

# THE STALKING HORSE

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A full-length drama by  
Ed Shockley

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

MAJI, a young slight built adolescent male.

UPEPO, a competent boastful adolescent male.

WOTE, a handsome young lady's man.

MADODO, a ravishing beauty from another tribe.

TUMA, a quiet young girl who dotes on Maji.

MBILI, male, a follower of Upepo.

MBAYA, a loud adolescent girl.

NENE, a full figured adolescent girl.

MZEE, a gossipy old woman.

FUNDIZ, the village elder.

WITCH, a mysterious traveler.

MESSENGER, either gender.

CHORUS OF VILLAGERS can be included in any of the public scenes and can share in greetings, cheers, dances, drumming and any other theatrical moments that occur in the daily life of the village.

Fundiz and the Witch are played by the same performer, who may be of either gender.

*The Stalking Horse* is set in a fictitious "Africanesque" village and can be performed by actors of any ethnicity.

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**PROLOGUE (THE WIND AND THE WATER)**

*(A cow pasture in a fictitious East African hunter gatherer society. UPEPO and MBILI sit on their haunches waiting impatiently. Enter MAJI.)*

**UPEPO:** On your way, Herdsman! You stink of goat... Well, what are you waiting for? Can you not hear them calling for their friend? *(Mbili makes a goat noise. Upepo throws stones at the herd.)* Look! Something has frightened them. Perhaps they are in danger. Quickly, fly to their rescue, Herdsman, before it is too late.

*(Both men throw stones. Exit Maji.)*

**MBILI:** If looks were knife points, Upepo...

**UPEPO:** Where is Mkuu?

**MBILI:** We must be patient.

**UPEPO:** You be patient. Crouching in a goat pasture like herdsman. We should be miles along our way.

**MBILI:** No one knows better than Mkuu when is the hour to hunt.

**UPEPO:** He is an old fool and if he does not soon arrive then I will hie without him.

*(Enter WITCH.)*

Who are you?

**WITCH:** Might I have a little milk?

**UPEPO:** Who are you?

**WITCH:** A thirsty traveler. Might I have some milk?

**UPEPO:** What have you to barter?

**WITCH:** I am old.

**UPEPO:** That is worth little.

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**WITCH:** In another place that is priceless.

**UPEPO:** Then go there for your milk.

**MBILI:** Well said, Upepo.

**WITCH:** Must I thirst?

**UPEPO:** Water is for the poor.

**WITCH:** I will tell you a story.

**UPEPO:** I am not a child.

**MBILI:** Let her tell it, Upepo.

**UPEPO:** I have no time for stories.

**MBILI:** It might be funny; and it will pass the morning at the very least.

**UPEPO:** Tell your tale then, the child would have a show.

**WITCH:** Will you let me have a sip of milk to wet my throat?

**UPEPO:** If I like your story then I will give you milk.

**WITCH:** So be it. The wind and the water were twin sons of the earth and long ago stood together in the place where the oceans begin... Along the water's shore lived all of the world's people in harmony, for the water was rich and giving and answered every reverent prayer. The people of the world all loved the water, and this made the wind jealous. So one day the wind decided to punish the people who had ignored him for so long, and he began to blow. "I will teach them," said the wind, "that the stronger is the more to be loved!" At first the people cursed the wind, but this made him the more angry and he blew harder. Then the people became frightened and began to sacrifice to the wind, but still he fumed until, finally, the people began to curse the water for not helping them, and they called the water weak and this caused the wind gladness and so at last he stopped blowing and the people rejoiced and

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sacrificed to the wind and cursed the water more. "Have I not fulfilled your every need?" asked the water. "The wind is cruel and blows down your houses while I offer my gentle surf to soothe you and this is how I am rewarded?" But the people could not hear the words of the water, so she set out in search of new friends... At first the people did not follow, because they feared the wrath of the wind; but soon the crops began to wither and the herds to die and life became unbearable. The people sacrificed to the wind but he could not cause their crops to thrive, and so by teams and towns the people left in pursuit of the water... Again the wind raged and the dry earth blinded many eyes so the people became lost one to another, yet on they went their stumbling separate ways... The wind then decided that he must stop the water if the people were again to live at his mercy. He flew to the head of the water, pursed and puffed and created waves upon the surface, but the water parted and continued her march. And the wind and the water fought and fought, leaving rivers, streams, and ponds and seas in their wake until finally the water reached all of the corners of the earth and discovered that there were no new people, and so she separated the lands and vowed to nevermore allow men to be brothers. And though the people returned to their love of the water, to this day she has neither forgiven nor trusted man and flows ever to the sea, despite all obstacles, as a sign of her great power... And now, my milk if you please?

**UPEPO:** I do not please.

**WITCH:** I do not understand.

**UPEPO:** That is a story for a child.

**WITCH:** You promised me milk.

**UPEPO:** Only if I liked your story. Now be on your way.

**WITCH:** Wait! I will tell you another story.

**UPEPO:** I have no more interest in your prattle.

**WITCH:** But this is one that you should hear, for it is of a village much like yours and a stranger much like me who came in search of hospitality and a little milk. It is a story of hunters, very much like yourselves, by whom she was offended and denied. It is the sad story of a village that fell prey to a great beast, for the woman was powerful beyond all appearance, and in her anger transformed herself and one by one swallowed each of the hunters as they left in search of food, until everyone was eaten or starved and the village was no more than bone and dust. All for a single cup of milk.

**MBILI:** Why not give her a little milk? She is old and certainly we can spare it.

**UPEPO:** Are you frightened by the lies of this hyena?

**WITCH:** A gourd of milk is pittance to purchase peace of mind.

**UPEPO:** Let your witch come and I will slay and roast her with an apple in her mouth.

**WITCH:** So said the hunters of my story, but they had no magic and so they failed.

**MBILI:** But Mkuu Mwandaji, the great hunter, has magic.

**WITCH:** Yes, his name is known throughout many lands; but often the crafty prevail where the strong fail.

**UPEPO:** On your way, Witch. Peddle your stories to some fools.

**WITCH:** Fools will not buy.

**UPEPO:** Go now! Or so help me I will slit your throat and feed you to the goats.

**WITCH:** You will live to regret this day; but not much longer.



*(Exit Witch. A DRUM signals from the village.)*

**MBILI:** The death drum.

*(End prologue.)*

**DAY I**

**MESSENGER:** Mkuu is dying! Cease your cooking, women; cover your pots and unbreast your babies. Mkuu is dying! Pull tight the waist-string, stop your playing children. Mkuu is dying! The winter's meal is lean. Come quickly hunters, to his bedside, come. He offers the secret. Come, hunters, the secret is to be yours.

*(Exit Messenger. Enter Upepo and Mbili.)*

**UPEPO:** At last! A black cloud drifts from before the sun and its rays shine full down upon me, Upepo, the greatest hunter. No longer must I stand in the shadow of Mkuu Mwandiji. Hear me, World, Upepo goes this morning to claim his destiny.

**MBILI:** Any of us could master the secret and become the new Mkuu.

**UPEPO:** There is no secret but the strongest arm, and there shall be no Mkuu but me.

*(Enter WOTE.)*

**WOTE:** Is it true that the drum sings for Mkuu?

**MBILI:** None other.

**WOTE:** And he is about to give out the secret?

**UPEPO:** Why does it concern you? You hunt only when the wind blows you.

**WOTE:** Ah, my friend, there you are wrong. I am a most diligent hunter, only of a different prey.

**MBILI:** How can you hunt when you near never leave the village?

**WOTE:** Within this village lurks the fiercest game of all; hunter's wives.

**UPEPO:** And some day soon an angry husband will stalk you.

**WOTE:** Perhaps, but for now my table is always overfull. The hunter gets the spleen and I get the breast. The hunter gets the back and I the heart. The hunter makes the kill and I get the carcass. I am the greatest hunter of all.

**UPEPO:** Behold the new Mkuu, Wote Mvivu, hunter of wives and robber of tables.

**WOTE:** But let us hurry before the secret dies and we are cursed to forever carry skinning knives.

*(Enter Maji.)*

**MBILI:** Look who's coming, Upepo.

**UPEPO:** Where are you going, goatsman?

**MAJI:** Mkuu is dying. I go to learn the secret.

**MBILI:** Why?

**MAJI:** I am a hunter.

**UPEPO:** A hunter of lizards and broken winged birds. Go back with the women where you belong.

**WOTE:** His dreams cannot harm you, Upepo, and he has the right to hear Mkuu.

**UPEPO:** He has no rights save those I grant unless he dreams himself man enough to stand against me.

**WOTE:** On this one day he does not stand alone.

*(They square off.)*

**VOICE:** *(Off:)* MA-JEE!

**WOTE:** Is that an elephant or a hippo?

**VOICE:** Maji! I know you hear me.

**WOTE:** Oh, that is most definitely a hippo.

**VOICE:** You get your round rump in here and do the wash before I come get you!

**UPEPO:** And he wants to be the new Mkuu...hah!

**MAJI:** But Mkuu is dying, mother, the hunters go to learn the secret.

**VOICE:** You get in here!

**MAJI:** But...

**VOICE:** Now!

**UPEPO:** Let us leave the women to their chores.

*(Exit Hunters. Exit Maji into the kibanda. Enter TUMA with wash. Enter NENE, MBAYA and MZEE with laundry. Tuma, trying to hurry away, drops her wash.)*

**MZEE:** She is a strange one.

**NENE:** She is too quiet. I prefer people who speak.

**MBAYA:** Silence suits her plain face.

**NENE:** She works well with her hands.

**MZEE:** She will make some herdsman an ample wife.

**MBAYA:** But not a hunter, eh?

**MZEE:** Oh no, never a hunter.

*(Enter Maji running. He bumps into the women.)*

You oaf! Are your feet so large?

**MAJI:** Forgive me, I must hurry to do the wash so that I can hear the words of Mkuu...

**MBAYA:** Are these the manners that your mother has taught you?

**MAJI:** No, but...

**MZEE:** I should say not! I know your mother, and if she were to hear of this...

**MAJI:** Please forgive me, Mzee, but I must hurry...

**MZEE:** And is your haste so great that you cannot carry a woman's wash to the pond?

*(Maji takes Mbaya's clothes.)*

Will you carry hers and not mine?

*(Maji takes all of the laundry.)*

**MAJI:** And shall I take yours as well?

**TUMA:** Oh no. Your load is too great already. I would not burden you with more.

*(All start toward the pond.)*

**NENE:** Is it true that Mkuu is dying?

**MZEE:** Read the drums.

**MBAYA:** I have seen the hunters going to hear the secret.

**MZEE:** And why have you not gone, Maji?

**NENE:** Maji?

**MBAYA:** Imagine if Maji were somehow chosen Mkuu...

**NENE:** The village would surely starve.

**MZEE:** But he did not even go to listen.

**MBAYA:** He chooses to be a herdsman, not a hunter.

**MAJI:** I want to go, but...

**NENE:** He knows that Upepo will be Mkuu and doesn't want to waste the effort.

**MBAYA:** Who says that Upepo will be Mkuu?

**NENE:** Who else is there?

**MBAYA:** Wote.

**MZEE:** That young one is too taken with women to ever amount to much.

**MBAYA:** If he were to settle down he could be a great hunter; even Mkuu.

**MZEE:** And if lions could eat grass, wildebeest would grow fat.

**MBAYA:** He only needs a good woman.

**MZEE:** He has already had too many.

**NENE:** Good and bad.

*(Maji sees MADODO. He forces the laundry back into the arms of the women and crosses to her.)*

**MAJI:** Madodo! Let me help you carry your wash.

**MADODO:** Oh, hujambo, Maji.

**MAJI:** Sijambo.

**MZEE:** I have never been treated so rudely in all of my life.

**MADODO:** Are you not with the hunters?

**MBAYA:** Watch yourself with her.

**MAJI:** I must finish the wash for my mother.

**NENE:** A pox upon her.

**MADODO:** You are content to do the work of women in an hour when destinies are decided?

**MZEE:** She leads the men to their ruin.

**MAJI:** I have no choice.

**MZEE:** They become as children before her.

**MADODO:** If you are a man then you have choice.

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**MBAYA:** We must get closer to hear.

**MAJI:** Can I defy my mother?

**MADODO:** Can you deny yourself?

**NENE:** Let us hide in these bushes.

**MAJI:** But she has borne my weight within her stomach, my mouth upon her breasts and dried my tears and cared for me in sickness...

**MADODO:** She has labored to give you life, and you are afraid to live it.

**MZEE:** I cannot hear.

**MAJI:** That is not true.

**MBAYA:** We must draw closer.

**MADODO:** Then why are you not with the hunters at the bedside of Mkuu?

**NENE:** Careful!

**MAJI:** Because I am opposed at every turn. The hunters, my mother, Upepo unites them all against me. Only you are my friend, I want to be Mkuu and show them all, but what chance have I?

**MADODO:** What chance should you have? Whatever it is that you want, you must go and get. No matter what it is or how untouchable it seems; just reach out and take it. There are no mystic riddles, only appetites. The hungriest lion gets the deer. I do not know many things—I am neither learned nor wise, but of one thing I am sure; I know what I want. And that is all I need to know. Do you know what you want, Maji?

**MAJI:** Yes.

**MADODO:** Then grab it with both hands... Who is there?

*(Madodo picks up a rock.)*

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Come out now or...

**MZEE:** Uh, hujambo Maji, Madodo.

**MADODO:** How long have you been there spying in the bush?

**MZEE:** Spying? Why we were just, uh, looking for, uh...

**MBAYA:** ...herbs

**NENE:** ...berries

**MBAYA:** I mean berries.

**NENE:** I mean herbs.

**MZEE:** Herbs and berries.

**MAJI:** You'll learn no secrets feeding ants with your knees, for I have none.

**MZEE:** Except why you are here, a stranger amongst us.

**NENE:** Baiting our men.

**MBAYA:** And wearing your hips up beside your nose.

**MAJI:** Were you a man I would bury your face in the dirt.

**MBAYA:** Were I a man you would be a stain upon my hunter's longknife, Shepherd.

**MADODO:** No good comes of this bickering.

**MAJI:** She cannot wag her bitter tongue uncensored.

**MADODO:** Whether voiced or no, her heart is unchanged. Better that I know it.

**MBAYA:** Its content would make you blush.

**MADODO:** That I do not doubt, but come, what bone has been caught in your throat these several months?



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**MBAYA:** We have all feasted upon nothing but bones since your unwelcomed arrival.

**NENE:** Bird wings and gristly goat flesh. In all my years I have never before suffered such indignities.

**MAJI:** But these things are not the doings of Madodo.

**MBAYA:** Who else then?

**NENE:** I ate well before her coming.

**MADODO:** So I see.

**MAJI:** Madodo does not slice meat.

**MZEE:** No, she beguiles the hunters.

**MADODO:** Peace, Maji...and so what would you have me do?

**MBAYA:** Go back from whence you came.

**MZEE:** Yes, return to your home and plague your sisters.

**NENE:** Tonight, without a word; just turn your back toward our village and leave us to a better life.

**MADODO:** Very well. I will away this present hour.

**MAJI:** No!

**MADODO:** ...only first you must tell me where I am to go from this place, for the village that I fled is home for flies and fat worms. My sisters, bone and dust.

**NENE:** What happened, Madodo?

**MADODO:** A beast from the mountains preyed upon my cousins until the village was no more and I awakened in this friendless land, revived by famed Fundiz.

*(Loud animal growl.)*

**MBAYA:** What was that?

**NENE:** I would rather not know.

*(Another growl and the bushes shake.)*

**MZEE:** The creature has followed her here to us!

**MAJI:** Quickly, let us return to the village.

*(Women go after the laundry.)*

Leave the wash.

**MADODO:** You return to your mother with no wash if you wish.

*(Maji gathers the laundry.)*

**MAJI:** Hurry, hurry. It draws closer.

**MZEE:** Tuma, quickly, we must all flee!

**NENE:** We will never outrace it.

**MBAYA:** Maji must delay the thing until we women can escape.

**TUMA:** Why Maji?

**MBAYA:** Maji is a hunter.

**NENE:** Yes, Maji is a hunter.

**MADODO:** He is a shepherd with the same right to life as we women.

**MAJI:** I am a hunter. I will protect you.

*(Maji advances on the bush.)*

**TUMA:** Muungu, guard him.

*(Exit Nene, Mbaya, Mzee. Maji is pulled into the bush. Enter Upepo, Mbili & Wote carrying Maji and making the sound.)*

**UPEPO:** Brave Maji. He defends the women against the fierce...what shall we call it?

**WOTE:** Boobeast.

**UPEPO:** Against the fierce boobeast.

**MBILI:** Risking life and limb.

**WOTE:** Rushing headlong into the bush with his tiny knife drawn.

**MAJI:** Put me down!

**UPEPO:** Wait! Silence. The great hunter speaks.

**MAJI:** Put me down!

**UPEPO:** Word is law.

*(They drop him.)*

**MADODO:** You have embarrassed the boy.

*(Maji picks up his knife and squares off with Upepo.)*

**WOTE:** Let us not feed our anger blood.

**MAJI:** I will see him dead.

*(Hunters grab and hold Maji.)*

Let me go! Let me go!

*(Upepo draws a long blade.)*

**UPEPO:** Let the boy go.

**WOTE:** Hold him. He is not yet ripe for death.

**UPEPO:** Let him go, I said.

**WOTE:** The drum are mute, Upepo.

**UPEPO:** Let him go.

**WOTE:** Will you shame your new blade with the blood of a shepherd?

**MAJI:** I am not a shepherd.

**WOTE:** There are worse fates and shorter lives, my friend.

**MAJI:** I am not a shepherd.

**WOTE:** You have not heard the secret.

**MAJI:** Not yet, but...

**WOTE:** His death will only bring you dishonor, Upepo.

**UPEPO:** You are not worthy of my new blade.

**MAJI:** I am a hunter!

**UPEPO:** You are a shepherd. You have not heard the words of Mkuu.

**TUMA:** But he will.

**WOTE:** She speaks.

**MAJI:** Yes. I will hear the words. He will give me the secret. I will become Mkuu and your family will starve.

**UPEPO:** Go get it then. Mkuu is waiting.

**WOTE:** Upepo, this is too...

**UPEPO:** This is nothing! Go claim your destiny, fool.

**MAJI:** You will see. You will all see. I will hear the secret and become the new Mkuu.

**UPEPO:** You had better hurry...

*(Exit Maji.)*

Before they bury him.

*(Maji crosses through the woods. There is a peculiar animal howl in the distance. Lights dim. Unnatural silence.)*

**MAJI:** Mkuu will give me his secret. I am meant to hunt, not herd.

*(Enter Witch from the darkness.)*

Who are you? Where did you come from?

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**WITCH:** What you see is an old traveler, haggard and hungry, in search of a little food.

**MAJI:** I have nothing.

**WITCH:** Surely some small morsel.

**MAJI:** I am upon an errand of great urgency...

**WITCH:** And you have no time to aid the aged.

**MAJI:** I lack means as much as time.

**WITCH:** What is your great haste?

**MAJI:** Whoever does not hear the secret must remain forever a shepherd.

**WITCH:** And that fate is not for you, I gather.

**MAJI:** Please, I must go.

**WITCH:** Go then, Maji. Mkuu is waiting.

*(Exit Witch into darkness.)*

**MAJI:** How do you know my name? I never told it to you... How?

*(Enter Tuma.)*

**TUMA:** With whom do you speak, Maji?

**MAJI:** No one... Leave me be.

**TUMA:** But I have brought...

**MAJI:** I have had enough delays!

*(Exit Maji into village.)*

How did that traveler know my name?

**VOICE:** Maji?

**MAJI:** Yes, mother.

**VOICE:** Where's my wash?

**MAJI:** I left it at the pond.

**VOICE:** You what? Well you just march right back up there and you get it.

**MAJI:** I cannot, mother.

**VOICE:** I don't think that I heard you right.

*(Enter Tuma with the wash.)*

**TUMA:** He said that he must go to hear Mkuu and so has asked that I bring the wash for him.

**VOICE:** Who is that?

**TUMA:** It is I, Tuma. Shikamoo.

**VOICE:** You hear that, Maji? Some children know how to respect their elders. You'd do well to marry that child.

*(Maji turns to exit.)*

**TUMA:** Maji? I have brought your wash for you. I saw what happened, and I knew that you had forgotten it.

**MBILI:** I have no time for thanks.

**TUMA:** I ask for none. Go quickly and hear the words of Mkuu.

*(Exit Tuma. Maji crosses to the Kibanda of Mkuu. The entrance is guarded.)*

**ELDER:** Where are you going, young one?

**MBILI:** I go to hear Mkuu.

**ELDER:** You are late.

**MAJI:** Yes, but now I go to hear Mkuu, for I am a hunter.

**ELDER:** It is too late to see Mkuu.

**MAJI:** To wait until morning would be later still.

**ELDER:** Mourning is begun... Fate has a place for each son. There is no position without value nor person without worth. The young ones do not respect shepherds, but...

**MAJI:** I am not a shepherd!

**ELDER:** The rules of your caste are immutable. Those who do not hear the words are to be shepherds...

**MAJI:** And so I must see Mkuu.

**ELDER:** ...and they must tend to the deeds that hunters neglect.

**MAJI:** And so I must see Mkuu!

**ELDER:** It will serve no useful end.

**MAJI:** You are against me, just like the others, but you will not keep me from the secret. I am the heir! You cannot keep me out!

*(Maji draws his knife. Elder raises his weapon. Enter FUNDIZ.)*

**FUNDIZ:** Let him see Mkuu. Let him pass.

*(Maji enters the kibanda. Fundiz sends Elder away. Fundiz prepares to enter the kibanda.)*

**VOICE:** Maji.

**MAJI:** Oh. There you are, Mkuu. *(Fundiz stops.)* I thought that you were here. Shikamoo, Mzee.

**VOICE:** Marahaba Mwanangu.

**MAJI:** I feared that you had forgotten me. I could not join the others but I must have the secret. I am not a shepherd, Mkuu, I am a hunter.

**VOICE:** I am tired and want to go. Listen and learn.

A stalking horse rides  
The shadow of day  
So close to its sides  
Go safe through the night  
The narrows are wide  
Surrounded by gray  
Where hearts only guide  
Back into the light.

**MAJI:** I do not understand. Mkuu? Mkuu?

*(Maji exits the kibanda.)*

I do not understand, Fundiz.

**FUNDIZ:** The answer is not here.

**MAJI:** Where then?

**FUNDIZ:** Who can say?

**MAJI:** No matter. Now I have the secret. I am a full hunter, and I shall mount the stalking horse and squeeze its flanks between my thighs until it crowns me Mkuu!

*(Black.)*



## DAY II

**MESSENGER:** The week die. The drums are still. When next they sing, bones shall fill the village and name Mkuu. Hurry hunters, famine rides upon the wind, and death is near at hand.

*(Wote is seated in the shade of a tree. Enter Upepo and Mbili.)*

**MBILI:** Will you hunt today?

**WOTE:** I hunt only at night.

**UPEPO:** Were we all to hunt like you then many bellies would be empty.

**WOTE:** And many more would be full.

**MBILI:** Soon the drums shall call the hunters. Will you have no bones to bring?

**WOTE:** Only my own.

*(Enter Maji from a kibanda.)*

**VOICE:** You just guard the goats, leave the hunting to the hunters.

**MAJI:** I am a hunter.

**VOICE:** Don't start that up again.

*(Enter Tuma.)*

**TUMA:** Maji?

**MAJI:** What do you want?

**TUMA:** Hujambo?

**MAJI:** Sijambo. What do you want?... What is it?

**TUMA:** Maji, why do you hate me so?

**MAJI:** What?

**TUMA:** What is it that I have done?

**MAJI:** I do not hate you, Tuma.

**TUMA:** It seems that you are always angry and anxious to leave when I am present.

**MAJI:** I am not always angry with you... I guess that we just meet in the wrong places and times. What is it that you want?

**TUMA:** I have found some berries for you to eat. I know that food is scarce in the pastures.

**UPEPO:** You should gather food for hunters, not shepherds.

**TUMA:** I do. I gather food for the new Mkuu.

**UPEPO:** Then give it to me.

**TUMA:** Give it back! Give it back!

**MAJI:** Let him have it. Let him grow used to my leavings. Soon he will beg for them.

*(Upepo throws the berries on the ground.)*

**WOTE:** Food is too scarce to waste it so.

**TUMA:** Maji, I could wash them for you.

**MAJI:** In what water?

**UPEPO:** Let him eat them from the dirt.

*(Upepo grapples with Maji.)*

**TUMA:** Let go! Leave him alone!

*(Tuma tries to intervene and is pushed.)*

**WOTE:** Brave hunter, Upepo; conqueror of shepherds and women. Tell me, what shall you tame next, children?

**UPEPO:** Beware that you are not next to taste my wrath.

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**WOTE:** I am neither shepherd nor woman; your anger can only taste red upon my blade.

*(Upepo and Wote square off. Enter Madodo.)*

**MADODO:** You cannot kill game, so now you murder one another.

**UPEPO:** Only one of us shall die; and I have a destiny to fulfill.

**WOTE:** If you do not soon sheath your knife you shall fill no more than the belly of a wild dog.

**MADODO:** What has prompted this?

**UPEPO:** I grow sick of this canker.

**WOTE:** Then slice it open, if you can.

**UPEPO:** I will and rid the village of your uselessness forever. You disgust me.

**WOTE:** No less so than you, I.

*(Wote grabs a spear.)*

**MADODO:** Wote, no!

*(Wote runs past Upepo and throws the spear into the woods.)*

**WOTE:** I missed.

**MADODO:** What was it?

**WOTE:** A boar, I think. Yes, a boar.

**UPEPO:** Mbili! Njoo hapa!

**MBILI:** I have found fresh berries, can it not wait?

**WOTE:** A huge black one... Big and ugly, with fiery eyes. Big enough, perhaps, to feed the entire village.

**UPEPO:** Sasa hivi, mjenga!

**WOTE:** Its mouth as large as any I have ever seen. It just stood there, angry and ignorant, hungry and stupid, mouth agape. And I missed it.

**UPEPO:** Which way did it go?

**WOTE:** Straight down there. I am surprised that you did not see it...

**UPEPO:** Follow me!

*(Exit Mbili and Upepo.)*

**WOTE:** ...A huge boar running through the bushes.

**TUMA:** Are you going, Maji? I will get your spear.

**VOICE:** Maji? Are you still out there? Child, you'd better get your bones up with the goats where they belong.

**MADODO:** Are you going, Wote?

**WOTE:** I have no spear.

*(Exit Madodo into bush. Tuma offers Maji the remaining berries.)*

**MAJI:** Leave me alone—I do not need your help! I am the greatest hunter. I neither need your berries nor your knife. If I have battles, then I shall fight them for myself.

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