

## Arnaud and Grace

Arnaud arrived home after a long day working in the fields. He was tired. His wife, Grace, arrived just after him. She had been working in the cocoa farm too. Everyday she arrived tired, but she was different this time. She was excited, talking about the Women's School of Leadership. Someone invited her and she was going to go.

Arnaud did not understand why she wanted to go. They had so much work to do. He tried to convince her to stay and work in the farm. She did not change her mind. "It was just 3 days", she said.

Grace was very excited after the first day. She came back talking about how they could manage their finances better. Arnaud had always been in charge of their finances. He heard all she said but did not answer anything.

On the following day, Grace talked about the way they lived. She worked in the cocoa plantation, she took care of their children and prepared their food. She was busy all day but never received any money for her work. Arnaud thought that was the way things were. The wives helped their husbands with farming, they took care of the house and the food. The husbands were in charge of the business. Grace said she worked so hard that she had no time or energy to do anything else that could make her some money. Once again, he heard everything but said nothing.

After the first 3-day session, Arnaud could see his wife was different. She was talking more about her ideas and her rights. Arnaud did not know what to think about it. So he waited.

The course lasted one year. Grace went to 4 sessions of 3 days. During that time, Arnaud watched Grace change. She was not so shy and insecure anymore. Arnaud saw her friends change too.

A woman from the group lost her father during the course. She was her father's only child. When her father died, she should have inherited his farm. But another man from the family took the land from her. He said women had no right to own land. She was devastated, but she decided to complain.

She went to talk to the authorities about her case. Grace and other colleagues from the course went with her.

Cases like hers were still common in the rural areas of Cote D'Ivoire. But the authorities agreed with her. They made a decision in her favour. She won the case and

the ownership of her land. Arnaud thought she was right and the authorities made the right decision.

This year, Arnaud made a decision of his own. He is going to do the course at the Women's School of Leadership. Most students are women, of course. But men can attend the course too. He wants to learn what he can do to support his wife and the other female farmers.

Arnaud is now helping more at home. Sometimes he washes the dishes. Sometimes, he cleans the floor. If Grace is very busy, he can cook dinner. His cooking is not great but he can do it in case of emergency!

When his friends see him helping at home, they say: "Why are you doing a woman's job?" Arnaud answers; "If my wife can help me at the farm, I can help her in the house". They go away thinking.

Grace has plans to start a small business with other women from the community. They are going to make soaps and beauty creams to sell.

Arnaud is proud of her. And Grace is proud of him.

### New words for this article

Take care of	look after
Shy	timid
Manage	to organise
To last	to take time
Ownership	possession

### Comprehension Questions – True/False

Indiquez si les expressions suivantes sont vraies (True) ou fausses (False).

- Grace learned about the leadership course from a person she met
- Arnaud originally thought it was good for Grace to do the course
- Grace learned about managing money
- Traditionally women cooked in the home
- The course made Grace insecure

5	False
4	True
3	True
2	False
1	True

Comprehension questions

Answers