



M O L D O V A | March 1

NOBODY'S BOY

“Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me” (Psalm 27:10, NIV).

FAST FACTS

- Moldova lies west of Russia and is bordered by Ukraine and Romania. Population is 4.5 million. Chişinău (Kishinev), Moldova's capital and largest city, has roughly 1 million people. As of 2006, almost 12,000 Adventists lived in Moldova, or one Adventist for every 383 people.
- The official language is Moldovan, which is closely related to Romanian. However, most people still speak Russian from the Soviet era.
- The largest religious group is Orthodox Christian, with just under half the population. Other Christian denominations account for about 15 percent of the population.
- The country has rich soil and a warm climate, which makes it possible to produce abundant crops of fruits and vegetables, especially grapes.

Twelve-year-old Yura [YOO-rah]* knows what it is like to be homeless, unwanted, nobody's child. Now he is learning what it means to be loved and accepted by God and God's friends.

Difficult Life

Yura was born in a small village in Moldova. *[Locate Moldova on a map.]* Even as a little boy he had to work hard to help his parents. Life was not happy for little Yura. Then his mother died, and Yura's father sent him to a government boarding school for children whose parents could not care for them. The school had 600 other children, and no one noticed Yura. No one seemed to care that he was lonely, and no one noticed when he sat in a corner and cried.

Yura decided to run away from the

school and return home. But when he arrived, his father scolded him and took him back to the school.

Yura was so unhappy that he was sent to a children's center to live. But there he was treated badly, and again he ran away. Once more he returned home, only to find that his father had a new wife who did not want him there. Yura's father took him back to the children's center and signed papers saying that he did not want his son. Imagine being told that your father does not want you. How would you feel? *[Let children respond.]*

The Runaway

Yura was sent to an orphanage to live, but he was very unhappy. Once more he ran away and returned to his father. Once more he tried to tell his father how hard it was to live in the orphanage. His father allowed him to stay for a few days until he could find another home for the boy. *Doesn't anyone want me?* Yura wondered. *Am I nobody's boy?*

Yura's father took him back to the city. As the social worker drove him to his new home, Yura prepared himself to face one more dingy orphanage and the torments of the children who lived there. But to his surprise the social worker stopped beside a house—a real house. They stepped inside, where the floors were clean and polished; the walls were painted bright, cheerful colors. The house mother greeted him with a smile and introduced him to some of the children, who welcomed him and offered to show him around. *Wow*, he thought, *this place is surely different!* And it was.

A Home of Hope

Yura walked with the house parent to his new room. It was painted in shades of green, and had brightly colored beds and bed covers. He was given his own dresser to store his few clothes and space in a closet. He looked around at the big windows that did not have bars on them. *Am I dreaming?* he asked himself. But he was not dreaming. Rainbow Children's Home was to be his home until he found a permanent home.

"I like it here," Yura says. "The children are nice, and the house parents treat us well. If we do something wrong, they don't beat us. They talk to us and teach us what is right. And instead of being an only child, I now have 25 brothers and sisters. At last I have a real family!

"On Saturdays, a group of teens come to visit. They teach us songs about Jesus and tell us stories about God. I am learning that when I felt alone and forgotten, God was with me. When I felt I was nobody's boy, God called me to be His boy. I am learning to pray and talk to God about stuff in my life. I'm so glad I have found a home at Rainbow Children's Home."

Boys and girls, we all are God's children, so Yura and the other children at Rainbow Children's Home are our brothers and sisters. Let's pray for them this week and ask God to help them meet their big brother, Jesus.

Next week we will meet other children who live at Rainbow Children's Home. Be sure to come and hear their stories. 🌍

**Not his real name.*

Choose an activity from pages 31-34.