirit, but just someone from the village dressed in a costume. The elders told them those stories to teach them to be good and kind. The masquerade was not magic—it was a way to remind people to live a good life.

Story Moral: *The moral of the story is that it's not about what happens after death, but how we live our lives while we are alive. Being kind, helping others, and living a good, respectful life is what truly matters..*