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**Description:**

A favourite Yao story is that of the python (Sato) who was befriended by a man when caught in a bush-fire. He appealed first to a passing herd of buck to stop and save him, but they, considering that he had just eaten one of their number, not unnaturally refused. Then a man passed by with a hoe in his hand, and, on being assured that the python would not devour him, hoed up a piece of ground all round him, and thus saved him from the fire. The grateful python told him to come back in four days' time, which he did, and found that it had changed into a young lad, who took him home, entertained him with plenty of beer, and finally presented him with two pieces (32 yards) of calico and a magic bottle, which was to be opened in presence of his enemies.

When the man went home, he found there was war; his family had fled, and the enemy were occupying the village. He opened his bottle, and they were immediately annihilated. He then went to hoe in the gardens, leaving his bottle and other property in his hut. Another detachment of the enemy arrived — they took possession of the village and all that was in it, pursued him to his garden, and took him prisoner. He was tied up, with his neck in a gori-stick, with a view to being killed next day. During the night he felt a rat gnawing his feet, and asked it to go to the chief's house and bring the bottle. The rat did so, and the man said, 'I will pay you in the morning.' When the people were all assembled, and the man was brought out into the bwalo to be killed, he opened his bottle. The people who sat there when he held it up were dead and gone' — there was no one there! So he rewarded the rat with two cows.