

## Journey to Jo'Burg by Beverley Naidoo

Naledi and Tiro have travelled to Jo'burg to find their mother who is a housekeeper for a rich white family. They live in the country whilst their mother works far away from them to earn money to feed them. They have travelled alone to find their mother because their baby sister Dineo is very ill and they need to tell her.

### Chapter Six

Naledi and Tiro have managed to arrive at Jo'burg and now they are trying to get to Parktown where their mother lives and works.

As they turned towards the road, there was a bus with the word 'Parktown' in big letters on the front. It was slowing down a little way up the road and the doors were opening. Through the front window screen, they could see the driver was black.

"Come on Tiro!" called Naledi, pulling him by the arm. They were just about to jump aboard, when someone shouted at them in English, "What's wrong with you? Are you stupid?" Startled they look up at the angry face of the bus driver and then at the bus again. White faces stared at them as the bus moved off.

Naledi and Tiro stood at the side of the road, shaken holding hands tightly, when a voice behind them said, "Don't let it bother you. That's what they're like, you'd better come out of the road." A young woman put her hand out to bring them on to the pavement. "You must be strangers here if you don't know about the buses. This stop has a white sign, but we have to wait by the black one over there." She pointed to a small black metal signpost. "You must look at the front of the bus for the small notice saying 'Non-whites only'."

"I'm sorry. We forgot to look," Naledi explained.

"It's not you who should be sorry!" said the young woman forcefully. "They should be sorry, those stupid people! Why shouldn't we use any bus? When our buses are full, theirs are half empty. Don't you be sorry!"

The children glanced at each other. This person was different from their mother. Mma never spoke like that. Naledi took out the letter and when the young woman looked at the address, she exclaimed, "But this is where my mother works. I'm on my way to visit her today so I can show you the place."

Luckily the bus wasn't full when it arrived, Grace had warned them that in rush hour you were almost squeezed to death.

The buses for white people were comfortable with padded seats and windows that opened. The seats were big, so two people could sit on each one. The buses for the black people had a few of hard metal seats, most people had to stand up throughout their entire journey. The buses were older and had no ventilation, the black people would be squeezed in together with nothing to hold on to if the bus jerked or swerved.