

English Short Story: The Mandasi Seller

LEVEL B1-B2

POSITIVE ADJECTIVES FOR PEOPLE

GENTLE CLEVER LOVING TRUSTWORTHY RESPECTFUL POLITE

RESOURCEFUL CHARMING SINCERE ADMIRABLE MATURE

WISE HARD-WORKING BROAD-MINDED FAITHFUL AFFECTIONATE

LIKEABLE CREATIVE HEALTHY REASONABLE BOLD



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Once upon a time a beautiful mandasi seller lived here. Her real name was Edna Gondwe but everybody called her “Chiphadzuwa”: the one who kills the sun with her beauty.

Not only was Edna popular but her mandasi were the talk of the town too. People from all walks of life flocked to her stall to get their daily dose of her crunchy doughnuts which she sold daily, come rain or sunshine.

Edgar was Edna’s favourite customer. He was polite and always spoke to her in English. Whenever he stopped by, he would greet her and ask her about her business. How was she doing? Was she making enough money? What were her future plans?

She always laughed when she heard those questions. All she knew was that she loved making mandasi and enjoyed pleasing the customers she served. What she didn’t know was that Edgar had fallen deeply in love with her.

It was her beautiful face that had caught his attention but her immaculate soul won his heart. She radiated kindness and goodwill. This is why he kept returning to her even though he could easily go out with richer women.

Despite her stunningness, he failed to understand why she wasted her life on the roadside. Her beauty and brains could take her far, couldn't she see that? She could open her own restaurant and prepare more delicious food for her clients. She could become rich!

Yet, he never shared his real thoughts with her. Liked a tortured lover, he pursued her, silently. He bought more mandasi than he should. Oftentimes, he let her keep the change and it was no small change. She felt very uncomfortable but appreciated his generosity all the same. Not all customers were like him let alone men!

One day, he became more courageous and asked her if she could go out and have lunch with him. She accepted and told him that she would be free the following Saturday.

Edgar could not wait to take Edna to one of his favourite restaurants. It served excellent grilled chambo fish and chips. Their vegetables were succulent too. He also saw this as an opportunity for her to see what running a restaurant looked like. Maybe she would finally fall in love with him and the restaurant business. He could kill two birds with one stone!

Saturday arrived quickly and Edgar went to pick Edna up at the place where she plied her trade. Passers-by stared at them. Perhaps they were wondering why a rich businessman like him would go to great lengths to pick a mandasi seller.

Soon enough, they arrived at their destination. Edna was unfamiliar with the plush surroundings. She had never been in such a place before and she did not know how to behave. Edgar reassured her and in no time at all she was enjoying herself. She chose to eat grilled chicken with rice and vegetables. All in all, she found the dining experience remarkable and worth repeating.

Edgar saw that she was impressed with the restaurant and the food. Most of all, she looked relaxed and beautiful in her dark green dress that barely covered her knees. It fitted her body perfectly and her smooth complexion stood out in the late afternoon light as he drove her back home.

When he saw her house, he felt sorry. After all she was only a mandasi seller and she could not afford to live in the same affluent neighbourhood where he lived. Yet, she looked happy as she got out of the car and thanked him once again.

A child ran to her and took her bag. A puzzled and almost pained look appeared on Edgar's face. Edna laughed and told him that this was Kondi, her niece. She was almost ten years old and lived with her because her mother had passed away a few months before. The child was actually an orphan because her father had died when she was only three years old.

Edgar felt saddened by the news and had an even deeper urge to help Edna. How was she coping with a child and so little money? What would she do when Kondi would need school fees when she started secondary school? She wouldn't be able to afford all that as a mandasi seller!

These questions tortured him but it was Edna's angelic face that always brought peace to his heart. He knew that he did not want to see her suffer. All he wanted was for her to be happy, to stop struggling, to live a good life.

However, he did not want to appear as her saviour and her pride would not let him do this either. He needed to find a way to ask her to be his wife without appearing as if he was a member of a charity organisation.

The following week he asked her out again and she accepted. This time round Kondi came along and they went to spend the day at the beach in Salima.

Edgar marvelled at how Kondi loved the lake and wanted to swim all the time even when the water was getting colder at sunset. She was a bubbly child with a good spirit and he knew that he would love to take care of her.

Edna had doubts about Edgar's real intentions but did not want to rush things. She knew that he was a good man and had always acted like a gentleman in her presence. She also liked the way he was so thoughtful towards Kondi. He could be a good father.

Therefore when the question came, she knew what to say. Her heart was still in tatters after being previously smashed by ruthless men. Now, she wanted to take her time and get to know him better before she committed herself.

He accepted and decided to wait the full year that she had suggested. Thus they could continue to get to know each other and appreciate each other's company.

For them, that year passed slowly as they discovered who they really were. Edna found out that Edgar loved playing football with his friends on Saturdays. He did not smoke but drank beer on Friday evenings with his friends. He was also an avid reader and often spent his Sundays reading newspapers or a novel.

Besides, he did not like cooking but wanted to learn so that he could help her in the kitchen once they opened a restaurant together in the future. She always laughed when he mentioned the restaurant because she did not see herself capable of such a huge feat.

She also saw what he liked and did not like. He loved talking to people and being helpful. What he did not like was idleness. He believed that one could not be defeated until one stopped trying. He was also a stickler for order and she imagined that it would be difficult to live with a man who thrived in perfection.

As for him, his opinion about her kind-heartedness was reaffirmed. She laughed easily and was good-natured. Most of the times, she talked about Kondi and her business and how she wanted to go back to school.

Her parents had died when she was young and therefore she had not been able to go to college. Her dream was to do accounting so she could become business-savvy. She had good interpersonal skills but she knew that further education would increase her prospects of success. She became a mandasi seller so she could fend for herself but she did not want to remain so.

She loved cooking and knitting. These were her passions. When she was at secondary school she had loved playing netball with her friends. She valued friendships and did not want to participate in gossip.

Thus the couple learned more about each other and when the one year period passed, they got married and left the town.

We still talk about this story because the mandasi seller was popular in our town and we miss her. She made the best doughnuts and was kind to every one of us.

Rumour has it that she is now the most successful mandasi restaurant owner in our country. Yes, she specialised in the mandasi business and now creates different types of mandasi much to the delight of her customers!

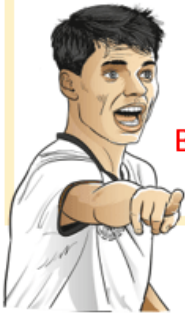
Most of all, her proud family of four is happy for her and we can only wish her more success! Shhh, she is expecting another baby. Isn't that delightful?

NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES FOR PEOPLE

MEAN SPOILED SELFISH CARELESS RIGID TYRANNICAL

IGNORANT ILL-TEMPERED THOUGHTLESS IMMATURE TOUGH

CRUEL IRRITABLE UNRELIABLE UNTRUSTWORTHY BOSSY



BOASTFUL LAZY RESTLESS ARROGANT UNREASONABLE



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