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Opening extract from

Hue Boy

Written by

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Illustrated by

Caroline Binch

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For Leann and Brian – R.P.M.
For Enid and for Wilf – C.B.

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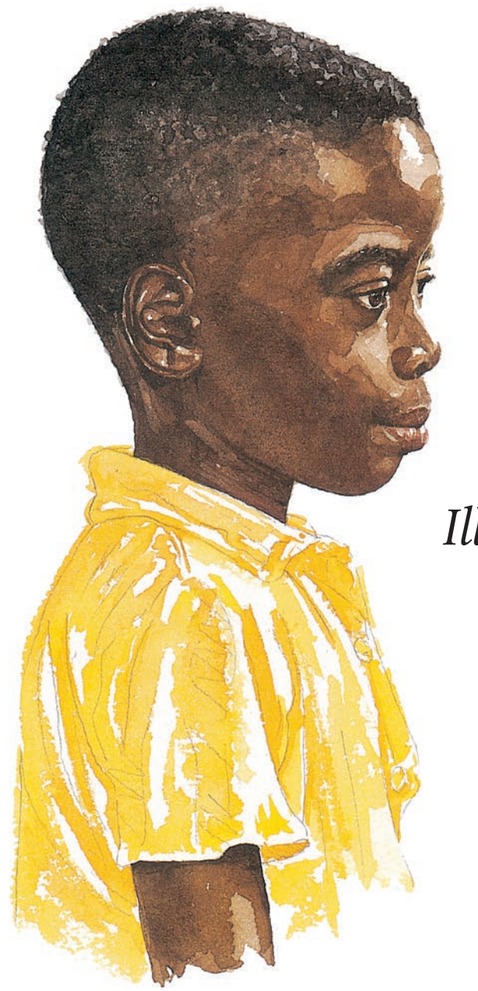

HUE BOY

Rita Phillips Mitchell
Illustrated by Caroline Binch

FRANCES LINCOLN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Little Hue Boy was big news in his village. He was so small that all his friends towered over him.

Every morning Hue Boy's mother measured him.

"Come, I must measure you before you go to school," she said. "Stand straight against the wall."

It did not matter how straight Hue Boy stood, he remained the same size – very small. He didn't grow at all, at all.

"Oh lawd!" cried Hue Boy's mother. "I wish your father was home. He would know what to do about this."

But Hue Boy knew his father was working on a ship, far away.

One day Mum said, "Hue Boy, if you want to grow tall you must eat fresh vegetables and fruit every day."

"Like pumpkins?" said Hue Boy. "I like pumpkin soup."

"Pumpkins are good. But what about spinach, Hue Boy?"

"Yuck!" Hue Boy said. "I don't like spinach! I'd rather have fruit, like mangoes and melons."

"And pineapples and sapodillas, I suppose?" said Mum.

"Mm, yum, yum," said Hue Boy.

"How about sweet-sops, cashews and craboos?" his mother asked.

"Yes," said Hue Boy. "Delicious! And don't forget guavas or tamarinds, either."

"I won't, Hue Boy," said Mum.

Hue Boy was soon eating everything his mother gave him. The pumpkin soup was delicious, but he enjoyed eating fruit best.

Still, Hue Boy didn't grow one little bit. He didn't grow at all, at all.

On Hue Boy's birthday, his grandmother gave him a special present.

"I've made you new clothes," she said. "You'll soon grow into them."

Hue Boy tried on the clothes. They felt a little loose.

"Lawdy! You look taller already," said Gran.