

**THE MASK MAKERS**

Ellis, Veronica Freeman

This summer we're visiting my grandfather. He lives in Monrovia, Liberia. Liberia is a country in Africa. Here we are in my grandfather's village. My dad used to live here when he was a boy. My grandfather makes masks. He carves each mask from one block of wood. In Africa masks are used for many things. Sometimes people use them when they get married. Sometimes they use them when a baby is born. And sometimes they use them when they are telling stories. My dad knows how to carve masks too. His father, my grandfather taught him. Now my grandfather teaches me. I choose a block of wood. My grandfather shows me what to do. After many days I have a mask. I use

my mask and tell a story. My grandfather uses his storytelling mask too. We all have a great time.

A year passed. My grandfather is visiting us in Boston. Today there's a neighborhood fair. The fair has rides, crafts and food. We're raising money for a playground. My family sells masks that my dad and I made. My masks don't look as good as my dad's. People want to buy my dad's masks. They don't want to buy mine! But I'm happy anyway. At least my grandfather likes my masks. He chooses his favorite one. Then, he uses it to tell a story. Soon many people gather around my grandfather. "Once upon a time," he begins.