



THE MASKED DREAMA

ABSTRACT

The storm was not over; it was just the beginning. Immediately the coast guards' ships were swallowed into the horizon; a sailor in Kamau's boat on the watch spotted a large boat approaching them from the back at high speed. The ship looked piratical. He raised the alarm to alert the other crew members.

Ian Kagaathi

eBook

THE MASKED DREAM



IAN KAGAATHI

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“Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us.”

-Wilma Rudolph

DEDICATIONS

This book is dedicated to my mom, Betty, with love, thank you for being a solid foundation on which to lean on. For the love of books, here is another copy for you mom.

To my uncle Mr. David Ngige, for all the sacrifices he has made for my well-being. All is at heart.

And to Neema, for putting herself into my shoes, and for always keeping my hands writing.

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CHAPTER 1

Kamau walked with graded footsteps to the local Mwananchi bank. He had five thousand shillings, folded and kept in his coat's inner pocket. He had grand plans which needed a lot of cash to be achieved. He was sure this was not going to be a grail again. A well-sculptured griffin stood near the counter. Kamau strode to the counter, where he was welcomed like a grandee by the lady behind the counter. He was given some documents to fill when he heard drums beating.

He turned to see a team of men of God in white robes being let into the bank by the security guards at the bank's entrance. The men of God had gloved hands that wielded giant and healthy-looking bibles. They were singing a joyous song that could move a mountain. Singing and drumming came to an end, and the gospel was spitted out with professionalism from their mouths.

Kamau returned his money in the pocket and cocked up his ears to listen to the heavenly crew. "Repent your sins, you people of the earth, Jesus is coming soon like a thief." This touched Kamau's heart and groped the idea." Who is ready

to give his or her life to Jesus?” Many hands shot up in the air as though this was a direct ticket to their maker.

The bank’s operation had come to a standstill. The loyal people closed their eyes to be taken through the repentance prayer by the men of God. Saying amen, they came face to face with guns’ barrels pointed at their red- faces. Everyone was ordered to align their faces with the floor. The men of God called to be given the valuables that the bank had stored for them. *At this time, the personnel at the CCTV control room were busy enjoying the mind-blowing skin flick that had been hacked into their server by the Men of God. All the other CCTV cameras had been switched off before the robbery.*

The bank’s customers went through scanning and were left only with their clothes. Kamau’s heart was rumbling violently, which made him grump. The men of God disappeared, leaving behind their bibles, used as gun holders by curving them in.

The gutless police force, which always arrived late, came into the scene brandishing their guns. They started their usual investigations, which often led to nothing. It was later discovered that the robbers had managed to make away

with fifty million shillings and other valuables with a net estimate of two million. In many years to come, the detectives and the police had to burn the case files as their pieces of evidence added to nothing. It was declared THE GHOST ROBBERY OF THE CENTURY by the local newspapers.

The bank customers were given bags full of promises to take home. Kamau gave hacking coughs as he staggered home. He had escaped Hades with his life but without his money. He reached home haggard only to find another complicated equation waiting for his mind to solve. His household goods were baking in the afternoon sun.

Kamau's pair of boxers lay unceremoniously on a plate of *ugali* that he had been dreaming about on his way home; his handful of clothes had been thrown near a dustbin, making them look like a pile of rugs. His furniture had been thrown carelessly, rendering them useless.

In quest to fulfill his dream, he had forgotten to pay his rent. The landlady had given him several notices, but each payday, he forgot about the rent. Kamau had to think quickly on what step to take. The goings were too much for a solitary mind to handle. The rumor-mongers had gotten a

new report to air around the slums. He concluded selling his furniture to Mama Otus, the local brewer, at a comrade's price.

Armed with the cash he had made from the sale of the furniture; he stormed the local pub to ease his stress and troubles. He sat at a corner and ordered two bottles of cold Tusker. He took his beer noisily in long gulps without looking at anyone. With time, his mind started clearing. Emptying the second bottle, he decided to look at his fellow liquor disciples. Sitting two tables away from him was a top-notch young lady wearing a blue leather jacket. In her left hand, she held a half-empty glass of wine, which she was sipping as though it was a glass of mercury.

“Possessing charm ladies are meant for special people like me.” This was the driving force running through Kamau's mind. With this encouragement running through his nerves, he strode towards the gorgeous lady table and made himself comfortable. *This lady would later come to be one of Kamau's best and unique agents.*

Kamau made sure he had marked his territory to stop any form of competition from his fellow “disciples.” The lady paid no attention to Kamau and acted as though she had

seen nothing moving. Kamau thought that this was the chance to make himself visible. Kamau's eyes were glancing at the well-set pair of breasts, which had curved their shape through her transparent top, all thanks to her unzipped jacket.

Kamau, at last, pulled out his finger. "They call me Kamau, what about the young lady?" Kamau's insides were on fire; he had almost used all his energy. "Sharon." She continued sipping her juice, Sharon was not at all interested with Kamau. Kamau saw this and was faint-hearted. He was ready to leave with the hope that he who goes for a bunch of bananas finds a whole stalk.

Being faint-hearted, Kamau stood up, ready to leave. Sharon, too stood up and whispered something into Kamau's ears. Sharon walked away from the pub and headed towards the lodging. Kamau followed her once without waiting for the second whistle.

Kamau was sure he was going for a kill. Petting phantasm was playing on his head." Today am going to prove that I am a real man. I will take twenty minutes on the mountain without a break. Here comes the man with his gun ready to

spit fire.” These inner words playing in his heart made him sober and prepared for action.

He opened the door he had seen Sharon entering. His shirt was already in his hands. Closing the door behind him, he started unbuckling his belt. His pecker was now threatening to burst out of its cage. On the bed, toying with a revolver, sat Sharon with all her clothes in place. She had crossed her legs and sat like a queen waiting for a plate of deluxe meal. Kamau’s phallus had now frozen to a pea-size. It was begging to be allowed a safe passage into the stomach.

At this time, Kamau could not believe that his sexual urge had led him to face this deleterious woman before him, who was smiling as though he was a delectable thing. “Come over here, honey.” The sight of the gun made him run to the gun bearer. His trousers came down without warning revealing greasy underpants with an opening about three centimeters worth of diameter at the front.

Inserting the revolver in Kamau’s pants, Sharon handed him a piece of paper. “Come to this place tomorrow, and don’t fail.” The door was banged shut, and Sharon was gone.

CHAPTER 2

Kamau made his way back to the ghetto. The strange twist of events was still haunting his mind. A sack full of trouble had been thrown on his life. It was too much for a solitary soul to carry. It was now midnight, and the road was deserted.

He reached his door and found it locked with an unfamiliar padlock. That is when he remembered second-handed that he had been kicked out. He had to look for a place to rest his body for the remaining hours. Kamau had a bad relationship with the neighbours and was sure no one would accommodate him.

After much thought, he found a place to rest his troubled soul, although it needed a healthy heart. To his delight, the latrine had not been closed that night. Kamau chose a better place to sleep. He tried locking the door from inside, but the lock had been tampered with. Kamau saw this as a small issue and went on to curl to fit in the latrine. He was lucky that day the toilet had been cleaned up.

That fateful night, Mama Akoth, Kamau's neighbour came running to the latrine. She had a running stomach after overeating beans at a funeral she attended at the

neighboring village. She emptied all the contents of her bowels on to the face of Kamau, who was snoring his troubles away. “OH, thank you God I have opened my rectum at the right time and place.” These were Mama Akoth’s words as she left the latrines majestically, with her head high up in the air.

Kamau was woken up by the flies trying to enter his ears and nose to find that his face was a parking lot of a swarm of big and healthy-looking flies. The stench from his face was overpowering his lungs. To his luck, it was raining heavily outside. At least this time, he had a solution to his current situation.

Sharon had not talked of the time at which to arrive at the place he had written on the piece of paper she had handed to Kamau. He had time to dry his clothes in the dull sunshine. Kamau’s stomach was now rumbling, asking for its democratic right. He had spent all his money on booze the previous night.

Nearby from where he sat basking in the sun with only his underpants lay a partial rotten mango. In his life, he had never imagined he could ever eat from the dustbins. The dreamer was now living the opposite of his dreamed kind

of life, but it was not too late for the dreamer to live his dream life. For now, he had to enjoy his free food as need makes the naked queen spin.

Kamau decided he was not going anywhere. He wanted to start building his life afresh and to achieve his valid dream. He was firm by this decision. He was sure that Sharon was just playing with his mind. He closed his eyes to listen to his heart and determine if he was ready for the work ahead.

Opening his eyes, he found a stretched hand waiting for him. Before him stood a boy of about twelve years old. The boy with bushy eyebrows and receding hairline handed Kamau a note and went away. “Come at mid-day at the place and don’t fail if you don’t want us to have your head after one hour,” read the note. This red-flag was enough to keep Kamau on his toes.

These latest directions threw Kamau into turmoil. Arriving at Quakers Street, he found a green Station Wagon waiting for him. The car came to a stop in front of a vast black gate that opened at its own free will. He was sure that the people waiting for him were from the underworld. The people around him wore business faces and had no time for jokes. Sharon sat on a leather couch, smoking a fat cigar. One man

with a goatee and in a black suit was busy cleaning a bore a.22 caliber pistol. Clearly, this was their chief. Surrounding the leader were stocky build men with penetrating eyes who were ready to pounce on a prey and tore it apart at a blow of a whistle.

“Welcome into our world, Mr. Kamau, and feel at home. These will be your brothers and here, your sisters.” The chief spoke calmly without looking at the addressee. He was polishing his weapon of mass destruction.

Kamau was handed five thousand shillings by one of the men. “That is the money we took from you at the bank.” It was then that it dawned on Kamau that these were the “men of God,” responsible for cleaning the bank and its customers’ valuables. Kamau’s face was filled with felicity, having been handed back his hard-earned cash, which had threatened to kill the visions he had. Kamau had dogged determination that his dream would come true. Exciting ideas of how he would start his life again made him smile to all the present souls.

The chief’s voice came alive again. “From the way you were giving my men a hard time during the bank robbery, I saw that you had potential. I don’t want to be barbaric to

you, but I just want you to join my team, and together let us rule the world.”

This statement made Kamau doggone. “What if I say no?” He was answered by being pointed with a dozen cocked Armalite rifles. He had to give in with raised hands. This was going too fast; this chunk of food handed to him from nowhere was too big for him to chew, but what could he do?

Kamau knew that to keep one’s tongue was worthy of praise. He agreed to join the gang on account that he was helpless. Sharon welcomed Kamau into the discipleship with a kiss. This at least revived Kamau’s dying spirit.

Kamau was left with a barrel-chested man whom he later came to know that his name was Simba. He took Kamau through a series of training, which included martial arts and the use of different weapons. This was after being led by the chief in taking a solemn vow of abiding by their rules and remaining true to the course.

Kamau decided to accept the customs of the team because it was the sole option he had. He had to understand that a man changing his abode is like a woman marrying.

CHAPTER 3

Cobra, the chief of the team, decided it was time to test Kamau's ability on an assignment. He had gotten first-hand information from his many news desks that Eurobond Bank in Utumishi town would be transporting money to their headquarters in Malewa town.

After drafting a plan, he gave the job to Simba, Sharon, and Kamau. Sharon was made the trio gang leader. Sharon and the chief had pulled major successful crimes together. This made her an experienced fellow with the underworld job and also the chief's favorite hands. The boss knew that if the first goat goes lame, those that follow will not reach the pasture. Sharon had to come up with the top of the art strategy to lead her team.

The three of them, armed with revolvers from Cobra's private arsenal, set off in a blue Range Rover with blended windows. It was Kamau's first time to sit in such a moving comfortability. The other one he had ever ridden in was a pick-up when he was working in Nyake town as a loader.

Kamau was feeling nervous. He had to do something to raise his diminishing spirits. He decided to pick up a chat with Sharon and Simba about their past experiences and

how they had managed to pull it. By the time they had reached their battlefield, Kamau's heart was at eternal peace.

Everyone was at home with the game plan on their menu. They waited calmly in their car for the right time to give their prey a deadly wound. Although this whole idea was precarious, they were all certain for one thing, success. All they had to do was to keep their pecker up.

There was an added advantage to their plan. The road that day was deserted. Everyone was busy cheering their respective countries at the Neema Johnson National Stadium in Malewa town. It was the biggest inter-countries football clash finals between Moshi from the state of Katoti and Moto from the Republic of Katiti.

Sharon, who was pregnant, was lying in the middle of the road wailing. Her white denim trouser was covered in fresh blood. Clearly, she was in labour, and this needed immediate medical attention.

A few meters from Sharon, Kamau, and Simba, now shirtless, were held in a fight. "That pregnancy is mine." Kamau was shouting at Simba. "No! Am sure the baby

would look like me.” Simba shot back, adding it with an upper-cut to Kamau’s egg-built chin.

The van ferrying the new banknotes together with the police escort had to stop. The unsuspecting escort police officers came out of their armored vehicle to see why they were making an out-of-the book stop. The police officers could not help seeing Sharon bleeding while the people who could help were embroiled in a fight.

“Somebody, please help me, am dying.....dy...ing, this pain is much for me.” Sharon’s cry for help set the three policemen into action. They laid down their sub-machine guns and run to help the wailing Sharon. This was a terrible mistake they had made, but there was no time to rectify it. The three policemen who had run to carry Sharon had to drop their anchors.

Three guns were pointed at the good unarmed Samaritans at point-blank. They were ordered to take off their uniforms and remain the Adam’s way. The van driver tried to escape, but a shot from Kamau’s revolver, which was fitted with a silencer, made him freeze on the wheel.

The driver was ordered to open the safe. The four sky-clad men were called to transfer the money from the van to the

enemies of the law gate-away car. The four men were locked up in the now empty van; Kamau was now acting as the boss. He was barking orders to Sharon and Simba. They had to flee the crime scene while they still had time. This whole process took less than twenty minutes.

Once in their car, they took off their now useless masks that resembled real human faces. Simba sat behind the wheel. He was the king of the road; he knew how to play well with the gate-away car. The Range Rover was driven into one of their nests; they changed their clothes and drove off in an Audi Q7. Their mission was complete. The rest would be taken care of by their network.

On the way, there was a massive police-check. It was clear that their robbery had been blown by the wind to the vigilante police stations and camps in Malewa town. After a few checks, they were cleared to continue with their journey. Kamau was really enjoying this experience. He found this new way of making quick cash to be so gripping and easy.

Cobra threw a party for his brothers and sister in crime. Containers of praises were hauled to the trio for pulling a successful job in record time. Kamau was officially

initiated into the group. He had fully earned the trust of the chief, more so, the whole team.

Sharon showered Kamau with endless smiles. Kamau found Sharon to be bonny in her figure-hugging clothing. He wanted to ask her out. His heart was willing, but his body was weak. He had to call it a day.

Kamau was given a well-furnished room to be his official restroom. Everything from food to clothing was handed to him without measure. He was like a calf being fattened to give the best veal. It was clear that Cobra had found him so valuable, and he was ready to sollicitude him.

Kamau, Sharon, and Simba became inseparable. They went to numerous missions and accomplished them to the taste of Cobra. Kamau was now a leopard that needed no lessons to climb trees. The killing was now like playing a game of Fifa to Kamau. He believed that no one could stop him at this point from achieving what he wanted, however strong they could be.

Whereas other people were splashing their money after a raid, Kamau had opened an underground savings account in his room. His dreams were still fresh and valid, and needed to be achieved. In this kind of profession, he was

sure he would make enough dough than when he was working as a greeter at the Mwenyenchi hotel.

Cobra developed a particular liking to Kamau. This was because he did his job with passion. Within a short period, he had risen to the position of chief treasurer, the most coveted rank in the underworld. Kamau was in charge of making and controlling their day to day budget.

This post was both a blessing and a curse to Kamau. This post came with a lot of allowances and easy pocketing of cash the way one wanted but without raising a red flag. The curse was that his fellow disciples developed snake-eyes on why him being a new member, had been given the post instead of them the old birds. One member of the gang, M-63, told Kamau openly that he would set a bomb in his mouth.

Kamau received numerous threats from some of the gang members, but this could not throw him into doldrums. He remained hawk-eyed to avert any oncoming danger. He reported this to Cobra, and he was promised maximum security and a level-up to any person who posed as a danger to his life.

Simba and Sharon were put in charge of creating a sanctuary for Kamau. He enjoyed the company of this team, not forgetting that he had a crush on Sharon. This trio squad was unbeatable, and no one dared them.

Cobra had worked up a plan after getting golden information from a reliable source. They were running out of cash, and their accounts had to flourish again. He chose a good team of experts in crime operations to accompany him to the mission. It was apparent that the trio squad would make it to the chief's list. This was a momentous job and had no room for the chicken-hearted. It had a small line separating the living and the dead.

The team parked their fuel guzzlers outside a nightspot. They wanted to use this place to polish their plans and be ready to pounce to action at the blow of the chief's whistle. When all the nitty-gritty had been understood, and there was no nix from anyone present, the team was ready for action.

Leading the pack of money hunters was Cobra. Nightjars could be seen flying from one building to the other with the aid of the night light. The handful of nightclubs that had

been open a few hours ago were now inactive. The streets were now deserted.

A police patrol car with blaring lights came to a stop in front of this legion of night owls. Cobra signaled his team to be at ease and let him handle his mates. *It was believed that Cobra was once a powerful sergeant in the police forces. He had numerous fallouts with his superiors, making him retire to the underworld.*

“Friends on the opposite side of the law, I greet you all in the name of our peaceful state,” came the booming voice of the patrol commander evident from the number of stars at the lapel of his police coat.

The gun-toting police officers joined their commander, now standing face to face with Cobra. His uniformed boys had one of their hands firmly on their gun butts and their forefingers wrapped around the trigger.

“Are you to the hunt or from the prey?” This timely question from the commander made Cobra’s face take an unhealthy color. In his life, he hated being questioned about anything. This time, however, he had to swallow his pride so that he could get away without much trouble.

Cobra looked at his delegation and was delighted by their act of sheer bravado. “You have a good team to bring you luck. Give the Pilate his share, and he will be on his way.” The commander now spoke soothingly to the obsolete bank account at his presence.

Time was elapsing. Cobra and his team would be late for their riches. He had to part exchange with the greedy policemen. He dug his black-gloved hand into his coat’s inner pocket. His hand fell on the butt of a 1997 AMT Hardballer fitted with a silencer. “Should I use this?” Cobra changed his mind and handed the commander a wad of notes.

“Thank you, comrades. The society needs men like you; see you again soon. It was a pleasure doing business with you.” With these words, the commander and his men went on with their patrol with bountiful cash to their advantage.

The National Bank came into view. The team spread out according to their game plan. Sharon and Kamau were to take care of the security personnel at the bank. To their advantage, a sole police officer was operating the bank’s entrance. Sharon threw a coin in the air and fell on the sidewalk near a mailbox.

The unsuspecting slim build officer went to check on the new arrival, only to fall into the open muscular arms of Kamau. The bank's alarm system had been disabled that night through the help of an insider at the bank. The locks on the bank's colossal glass door were easy to play with due to the availability of different talents within Cobra's camp. The double-doors swung open, and the team marched in.

An appealing police officer in figure-hugging uniform was waiting for them. "Welcome to the National Bank, our dear customers. We do hope you will enjoy our services; we are here to serve you with pleasure."

On the customer's waiting seats sat two dozen policemen with cocked rifles, ready to tear their unsuspecting customers to pieces. Cobra glanced around to ascertain if he was in a bank or a police station.

CHAPTER 4

Kamau took care of the police officer outside the bank and made sure he would never be seen again. It was now time to join the team inside the bank. As he raised his foot ready to bring it down on the doorstep, something caught his attention.

There was a streak of light coming from the door's closing end, meaning that the door was not locked. This alarmed Kamau; it was their custom to close the entrance door during a robbery, whether or not all the partners in crime were in. Barrages of questions were streaming in his mind. Should he save his lone soul or even those of his family in the bank? He was yet to decide, which he had to do it quickly for the time was running out.

Overlooking Cobra and his team was a giant screen displaying the words "FEEL AT HOME AWAY FROM HOME." Cobra cursed these words under his breath, for they were digging deeper his worsening wound. Cobra knew that they were outnumbered four men to one, but he wanted to die an honorable death if at all his end had been recorded somewhere that it would be as a result of police bullets during a bank robbery. He flashed his hand into his

pocket to grab his gun, but the hand was dead on reaching there. Twenty death-spitting gun barrels were pointed on every inch of his body. His team, which was following his actions attentively, also froze into a mass of breathing ice.

This was an apparent set-up. Cobra was sure that he had been sold by one of his men. He was sure this had nothing to do with the police patrol team they had encountered earlier.

Cobra and his team then lay face-first on the cold, marble floor. His blood was boiling; he was sure steam was coming out of his skin. His hands were yearning to do something. He believed in the saying that an animal caught in the trap does not refuse to set itself free.

Four armed policemen, under cover of the other police officers, came to collect the gang's guns. Cobra saw this as a chance to save their souls from rotting in a prison cell. He was calmly waiting, like a starving python with a poised head, ready to devour its prey.

Cobra's ever alert team had learned of his intentions and was ready to pounce into action. In a fluid motion, Cobra, together with his disciples, were on their feet with their guns emitting death blows on the incoming policemen who

were sent to disarm them. The four policemen died with shocked expressions spread all over their faces.

The bank's lights went off immediately the four policemen were gunned down. Kamau had decided to blow-up the bank's powerhouse situated behind the bank, in his bid to save his team. This was a blessing to the gang as they had been trained to operate in the dark. The police officers were confused and had to hold back their fire.

The police saved their bullets while waiting for Cobra and his team to open the bank's door. This would have been easy to know where they had assembled to rain bullets on them. Cobra was smart to fall for this trick. He dived on the floor and opened the door with his body flat on the ground.

A massive storm of bullets came swirling towards the open door. Cobra and his team were out of harm's way. It was now payback time. When the police ceased fire, Cobra's team now opened fire on the unsuspecting police officers, who had thought that their work was over.

It was Cobra's wish to at least go home with a few coins from the bank, as a show of their efforts, but this was now beyond their imaginations. It was now time to calculate

how they would escape from the bank and reach home with their lives.

Cobra and his team were lucky to escape out of the bank with their souls but unlucky with the money. Their journey to be millionaires had been cut short by the police officers who a good number of them at that time had gone to meet their maker. They had begun celebrating having their lives; however, the war was not yet over. Coming out of the bank, they heard police sirens. This threw the team into a maelstrom.

The shooting at the bank had magnetized other police officers. This bolt from the blue caught the team unaware. They had to act quickly to escape from the state boys. It was time for everyone to save his or her soul.

They had to separate, as making a bolt together would make them an easy target to the police. By now, the police had surrounded the bank. The discerning policemen had seen some figures running in the dark. They decided to round them up before they could go far.

A rain of bullets had started on the underworld characters. Cobra was being haunted by a swarm of lead, which was threatening to end his existence. He ducked into cover,

where he met Kamau gasping for breath in the old container that at times served as a home to the street families.

They could hear the police commander barking orders at his subjects. “We have to get out of here before these merciless men roast us in here.”Cobra was talking to no one in particular as Kamau had vanished from sight. He had gone to check the surroundings for a loophole they could escape through.

One of the gang members was unlucky. In his bid to run away from the police, he had blindly climbed into one of the police ill-fated Land Cruisers thinking that it was their gateway car. He was welcomed honorably with handcuffs from the police squad who were waiting for the command. He was praised by the police in giving them an easy task in apprehending him. He was awarded a cigar which he had to balance with his lips, now that his hands were handcuffed at his back.

Kamau checked his revolver to ascertain if it was in a working condition after all the running. He was hiding under one of the police Cruisers, where he thought they were deserted. He was working on the next course of action

when the vehicle that had housed him sped off, leaving him lying on the open road.

A flurry of bullets sped past where his stomach was a few seconds ago. He dived into cover, tumbling over his boss Cobra, who hauled curses after him. There was a deafening sound all of a sudden. Cobra's chest was ripped open by two four-inch bullets, probably from AWM-40, under the operation of an experienced sniper who was at close proximity.

Cobra's last-minute beating heart could be visible from his open rib cage. The bullet's impact from a close range had rendered some parts missing in action from his chest. Some of the features could be seen as a meter away. Kamau had no time to return the chunks to its owner, which would only earn him a bullet. He cast a last look at the hellish corpse and ran out of the hell-hole before he was caught.

Kamau decided to act on a hell-bent idea. From a hiding place in the shady verandah, he saw a police superbike with glaring headlights heading in his direction. He rolled on the road, did a backflip, and sent two successive bullets from his revolver into the crash helmet of the rider.

“You will have to take motorbike lessons from today, one day it may save your skin from fire,” Kamau remembered the late Cobra’s words now and for the first time saw meaning in them.

Kamau nearly ran into a lady coming from a back street. He braked in time to save two lives. The lady was Sharon. Without a word, she jumped on the superbike. It was time for Kamau to show the world what his trainer had taught him. The police siren blasting caravan in pursuit of Kamau was no match for him. They had to admire his riding skills as he got away from their grip.

CHAPTER 5

The gang had received a mighty blow. Cobra, their leader, was no more, two members had been arrested, and five had been gunned down. They were now like sheep without a shepherd. *The two in police custody were found guilty of committing a capital offense punishable by death. They were each given a life sentence after appealing. They were later shot dead as they tried escaping from Shimo La Tewa maximum prison after serving two years of their jail terms.*

For now, Kamau wanted to smoke out the rat that had sold them out to the police. He longed to pay him dearly for the loss of lives of Cobra and his other gang members. Kamau and Sharon, the only survivors at that time, had to remain indoors to let the police sniffing around cool down their noses.

They had to move out of their gang lair for some time as a precaution, in case somebody sold them again to the police. As far as Kamau and Sharon knew, their traitor was still at large. They booked themselves in a luxurious hotel in Malewa town, far from their foiled robbery scene. Kamau was now thinking of hanging his boots and go for his

dream. He decided that he would quit the game after dealing with the person responsible for their set up.

“If I find this poor bastard am going to empty the contents of my beloved revolver into his dumb head. I will enjoy seeing his brain spattering on the ground.” Kamau punctuated what was cooking in his mind with a hysterical laugh. This thing was eating him up deeply. He needed to find the rat quickly before he got out of control.

Sharon saw Kamau was not at peace. Something was terribly disturbing him. She was curious to find out. “What’s wrong with you, Kamau? Nowadays you look like hell-bound.” “I am fine; I am just thinking of a painful death to present it to someone. Do you have any suggestions for me?”

“Am sure this is about the person who caused the deaths of our brothers and our beloved chief.” “Yes, you are right,” Kamau answered her while polishing and checking the working condition of his fully loaded revolver. Apart from Sharon, his gun was the best companion present to him. “Count me in the game right away.” With this, Sharon was gone. Probably she was going to prepare herself for the

hunt or to think of the best death penalty to accord someone deserving.

Back at their lair after the police hunt had come to an end, they were sure their traitor would show up. They lay quietly, waiting for their prey patiently to strike him down.

One fine morning, M-63 came into the living room of the lair from nowhere. He was talking to someone on the phone on how he was going to be the new emperor of the gang. Kamau and Sharon sat in leather couches in the living room smoking out their lungs.

The phone came out of the trembling hand and fell in a bush of African violet growing from a vase near the twin metallic doors. It was evident that he was conscience-stricken. All along, he had been toying around with the idea that all the gang members were dead except him. His head told him he was staring at the ghosts of Kamau and Sharon bearing guns. He believed it was just an illusion.

The sight of the waving silenced guns from the duo hands trammled him. His bow-shaped legs were unwilling to carry him from the horrifying ordeal before him. He stood transfixed at the door, waiting for a miracle to happen in his favor.

Simba, who had been counted among the dead, came into the death smelling living room. His left arm was heavily bandaged, clearly from a gun wound. Apart from this, he looked well-fed with the strength of a mule.

M-63 saw this as the miracle he was waiting for. “They want to kill me for only eating their breakfast, talk to them so that they can have mercy on me, please. Save my stomach from these hungry vultures ready to devour me.” M-63 pleaded with Simba on bent knees, crying like a babe. All this time, Kamau and Sharon were still smoking silently.

Instead of Simba promising to insulate him, he closed the double doors threw M-63 to the middle of the room with his right hand. He took out his silvery automatic pistol and pointed at the puffy figure before him.

“I have all the reasons to believe that this is the man behind our past troubles. I have been secretly following him after escaping from the police that fateful night. From my judgment, he is the right man to kill. Simba had passed his sentence and was now waiting for a go-ahead nod from the bench of fellow judges before him.

Kamau prepared a mock courtroom to give the accused room to defend himself. “Wafula Mtembei, do you intend to tell the whole truth before this court.” *This was M-63 real name; the latter was given to him by Cobra due to his liking for the big guns.* “Yes, your honor. Wafula fell for this, with the belief of being pardoned. “You are charged with the crime of selling out your fellow gang members to the police. Do you plead guilty or not guilty of the above criminal charges?

“I am not guilty, it is the devil who led me to sin against the team, and he is the one to be held accountable for the charges.” Do you have a lawyer to defend you in this court?” Kamau asked with a smile written on his face at the sight of Wafula, who had soiled himself. “Never mind, the charges against you are punishable by death. Since the devil who led you into temptation is inside you, I sentence both of you to a bitter death, which will be decided by this court. You have fourteen seconds to say your last prayer.” Sharon and Simba seconded the decision of the acting judge with a nod.

Filling Wafula’s head with lead was voted against as a less painful death. After a few minutes of debate, they came up

with a long-lasting solution to serve the best interests of their client.

Wafula's panic-stricken body was dangling head facing downwards from a mango tree, growing at the backyard of the gang's lair. This was after his mouth was stuffed with several grams of freshly ground hot pepper, laced with concentrated sulphuric acid. He was gagged and left to sip in the contents in his mouth for some time before taking further destructive action on him.

The first ordeal had started dragging him to hell. A small smoky fire was lit a few inches from his stubby nose. This jerked his body as he tried to fill his lungs with the now-extinct oxygen. His body was held firmly in line with the smoke so that he could take it in, in full measure. It was now time to book him a first-class ticket to hell.

His head was hacked from the rest of the body by the impact of a swarm of bullets from the trio's revolvers, shot at close range. Wafula's body was dumped in a bush which was situated twelve miles from Malewa town, infamously used as a dumping site for mutilated human bodies. It was found by the police after vultures had made a meal out of it.

It was believed that Cobra had hidden a considerable ransom somewhere in that lair. The trio made up of Kamau, Simba, and Sharon, now branded the S.S.K squad, wore out their backs each day in search of the ransom.

After two weeks of turning everything in the house upside down and clearing the whole compound, they had nothing to show off for all their efforts. They decided to give up on the search for the ghost valuables.

On a bright sunny morning, Kamau went into a room that had previously served as Cobra's office situated at the headquarters of the gang's lair. He sat on the vast mahogany desk. "I must find this treasure today." He assured himself, and this time he was optimistic.

Kamau absent-mindedly saw an ugly rust-colored steel chair at the dimly lit far corner of the room. His legs willingly carried him to it. Although it was dusty and tired of its work, his instincts pushed him to place his breach in it. Immediately, a part of the wall behind him slid sideways, revealing a refined steel door with a combination lock placed at its midsection.

The revelation was too much for Kamau. After all what had happened in that room, he believed that he was not an

imbecile as his former boss at the Mwenyenchi hotel used to call him. “If Cobra would have been alive, he would have praised or given me another promotion, this time to be his assistant.” Kamau’s imagination drove him to shake hands with Cobra’s ghost.

Sharon and Simba, who had joined Kamau, were busy looking for the combination codes in the chest of drawers in Cobra’s office. They tried two sets of numbers, but the door remained in its place. They had one more chance left.

If they keyed in the wrong combination codes for the third time, they would have to pay with their lives. A machine gun had appeared at the top of the door waiting for them to make a wrong move.

Would they manage to get what was behind that door? Master time would tell; nevertheless, an elephant is not overpowered by its tusks. This was their driving force as they were determined to get what was behind the heavily guarded door.

CHAPTER 6

The time had come for Kamau to venture into his dreams. He was sure nobody or anything was going to stop him. He was ready to push the panic button to anyone who would dare to stand on his way. The only remaining thing was to get more henchmen; Simba had many connections in the underworld. He was awarded this contract.

Kamau's dream and ambitions were now a thing of the S.S.K squad. They came together to make it a reality. One strong man cannot close the ford of a river, so with the S.S.K team united for one course, they could manage it.

The Republic of Katiti was going to hold its fifth general elections. Candidates had started joining various political parties. Others were forming their own parties while some were to run as independent candidates. All political seats in the republic had been declared vacant. Any willing person with the needed qualifications was welcome to contest for any political seat of their choice.

The S.S.K squad had managed to get the combination codes. Kamau had remembered some numbers that Cobra had whispered to him in his death bed. Kamau had not paid full attention to them. It took him a lot of brains digging to

figure out the codes from Cobra's last words. The squad now had massive accounts with several banks in the republic.

They had found loads of cash stacked in piles and a dozen crates full of heroin and cocaine, which was packed in small glassine bags. The drugs were sold through connections in the underworld to the prominent chiefs in the drug burrows, away from the police powerful noses.

The squad bought their crime files from the police. All their criminal records had been erased from all the police records in the republic. They were issued with certificates of good conduct for being law-abiding citizens.

He had all the needed resources to bankroll his political dream. With money, everything was attainable. He was going to buy his way to clinch and to cling to the seat if the first plan failed.

Kamau was declared fit to run for the Ukambane parliamentary seat. He was not a resident of this constituency, but who, worth of living, was going to raise this alarm? The campaigns had been rolled out. Kamau had decided to run as an independent candidate. He had no time to be driven around with numerous rules and regulations

from the party bosses and their boards of management. Simba was the chief campaigner of Kamau, in charge of field operations. He had chosen a team of heavy-set men to accompany Kamau in this mission. Sharon was Kamau's political advisor and chief treasurer.

Kamau was now a proud owner of a helicopter. Whereas other contestants for the parliamentary seats were arriving at the campaign grounds, Kamau was landing. Whoever tried to ask where Kamau campaigning funds came from became a victim of Simba's athletic build men.

Kamau had set up a brewing industry at Masake, a village in Ukambane constituency. This, according to him, would counteract the youth joblessness in the area. He also set up a series of clubs and hotels in several villages and towns in Ukambane. This was the first item in his manifesto and which was now settled.

The campaigns were running smoothly. Every contestant was trying hard to outrun the other. Others went as far as to invite the top performing artists in the republic to entertain their crowds. The crowd was also given clean banknotes as a token for attending the rallies. It was time to eat from these politicians, who would disappear after

getting the votes to the respective offices, only to reappear when the next elections would be knocking.

It was nearing the Elections' Day. Every candidate was now winding up the campaign rallies, giving their best shot, throwing promises to the hungry crowd. Kamau thought of a place to take his campaigns. After sharing ideas with Sharon, all was set ready for action.

The Foot of God church was filled with a congregation that was in hunger for the word of God. They were seeking God's kingdom in spirit and truth. The end times had been prophesied to be near. They were repenting to be at peace with God; they wanted their names to be on the roll call.

“Raba...batu.ro...boo...sissy...yamasuta....yamayao...oo hhh Jehovah. Everyone was speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit had rained abundantly on them. Jesus had remembered them as He had His disciples on the day of Pentecost.

The pastor, a longtime friend of Kamau and also a standard four class dropout like Kamau, was the shepherd of this flock of sheep. He was at the pulpit in golden robes with a large red cross printed at the front.

Kamau and his team used the central door to enter the church. The pastor, Mr. Kibor, surveyed his guests and at once knew that it was his time to be blessed together with his congregation. Mr. Kibor at once recognized Kamau. The sight of him summoned up their childhood memories, which were always full of trouble.

“Praise God, praise God.” The pastor was now spitting out words with renewed energy. The church had gone lively. Blessings were flowing in the air. It was just a matter of time before the heavy clouds of benedictions fell on them. This congregation was waiting for this rain to wash away their earthly problems.

“Today, we are lucky to receive a guest who is also a great friend of mine. Blessed be the Lord for sending his messenger unto us.” The pastor was happy to see that the congregation was pleased and ready to receive this money, throwing guests.

“Today, I am humbled to stand before you children of God. Praise God, I take this opportunity to thank you all for your warm welcome. As you well know, I am contesting for the parliamentary seat of this great constituency. To be short, I

just need your votes. Granted or not?” The joyous shouts from the congregation were enough for an answer.

The church was given a token of two million shillings and a promise of more than three million if Kamau won the elections. It was now remaining one week to the elections’ day. Kamau was not going to stop at anything until he got the winning votes from the people.

It was now clear that Kamau was going to win the election. He was the man to watch now. On the election’s eve, he called all his campaign team to finalize on their victory strategy. They had to make sure that all the loopholes to their victory had been sealed.

The state was now ready to conduct the elections. Everything necessary for the smooth running of the process had been fully facilitated. A tremendous amount of taxpayers’ money had been pumped to the electoral body. It was time for loyal citizens to exercise their democratic rights.

On the elections’ day, people woke up as early as three o’clock to beat the long queues witnessed in the earlier elections. The polling stations were opened untimely, with all the polling staff ready to help voters with the voting

process. The voting process ran on smoothly, with some polling stations receiving a massive turn-out of voters.

In the Ukambane constituency, voters came out in large numbers. This kept Kamau and some of his team smiling as they watched the live event from his mansion. He enjoyed the support of his family from the underground world as they looked upon him as their supreme leader. Kamau had sent some of his men in all the polling stations across Ukambane. They were to make sure Kamau wins the election with or without the votes.

Kamau and his team had to cast their votes at Kamachonjo primary school a few kilometers from his residence. His voting registration had also been done there. He was positively received by his supporters. The voting process came to an end at six o'clock in the evening, and the counting process was rolled at once.

Kamau followed the counting process keenly to make sure all his votes were intact. His men spread all over all the polling stations acted as his satellite. They were to give first-hand information on all the happenings at the polling stations. Their primary role at the polling stations was to

oversee that their employer won the elections with great numbers.

At midnight, the results of the election for the constituencies were out. All the contestants, together with their agents, stayed awake to make sure there were no surprises. They had invested heavily in this election. Some of them had loans amounting to millions of shillings which had been used to finance their candidature.

The tallying center was well guarded. Armed police officers had been stationed at all the entrance and exit points. Everyone entering and leaving the center went through scanning. This was put as a measure to get reliable results. Police dogs were also deployed to sniff out any mischief at the tallying center. Mr. Mutinda, who was the presiding officer, was ready to give out the awaited results. Behind him was his team, who had worked out their bodies to provide the products. The Camera crew was blinding them with their information-hungry camera flashes. Different media houses were covering the live event.

“Ladies and the gentlemen gathered here tonight. I greet you all in the name of our great and peaceful nation. I take this opportunity to thank you all for making this day a

success. I would also like to thank you all for your patience. Without wasting time, allow me to give you the much-awaited results.”The returning officer cleared his throat and looked at the audience before him.

“According to these reliable results in my possession, coming at the first position is Mr...” Before he could add the name to the title, the power went out. There was panic everywhere at the center. The security personnel raised their ears to detect any foul play in the dark.

After about two minutes of waiting, the lights were back, this time with more brightness. “Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your patience. The problem has been fixed, and it is my prayer that it will not occur again.”

The presiding officer looked at the results in his hands. Astonishment was written all over his face, but he quickly concealed it before any camera could catch him. “Allow me to give you the results now. Coming at position one is Mr. Kiluki Ndiema Kamau with 126,578 votes, at the second position is Mr. John Opore Nyakundi with 98,200 votes, at third position is Mrs. Joan Etyang Emoru with 89,247, at fourth position is Mrs. Jane Watiri with 79,265 votes. Because of time, the list will end there, the rest of

the results you will access them from the media and our social platforms.”

“Ladies and gentlemen, thank you once again for your cooperation. These results were well documented in the presence of all the party agents representing their various candidates. Thank you all for maintaining peace and order throughout the process. Congratulations to Mr. Kamau and to the other contestants, this is not the end of the tunnel. Thank you all, and may the almighty God grant you peace and good health. Good night to you all.”

Kamau and his team had bagged the win with a significant margin between them and the runners-up. His field team had not failed him. This called for a big celebration; the winning meant a great deal to them. Kamau was now about to start living his dream. It was now time to spread their wings and soar to greater heights.

Kamau’s victory celebration was cut short by a petition filed by Mr. John Opopo Nyakundi, challenging the results of the election, which he claimed were rigged. This did not come as a surprise to Kamau. He understood how the game was played. The good thing was that he was never short of

ideas to beat his rivals irrespective of their power and abilities. He was now at the top of the food chain.

Kamau sought the services of the most influential lawyers in the republic to defend his results at the law court. Their real work was just to act as puppets in the court. The entire job was left to Kamau and his team. The Electoral body had no option. They had to hire lawyers to defend its results alongside Kamau's legal team.

According to the petitioner, he claimed that the results had been interfered with and were not transparent. He also claimed that there was a blackout on the time of releasing the results, where he believed that the actual effects on the tallying sheet were altered.

The day of the hearing was set. According to the law of the land, the hearing and the court's verdict was to be done in one day; after the evaluation of both pieces of evidence presented in court, the jury had to come up with a lasting verdict.

The courtroom was filled with Kamau's and the plaintiff's loyal supporters. Also present in the court were Kamau's legal team and his agents. Kamau was absent. He was

taking care of unique duties that needed his utmost attention.

The courtroom was covered with silence. Everyone stared at the entrance every now and then. The plaintiff, Mr. John Opore Nyakundi, and his team were being waited for the proceedings to begin. The large clock behind the bench of judges was ticking noisily, waiting for no one.

According to the clock, they had one hour at their disposal to be at the court. People were growing impatient at each second that went by. The jury was seen conversing from time to time. Time was moving fast. The clock's hands were bidding people farewell.

It was time to call off the case. The plaintiff and his team were added another ten minutes, which were also wasted. Kamau was declared the winner by the court. According to the court ruling, the election was democratic; that was why the plaintiff and his team failed to avail themselves in the court.

Kamau was sworn in after two weeks and handed the power to serve his people. He was now Honorable Kiluki Ndiema Kamau, representing the interests of the residents of Ukambane constituency at the National Assembly.

People were currently waiting for the Promised Land they had been told of by Kamau, whom they thought they had elected. Would he deliver home all the things he promised us in his manifesto, or would he behave like his predecessors? These were the questions in peoples' minds awaiting answers. Would they be answered? Only master time would tell.

CHAPTER 7

The former Member of Parliament for Ukambane constituency, Mr. John Opore, and his legal team left his office at seven o'clock in the morning in a motorcade. They were armed with all the evidence they had gathered, which could make him retain his seat. The traffic was moving smoothly. According to this traffic flow, they would reach the court's grounds in one and a half hours. The hearing was to begin at eleven o'clock.

After a twenty minutes' drive, the traffic first became slow then became stable. A trailer ferrying crates of beer had overturned a kilometer away from the court. There was another route to the court through Katambe Avenue. There was news that an accident had occurred along that route too. This meant that it could take hours for the road to be cleared.

Mr. Opore and his team were trapped in the traffic jam. People were getting drunk on the highway, making it hard for the police and the rescue team to access the area in time. Mr. Opore tried all his connections to get out of the jam, but all were unsuccessful. His pilot had gone missing the

previous day so being airlifted was out of the question. He tried calling the court, but there was a network outage.

Kamau was still lost in thought, swiveling lazily in his chair. The telephone ringing on his desk brought him to the present world. He walked out of his elegantly furnished office to attend a board meeting. He congratulated himself on the game well played to get that powerful office. All said and done, he was now living his dream.

Kamau appointed Sharon as his personal assistant and chief advisor, Simba was the head of security. The state gave Kamau five bodyguards and four SUVs for official duties. Kamau had to buy a house from where he could be operating his legal work. Residing at the gang liar would raise eyebrows, and that was the last thing that he wanted, bearing in mind that he was now a public figure.

His house was now in order. It was time to draft a plan on what he wanted to accomplish, either to his people or for personal benefits after being ghost elected. Most of his predecessors had used this office to enrich themselves. He had to choose his path. In his second week in office, he was driven to parliament to attend his first session. He had time

to mingle with the other politicians who welcomed him aboard.

Kamau now had full control of his area of jurisdiction. He was controlling both legal and illegal affairs. He was also serving as the supreme chief of the underworld community. He had called for a mega meeting with his underworld figures to discuss the way forward. Coming from a poor background, Kamau understood what it meant living from hand to mouth. He was not going to abandon these people. He was going to live and work with them. He wished to go down in the white books of history. Despite this, he had the interests of his underworld community at heart. It was a matter of balancing the scales on both sides.

Kamau fired all the people working in the planning and development committee. Most of them had corruption cases awaiting a hearing in the law courts. He replaced some of them with his learned fellows from the underground world. The remaining positions were allocated to the law-abiding and qualified residents.

Kamau spent most of his evenings in the local pub enjoying a beer with his people. They laughed at jokes and played poker. The residents used this chance to air their

grievances, which were booked and promised immediate cause of action.

Within six months in office, there was a primary school standing in the area bearing his name on its signpost. This attracted the eyes of the big political wigs in the republic. A lot of praises were thrown on his side. The time had come for him to venture into deep waters.

Armed with funds from the central government, the underworld, and his personal accounts, Kamau began setting up the second-biggest milling industry in the republic. The local residents were benefiting from the construction as most of the manual work was left to them.

Radiating warmth was built between Kamau and the Prime Minister, Her Excellency Mrs. Neema Johnson; she was impressed by this development-oriented leader. Kamau was invited to the palace to have dinner with the prime minister on several occasions. His constituency was leading in the polls as the most developed in the republic.

Within six months, the industry was ready for launching. The prime minister and other political big wigs were invited for the grand opening; all the roads in the state were

leading to the Ukambane constituency. Those leading in the opposite directions were closed.

All the people had assembled at the industry premises at eleven o'clock. The industry's large launch plaque was covered with the republic's multicolored flag. All eyes were on the prime minister. She moved one step towards the plaque. Kamau's bodyguards went past the congregation, escorting an elderly man in white gumboots with red patches. Strands of white hair from his head could be seen through his torn hat. His clothes were closer to rags. He was given the honor of launching the industry. His name had been embroidered on the plaque in bold letters.

Mzee Wamalwa had been a veteran who had fought for the state's independence from the British colonial power. All the previous regimes had forgotten him. He had sacrificed a lot for the republic, including his family, which was killed while fighting the Whites. Kamau used this chance to remember his services to the republic. His name would live to be recognized by generations to come.

Mzee Wamalwa was given the position of head of operations in the new industry. Other veterans in the region were also awarded jobs while the elderly were entitled to a

monthly fund from the central government, which was following in Kamau's footsteps.

The residents of his constituency were given the first priority to supply their maize to the industry. More youths were employed in the industry to serve in different capacities. The gap between the rich and the poor in this area was narrowing as time went by.

The booming economy in the region had attractive magnetic effects to potential investors. Kamau, however, was not interested in their injections into his already built economy. He wanted to be the sole controller of all the affairs of his region.

Time had come for his underworld crew to spring into the business. Kamau had cautioned them against any attacks on the local residents. Instead, they were protecting the area against potential external attacks. They had been promised their due when the right time struck.

With the mill in full operation, it was now time to shift focus to other businesses. Kamau called a board meeting of his gang members. They had to discuss a business idea he had for them. It was their time to reap from his leadership too. They formulated a plan on which to roll on.

The milling industry needed more maize. According to Kamau, the maize produced in the region and their neighbors' was not enough to keep the mill in its maximum operation. This called for the importation of three hundred metric tons of maize from Mexico, which was the world's largest producer of maize.

Kamau's request was implemented at once by the ministry of agriculture through the directive of the prime minister. Kamau flew to Mexico to supervise the purchase and the loading of the cargo into a ship that was bound to his home country. On his return journey, he boarded the ship ferrying the maize. He had some business to attend to along the way.

They made a stop at Grenada Port-of-Spain in the name of fueling the ship. At the port, another ninety kilograms sacks were carefully loaded onto the boat. The bags had maize labels printed on them in bold red letters like the bags of maize from Mexico. The Sea Monster, as per the name on the ship's belly, was swayed by the enormous waves. The ship waddled through the waves but lived to make its majestic voyage home.

The tax-free cargo arrived at Majimazuri port at 9.00 a.m. The port officials had been ordered to clear the shipment

aboard the Sea Monster without any inspection. This directive from their superiors had to be adhered to without any opposition. The cargo was loaded on trailers ready for transit to the Ukambane constituency.

Kamau had hired a heavily armed security team to facilitate a safe movement of his cargo to the mills. Kamau followed the procession in his helicopter with his head of security and personal assistant. He did not want to leave anything to chance. This procession passed all the security checks along the way without a single wave from the traffic police officers.

The maize sacks were offloaded at the mill's warehouse through the supervision of Kamau, Sharon, and Simba. Fifty bags that had been ferried in a different trailer were put in a particular room because, according to Kamau, they had a high humidity ratio, which needed immediate special attention.

The following day, a bright Wednesday morning, Kamau received a call from the statehouse requesting his presence. A surprise party in his honor had been facilitated by Her Excellency. He was awarded the republic's most coveted award, the Spear of the Republic, by the prime minister.

Mrs. Neema hailed Kamau for his tremendous work in his constituency. She urged all the other leaders to benchmark Kamau.

Everyone was enjoying the cool music from the Zangalewa band while sipping champagne from the goblet-shaped tulip glasses. “Can you take a walk with me?” Before Kamau could answer, the prime minister had taken his hand into hers. “Who can say no to the wishes of Her Excellency?”

“I think it’s time to circumnavigate the world. Are you ready to stretch your legs in another country?” The prime minister stopped to face Kamau. Her sharp, penetrating eyes were boring through Kamau’s calm face. “Yes, madam, I would like to navigate the world.” The prime minister pulled Kamau’s left ear daintily.

“I would like you to represent this republic as its ambassador to the United States; this will be in effect from now. Do we have a deal?” Kamau did a quick calculation in his head. “Thank you, madam Prime Minister for having great confidence in me, for now, I am afraid I can’t take the offer. I still have much to accomplish to the people who elected me. When I am done, I will come running to you.”

“You know where to find me then. She shook hands with Kamau then went to join the elites.

The mill in Ukambane was in production day and night. Maize flour was supplied each day throughout the Republic and the neighboring countries. Inside the mill, there was a room labeled *Special Operations Authorized Personnel Only*. The massive steel doors had a face scanner that was integrated with it. The room was believed to contain the mill’s valuable assets. Only Kamau, Sharon, and Simba had direct access to it.

Kamau’s gang that was working at the mill was scheduled to take the night shift. The night operation took place at the unique operation room. The fifty sacks of maize that Kamau had said needed special attention had been stored in this room.

The fifty bags contained cocaine that needed packaging into small quantities for easy transportation to various regions. This work was supervised by Simba. The mill’s machines were still rumbling to tell the world that maize milling was in progress, producing their much-loved flour. One night they had repackaged twenty sacks of cocaine. All that stock needed transportation the same night.

The cocaine packed in bales labeled as Ugali Finest maize flour was fork-lifted to the mill's trucks. Most of it was bound for importation to various countries. This whole process was being run by the underworld members. The business was carried out immaculately without any apprehension. During the day, the industry was milling, but during the night, it was minting money.

This tax-free night business transmogrified Kamau's underworld into an empire. Kamau engaged in money laundering to get rid of the ever-multiplying legal tender in his safe. Despite being affluent, Kamau led a simple life. He was always dining with the poor and eating from the rich.

Kamau cohered with those in power to his advantage. They would act as his shadow if anything went wrong or when he needed sheltering during his transactions. He used hush-money on those who were hard to get. The playing field had been smoothed for his game; all the players had agreed to play his ever-charming matches. Was he going to carry this bewitching spell with him for long, or would it break at some point?

CHAPTER 8

The family basilica in Ukambane was filled with people from all walks of life. Security in the region was unbreathable. All the barons in the Republic and some from the sister countries were in attendance. Her Excellency, Mrs. Johnson, could not miss this great day. She had arrived prematurely to make sure she did not miss anything. Mrs. Johnson was caught on state cameras welcoming other dignitaries into the basilica.

An army of drones was flying overhead, capturing the moment. People sold their wildest poses to the drones, which caught them without complaint. At 10.30 am, the groomsmen and the bridesmaids were ready for action. The page boys and flower girls were in strategic positions waiting to offer their services.

A procession of sports cars made their way noisily into the church's compound. Their customized number plates announced their owners. The bridegroom, dressed in a white tuxedo suit and brown Oxford pair of shoes, was led into the basilica by his hired parents, Mr. and Mrs. Rotich, and the bride's man. After a half an hour later, the bride

was driven into the compound in a procession of sparkling SUVs.

The bridegroom stepped out of a blue BMW X3; her face was covered in white tulle. The strapless gorgeous bridal gown was richly interwoven with gold; it must have taken the sewer donkey's years to develop this fine product. The ornamental train was carried by two bridesmaids.

The flower girls had spread pink rose petals on the red carpet leading to the basilica. They spiced this up with confetti. The bride's Cuban six inch-heeled shoes downed heavily on the roses' petals, turning them into a pulp along her trail. Her parents held her hands affectionately as they escorted her to the pulpit. They were lead by the bridesmaids who were matching to the tune of *Forever yours*, an athleticism love song playing from the squawk box.

Everyone was clearly bored by the short mass. The congregation had been waiting for the main event of the day. The church's internal environment was color coordinated in rhyme to the wedding theme. The bride's elderly parents gave their daughter to the priest, who later handed her over to the twinkly bridegroom. "Kamau

Ndiema, do you take Sharon Wanjiru as your loyal wedded wife. Will, you.... .” “Yes, I will.” The jubilant husband to be couldn’t wait for the priest to waste his time with his lengthy statement. After the vow exchange, they were declared husband and wife. They signed their marriage certificates then joined their bridal team in cutting the bridecake.

Kamau and his bride danced together to the epithalamium on the bridestake placed for them near the pulpit. Mrs. Johnson, now a great fan of Kamau, joined in the dance to give her congratulatory message to the newly-wed couple. The members of the wedding joined them in making merry.

It was time for the honorable attendants to give their tokens of love to the just married. They were given an assortment of presents from all the angles; the underworld representatives gifted them a brand new Infiniti Q50. Her Excellency bestowed them with two American saddle horses. The presents that Kamau was given on this day would require three trucks to ferry them home. The invites only reception was to take place at the statehouse. This was a great honor to Kamau and Sharon. People were still

wondering how Kamau came to marry Sharon. Their relationship had utterly been in the shadow all along.

Everyone was happy. Kamau had found his right left rib. They had been worried he would die a bachelor because he had shown no interest in marriage. This was after his previous relationship ended, displeasingly leaving him with emotional injuries, which took him an eternity to heal.

Kamau and Sharon left the Republic on a Saturday night. They jetted to Singapore for their honeymoon. Kamau wanted to use this honeymoon period to cement his love bond with her gorgeous, newly-wed wife. This would also give him time to think and plan for his uncertain future. He had to use this time to lay a firm cornerstone.

In Singapore, Sharon was being given a queen's life by Kamau. She was bought expensive and rear jewelry of her choice. She had a tour of the famous Marina Bay and the botanic gardens. Her wardrobe was changed to Singaporean style. Wearing florals, bold stripes, and polka dots blended her well with the locals. The hot and humid climate suited her well.

While Sharon was out in the light and flowy summer dresses making new chat friends, Kamau was out in suits

making business connections with various partners. Most of the partners were crime masterminds with contacts around the globe. They signed binding contracts and vowed to remain in the course.

Now that Kamau had a wife, he had to buy another house to confer with his status. He settled for an architectural fabric that was situated in the posh sides of Ukambane. He did this virtually with his chief of security to surprise Sharon once they got home. After a month of merry-making, Kamau and his wife were now bound to get back home.

Kamau had a myriad of activities that had piled due to his absenteeism. He was also needed to launch projects in his area of jurisdiction. His underground business had limped due to security reasons caused by his absence. Kamau was also briefed that the prime minister had requested his presence once he landed into the state. Kamau felt broken into a thousand pieces by the workload at the hands of a single soul; however, being mule-minded, he was confident that he would accomplish the entire task in record time.

Kamau was in the sea again. His mill and the underground business needed raw materials. He was the right man for this job. The sea was calm; the Sea Monster was sailing peacefully across the Indian Ocean. A school of dolphins had partnered to escort the ship home. Kamau's eyes were lost on a fish-hawk that had made a splendid dive into the sea. It emerged with a well-sized tilapia in its powerful talons; unfortunately, they both fell into the open mouth of a blackfish that came swirling out of the water.

“Sir, we have a situation.” Kamau turned to face the middle-aged, white-uniformed captain, the captain's cold, almond-shaped eyes gave Kamau the much-dreaded message. Coast guard patrol ships had been spotted a half a kilometer away. They were cruising in their direction at top speed. Ten minutes later, ten medium-sized drones fitted with DJI Zenmuse Z30 cameras flew above the Sea Monster. Their every movement was being watched. Four drones were flown into the ship. The ship crew was tied to their bodies by the strange unfolding of events.

Kamau signaled them to be at peace. One of the drones stopped in mid-air near Kamau's face. He could feel the strength of its rotating blades in his face. He smiled and

waved to the blinking cameras attached to its belly, hoping this charm would send it away. All the crew had assembled at the deck to wait for orders from their superiors.

The cool breeze washed their faces with strength and hope. The white coast guard ships surrounded them. The colossal machine guns at the aftermost of their boats pointed at the Sea Monster. Kamau feared the sight of those guns which were threatening to turn them into axial skeletons.

The guards came onboard the Sea Monster through the starboard. The sight of sniffer dogs made Kamau cling to the ship's rails. They were going to turn the boat inside out. A trim-built man approached Kamau. His white coat was laden with medals. "Good afternoon Mr...." "Kamau," Kamau answered and shook the outstretched hand of the officer.

"It's a pleasure meeting you, Mr. Kamau. I am General Ngulam, and these are my boys. We are inspecting all the ships coming into the state due to increased drug trafficking through this water channel. Wait for a second; are you that Member of Parliament being sung about by all the tongues back home? Yes, you are." The general called

his men back to their ships. He apologized to Kamau for the delay.

The guards had reached the compartment holding the drugs. The general's whistle had saved Kamau and his crew hefty jail terms and fines. The Bloodhounds looked at Kamau with crafty eyes as they were being led away. He was lucky his title and reputation had saved him and his battalion.

The storm was not over; it was just the beginning. Immediately the coast guards' ships were swallowed into the horizon; a sailor in Kamau's boat on the watch spotted a large boat approaching them from the back at high speed. The ship looked piratical. He raised the alarm to alert the other crew members.

Kamau could make out the much-dreaded Jolly Roger flying at full mast. He handed the curved, ivory binoculars to the captain to have a share of the horrifying view. The assortment of guns he was carrying in the ship from his friends in Singapore was no match for the wreck hungry pirates' cannons exhibited at the hull of their ship. Their container ship speed was no match for the pirates' swift boat. The flight was a utopian project.

Raising the white flag was senseless to the hell hounds. The pirates' ship drew close and floated close to theirs. Kamau's crew was shaking. To most of them, this was their first encounter with the treasure hunters. Kamau had no time to calm them as he always did. The pirates who were on the deck were armed with AK-47 except one of them who, by judging, was their leader.

Kamau waved at the pirates who laughed at him in return. Their leader came aboard the Sea Monster, accompanied by three men. "*Ahoy, me hearties!*" The pirates' leader shouted at the scared crew before him. Their rich Arab scent was making Kamau sick; the air was unbreathable. They were chocking in their bodies.

"*Avast Ye*, we want to take all the cargo in this ship, throw all of you overboard, then sink this ship. Are you with me? Kamau had no time to answer. The leader called for his men to take charge of Kamau's ship. All the crew was lying with their faces on the deck in a collinear. All the guns were pointing at Kamau, who had refused to go down. They were shouting furiously at Kamau in Arabic. He was ready to go down trying, the saying you can't make an omelet

without breaking a few eggs, kept him welded on the wooden deck.

Kamau could not be shaken by their noises. He had been in these dying situations before, which had hardened him in the process. The pirates' leader approached him, which calmed his bloodthirsty crew. He took a walk with Kamau and headed to one of the cabins. The other pirates were enjoying a treat of marijuana and khat. The belching of smoke from their chimneys was hurting the saints lying on the deck.

After a half an hour of closed doors meeting with Kamau, the pirates' leader called his men to embark on their ship. "*All hand hoy!*" The pirates started firing in the sky while singing an Arabic song. The pirates' ship named Torture sailed away on its hunting route. The black flag with a skull and crossed bones was flying again majestically, waving them goodbye.

Nobody knew what Kamau had used to lure the pirates away. They were a terror to most sailors and their ships. Nobody dared to look them in the eyes, let alone having a chat with them. He had managed to excel where men of

high altitude had fallen. Kamau possessed high magnetic forces which most autocrats could not stand to repel.

Kamau was not ready for another surprise encounter. This was enough for the day. He called Simba to scout the harbor for any impending danger. The ordeal had scared most of the crew. Some of them had threatened to relinquish their jobs once they anchored at the port. Kamau could not let this happen. Most of them had bountiful information about his business. He would rather annihilate them than seeing them walk away.

The Sea Monster set anchor at the Majimazuri port at 3:30 p.m. He supervised the offloading of the merchandise from the ship and the loading to the trucks. He left Simba and his team in charge of the roll-on. He had a pressing issue at hand to attend to.

CHAPTER 9

Kamau arrived home at 11:20 p.m. He felt like a stranger in his home; four weeks had passed without him stepping in this house. Sharon was not in the living room. The place looked lifeless. He went to their bedroom and found Sharon lying at the edge of the bed. Her pretty face was covered with expired tears; he felt sorry for her. Kamau took her cold body into his arms. He was going to give her warmth until she could not take it any further, He was going to pay back all the lost time in a single night. Sharon had started calling out Kamau's name sweetly after ten minutes of his arrival.

He had vowed to spend the following day with Sharon. To a man of Kamau's caliber, this was just a dream. At around 9:25, he received an alarming phone call from Simba, which he could not ignore. He had a prison term explaining it to Sharon after the heavenly promises he had made to her earlier.

Kamau arrived at the mill to find police and the local residents swarming the place. The air was filled with horror. He was pulled away from the crowd by Simba, who was fuming. Simba was trying to say something through

clenched teeth, but he found it hard to spill out the words. Kamau, who had never seen Simba in such a rage, knew they must be in real trouble.

After much struggle, Kamau learned from Simba that two male workers who served as cleaners in the mill had stumbled upon a secret passageway leading to their underground vault, which had unpacked cocaine and a stash of money in dollars. They had filled their pockets with around two kilograms of the drug and a few notes. On their way out, the security motion sensors which had been switched off during their entrance, then on later by Simba, who was testing their abilities, identified them as intruders and activated the laser beams. They were cracked open by the rays into pieces, coloring the adjoining walls with their blood.

Their blue murder after seeing the killer beams had attracted another cleaner, Miss. Okwato, who called the police straightaway. The police found their body parts, the drugs and notes, which were in pieces too. The good part was that the passage had sealed itself automatically behind them. The worst part had been to come up with a theory to explain the situation to the police.

Kamau had no time to digest what he had been told. Two policemen were interested in getting some answers from him, being the head of the mill. The sight of two black body bags and the plastic evidence bag lying at the main entrance of the mill dawned heavily on him that things had gone south. “What am I going to tell the police?” This question in Kamau’s head needed an urgent answer. He whispered something to Simba quickly then turned to face the policemen.

“Are you honorable, Kamau, the CEO of this mill?” “Yes, I am officers, how may I help you?” Kamau engaged them calmly. He was sure the police would end up with nothing. “Sir, we would like to get a statement from you; concerning the death of two people an hour ago in this mill.”

“It is so unfortunate that two law-abiding citizens lost their lives in this mill. That is a big blow to us.” Kamau's statement was met with wild gazes from the officers. He was playing dumb to win the police. “We were told you have the keys to the control room bearing the recordings of this mill’s camera footage.” Without answering, he motioned the police to follow him.

The needed footage showed two men being cut by laser beams. One of the officers zoomed in on a still from the footage that had their faces before meeting their death. Kamau recognized them at once. “Do you recognize any of them, sir?” Kamau leaned closer to the screen. He scanned their faces, then shook his head. “I don’t think I have ever seen them in this mill or its surroundings.” The footage showed them trying to enter a door before being torn to pieces.

The officers searched the deceased footage from other areas, including the entrance, but they were clean. Kamau was happy that Simba had played his part well. Even the detectives from Scotland Yard couldn’t put the pieces together. The cleaning had been done well without leaving any trace. The police interrogated a dozen workers in the mill, but none could make out the two from those printed photos.

At sundown of that day, away from the prying eyes of the other mill workers, the local residents, and the police, Kamau and his gang packed the drugs and the stash of money into the branded flour packets. They were loaded with other bales of flour into trucks; he had sent out some

of his men to scout the area before the transportation process. The cargo was moved into a safe house out of Ukambane.

Mr. Opopo, who had lost the elections unceremoniously to Kamau, was not happy with the police investigations. He requested for fresh investigations. The police swarmed the mill once again. They searched each and every room for any suspicious products. In the Special Operations room, the police found maize flour market research and lab materials for checking the quality of their maize flour. They were also shown the mill's security system, which impressed the police force.

A week later, the police report on the death of the two people at the mill indicated that the deceased, whose pieces were lying in the public morgue, had been sent by forces against the achievements of Mr. Kamau to tarnish his name and that of the mill. The police in their report also indicated that they were investigating who was behind the attack. They urged the public to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activity. Kamau received commendations from the police due to his cutting-edge security system. He was

awarded tenders by banks, companies, and big business entities to install the security system on their premises.

Mr. Opore and his associates were put behind bars for aggression and possession of illegal drugs. The police believed they were responsible for the earlier happenings at the mill. He realized that Kamau was well set in the corridors of power, and nothing would stop him from achieving what he desired. The charges against them were enough to keep them in prison for eternity. Kamau came to his rescue, but he had to promise to go underground.

For the first time, Kamau cursed himself for having married. Sharon needed his hard to get attention. She was not the kind of woman to be glossed over; her presence in Kamau's life had to be felt by all. Kamau was put under house arrest for two days by Sharon. She switched off all the phones and hid them. It was time to have her husband all to herself. He had to subdue to her since he was never there for her. The idea of letting her be a housewife was chewing him up now.

Kamau had to anchor his underground business network to buy time for the air that was still hot. He appointed Sharon as the new CEO of the mill to divert his attention

somewhere else. He still declined the offer of being an ambassador. His sheep would be a lost course without him.

Even though the dreamer was now living his dream, something was making him restless. He had a deep meditation with his body and, in so doing, come out with results. The spirit of his fallen leader and mentor was haunting him. He had to do something to appease his spirit. There was one way of accomplishing this, but it wasn't like taking a short walk and back.

Kamau assembled the best men in his arsenal for the job. All the necessary materials were loaded into a mini-truck. This time they were going to strike during the day. They arrived at the National Bank at 1:30 p.m. The bank's branch manager alighted from his yellow Volkswagen Beetle and headed to the bank from his lunch break.

The automatic glass-door leading to his office slid open on a snap of his fingers. Instead of heading to his office, he summoned his assistant.

“We will be transporting eight million dollars to the headquarters at 2: 00 p.m. today.” “But sir, we have no official communication from the headquarters.” The assistant was complaining in grim awestruck. “I just

received a pressing call from the CEO saying that he needed the money for auditing and preparing a financial report urgently needed by the Central Bank.” With this assurance from the manager, he fell into line.

The assistant manager stepped forward and keyed in his combinations codes. The manager, Mr. Muriuki, added his combination codes too. The thick, oval, steel vault door spun open revealing bales of affluent notes in different currencies covered in transparent polythene bags. Four men carrying large black bags were escorted by two armed policemen into the vault.

The four men from Banks Securities Transportation Agency, as per the name tags hanging from their necks, started loading the cash into their bags. After signing all the relevant documents, they were cleared to leave the bank—the B.S.T.A van sped off from the National Bank at 2:30 p.m. en route to the headquarters in Nyake town, twelve kilometers away. Mr. Muriuki followed the van in his Beetle to make sure it had reached its destination.

The mission was completed without any casualties. It would take the bank some hours to know they had been played. By that time, Kamau and his disciples would have

vanished from the police radar. The real Mr. Muriuki was a blindfolded prisoner in Kamau's car. He was destined to be dumped out of town together with his car.

Simba, who had done the impersonation, had hammered it away. It had taken him only thirty minutes to master Mr. Muriuki's voice and his walking style. His body had to go through some transformations to match that of Mr. Muriuki. The false face he was wearing made him the perfect duplicate of Mr. Muriuki's body. Even the gloves he was wearing could not give him away. "Sir, this came in for you after you left for lunch." Simba could still hear the enticing voice of the alluring secretary at the bank still ringing in his head. He vowed to look for her later. If she was married, he swore to kill her husband. He remembered the letter and tore it open with his free hand.

The letter was from the head office, felicitating Mr. Muriuki of the development at the bank. According to the letter, the bank-depositor relations were at its peak. Satisfied customers had given positive feedback about his bank. This would have led to promotion on his side. The thunderclap news that was on the way would smash out their bank-addictive customers. Their songs will turn into

that of baying for his blood after leaving them with ugly wounds.

The spirit of Cobra was now on a friendly footing with Kamau. He had accomplished his last wish. A hummingbird was fluttering outside his car window. He took this as a sign from Cobra's spirit, complimenting him. "May his soul rest in eternal peace." These words rejuvenated his body; he was finally at peace with his heart. The smile spread across his contempt face told all that the people's honorable was happy.

Kamau and Sharon were at the statehouse enjoying dinner with the prime minister and other top government officials when the antiseptic bank robbery hit the headlines. The bank's manager was shown being pulled out of the boot of his Beetle by the medical team, two hours after the robbery. His mouth and the upper part of the white shirt he was wearing were covered in blood. At the bank, people were holding a demonstration demanding the bank management to give them their money. Most of them who were interviewed by the press were calling upon the government to intervene.

“I have been saving my money earned from washing people’s clothes so that I could pay for the mortuary bill where my son’s body is rotting and also pay fees for my daughter who has stayed at home for two years and my money is now gone.” The wailing of this woman gripped Kamau so tightly that Sharon had to wipe his tears and add a pat to his back. Kamau would later visit that woman and take care of all her bills. He also bought her a new house and started a business to benefit her whole village. This act, coupled with others, would earn him the much-coveted Universal Leaders award.

Most of the shareholders and big depositors at the National Bank were politicians and well-placed people. Due to their status, the cabinet secretary of State for Internal Affairs professor Yusuf Halali and the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Jonathan Mawe, were under pressure to find the culprits behind the robbery. All the possible measures were put in place to find the lost money and apprehending the suspects. The taxpayers’ money was used to hire FBI agents to boost up the investigations.

Kamau, through the underground network and the dark web, had managed to send three million dollars to his

friends in Singapore for safekeeping. He awarded his gang two million dollars with a promise of more when the investigations had been terminated with nothing tangible. Two million dollars would be used as an acquaintance to the pirates for safe passage during his previous and future voyages. The remaining amount would be used to feed some of the poor citizens across the state. Kamau was happy to steal from the rich to feed the poor.

The state had invested heavily in the investigations. The public had started losing faith in the state's security organ. They had to be given something to cool them down. Professor Halali and Mr. Mawe had eventually found something to throw at the public. The media was called to cover the live event.

CHAPTER 10

The courtroom was filled with an audience starving for justice. The jury in black robes and perukes perched on their bald heads was already on its bench. The witness stand was occupied by angry-looking citizens. The clerk and the court reporter were already in their positions, ready to offer their services. The bailiff, a strong young man, stood at ease at the courtroom's entrance. At the counsel table sat the defendant's powerful advocates. The prosecutor who losing a case was not his thing stood Close to the jury box.

Kamau and other politicians were in the spectators' seating waiting for justice to be administered. At the dock, Mr. Muriuki stood in handcuffs. According to the high-ticket investigations, he had a case to answer. Many people had requested to be friends of the court. The allegations against him were enough to send him to prison even without a hearing.

Some bloggers had used Mr. Muriuki's camera footage on the bank robbery to make a clip that had been aired on all social media platforms and media houses. He was starring in his own movie. Being in police custody had saved his

life as hundreds of citizens wanted a share of his blood. The acting bank manager's clip had many views on youtube than the state's channel.

The charges against him were read clearly and boldly. Mr. Muriuki turned to look at the spectators for encouragement. Their eyes had already sentenced him. His only hope was on the jury, where he now focused his eyes expecting a miracle. His advocates sang their well written defensive songs to the sleepy occupants of the courtroom, who were waiting for the jury's verdict to alarm them up.

This was the most straightforward case the jury had ever presided over due to the availability of clear and enough evidence against the defendant. "According to the strong evidence presented in this court, Mr. Muriuki is found guilty of all the charges. This calls for harsh charges against him." The head judge paused to look at the now alert spectators.

"The accused is a wealthy fellow, his property will be auctioned, and his accounts will be drained to pay part of the stolen money. To add to that, the court sentences you to thirty years in prison, which can be reduced to twenty, that is, if you tell the court where the stolen money is." The

accused was given three minutes to decide on the number of years that were suitable for him. The accused watched the awful spectators with bowed heads signing his death warrant. Being a staunch Christian, he asked God to forgive them of their earthly desires. The buck-toothed officer beside him was the lone smiling being in the courtroom. Kamau took out his phone and dialed a number.

The head judge stood armed with the gavel and examined the spectators; he would fulfill their desires. He looked at the sound block then raised the gavel. The spectators waited for the mating of the gavel and sound block from the cradle to the grave. His eyes revolted at the sight of the figure, walking into the silent courtroom. The gavel came out of his grip, bounced off the table, then flew to squash his toes.

The spectators turned their gaze towards the doorway. Mr. Muriuki saw it as a miracle that had been broadcasted to pull him out of the fire. God had sent an angel to his rescue; his hallucinating eyes could see an angelic figure floating in the air towards the jury. The head judge eyes' had reached their maximum expansion point. He remembered

having seen the woman before him somewhere. The bailiff was curled at the door, unable to move.

All the eyes were boring into her, the short off-the-shoulder dress left men drooling. The diamond-shaped pendant hanging from her necklace rested comfortably at the extreme cleavage. Her red plastered lips moved elegantly to pave the way for a killer smile. The head judge remembered being with this woman two days ago in a posh lodging down-town. He remembered having a feast on her bell-shaped breasts. Had she come to tell the court how they had spent together a night filled with pleasures of the flesh or to demand her money which he ran away without paying?

“Does his lordship want another free round now, or shall we do it later at our usual spot? The judge’s gaze fell on his red-faced wife seating on the front bench. The words were still echoing in the room. The look from her wife sent a fainting spirit to his body. It took the other three judges ten minutes to bring him back to the land of the living. The member of the demi-monde handed the court’s clerk a compact disk. She smooched the head judge’s wife on the forehead leaving the image of her lips there. She faced the

jury, took three steps backward, gave a curtsy, then marched out of the courtroom humming.

Large screens mounted on the court's walls showed Mr. Muriuki having lunch at the five-star Royal Hotel. He paid his bill and headed to his Beetle. Two men whose faces had been blurred approached him. He accompanied them to a waiting car after being shown something from their coats' inner pockets. A red motorbike with a passenger pulled over next to the Beetle. The passenger who resembled and dressed like Mr. Muriuki got into the beetle and drove off. The other car with Mr. Muriuki drove in the opposite direction. The car was driven to an abandoned road in the outskirts of town. Mr. Muriuki was heaved out of the car. He was asked the bank's vault combination codes, but he didn't bulge. His right canine tooth was pulled out with pliers. He trumpeted out the codes at free will.

Mr. Muriuki's assailants conversed something among themselves. Two of them, now wearing masks, moved closer to him. "Thank you for your service. You can now say your last prayer, also in your prayers, ask God to forgive us, will you?" The horror-filled Mr. Muriuki nodded as his mouth was heavy and swollen. Two gun

barrels were squeezed on his forehead. He closed his eyes, said the last prayer, then waited for bullets to crack open his head.

“Spare his soul; he is a good man. He has a beautiful wife and a fine daughter to return home to. Go home and make love to your wife while you are still available.” Mr. Muriuki turned to face the masked man who had at least encouraged him to live on. He went down on his knees and raised his hands in supplication. He was knocked unconscious from behind. A van and his Beetle were driven to the scene. A twin of Mr. Muriuki came out of the beetle and hugged his people. Mr. Muriuki’s limp body was tied into a ball using sisal ropes. He was dumped into the trunk of his Beetle. The mechanical voiced assailants drove off, leaving the Beetle and it’s occupant behind.

“Thank you all for watching.” After these electronic words from the screens, they went off. Tears of joy washed Mr. Muriuki's face. His innocence had been proven. He remembered the verse from Isaiah 54:17, read to him by his pastor, who came calling when he was in remand. The head judge, now full of energy, stood up armed again with the gavel. He had to strike it several times on the sound

block to draw the court into order. Angry spectators had started revolting. From the latest evidence, it was now clear that their money had vanished. They were finding it difficult to swallow the bitter truth. The man they had already killed in their hearts and minds was now a lively man waiting for the final whistle to join his family.

“According to the new evidence presented in this court, I find that the accused has no case to answer. With all the power bestowed upon me by this court, I acquit Mr. Muriuki of all the charges against him. Due to the physical and emotional suffering of Mr. Muriuki caused by this case, I order the government to pay him a fine of five million shillings to be paid in cash before the end of this week. On behalf of this court, I apologize for all the suffering caused to the accused. To my dear wife, I am deeply sorry for what I did; please forgive me. I love you so much. I will make it up to you.” The judge hit the sound block, and the jury left the courtroom to their chambers.

Outside the court, people were lamenting. It was hard to live with the revelation that they had parted ways with their money. The government would offer its condolences to them and a bag of promises that it would do whatever it

takes to find their money. Three citizens committed suicide that day, with more promising to do the same.

Kamau smiled all the way home that day. He was happy that the money which had been stolen from the public by politicians and well-connected citizens would finally find its way back to the pockets of the deserving citizens. The game plan had been changed in favor of the poor; now, it was the prey hunting the predator.

That night, for the first since their wedding, Kamau found himself idolizing the curvy body of Sharon. She was lying on the bed on her back; her pink, transparent sleeping dress exhibiting the heart-shaped hips was folded above her knees; Kamau, who was in a pair of shorts, lay by her side admiring the work of God's hands beside him. Sharon was faking sleep to give her husband time to admire her curvaceous body; through her partial closed eyes, she could see Kamau's lit face; this rose up her spirits; she couldn't remember the last time they had made satisfying love. This particular night she was certain Kamau would not let her down.

Kamau and Sharon were being chased down an alley by three masked men. The gibbous moon was partly covered

with a cloud. The alley was full of building stones, which slowed down their speed. The bullets that went past their heads from time to time gave them the energy to flee from their assailants. Sharon, who was pregnant, was finding it hard to breathe. She could not take it; she stopped and went on her knees due to fatigue. She could feel the baby kicking in the womb; she smiled calmly despite the glaring danger.

Kamau tried bringing Sharon to her feet, but his efforts were met with a rebellion. Kamau too went on his knees in front of Sharon and flung his hands around her waist, he tried lifting her up, but her weight was unbearable. The attackers caught up with them. Kamau was neck-lifted into the air and thrown a few inches from Sharon. One of the masked men knelt before Sharon and kissed her on her quivering lips. He stood up and moved to her back; he fired his gun at the back of Sharon's head, her brains splattered on Kamau's face, and some in his open mouth, screaming, he took the lifeless body of his wife into his arms.

Sharon was choking in her sleep, she woke up to find herself wrapped up in her husband's left arm, her face was pasted on Kamau's chest, Kamau who was holding Sharon by her neck using the other free hand while on his knees,

had to be hit severally on his back before he could wake up and let her loose. Kamau woke up in shock; the wild look from her wife made him start apologizing at once; when Sharon had calmed down, he staggered to the bathroom to wash his face.

Remembering that he had almost killed Sharon in her sleep, he cursed himself and vowed that he was not going to bed again. Kamau was about to look himself in the crescent-shaped wall mounted mirror when he heard some movement outside; he peeped out through the half-opened bathroom window. Through the help of the security light, he saw Jimmy, his newly acquired dog, chasing a butterfly. “What a dumb dog!” He smiled to himself and was about to leave the bathroom when he heard the noises again, this time it was loud.

Kamau went to their room and dressed up, he took his pistol from the drawers and silenced it, and Sharon was frightened by this action, remembering that the man holding a gun now had almost killed her earlier on. Kamau eased the tension by kissing her and explaining the situation to her.

Outside the main door to the house, Kamau saw Jimmy still chasing the butterfly; he found this strange. Jimmy, being a trained dog, was not known to act crazily. He was alarmed; something was going on in the compound. Finding nothing suspicious, he went back into the house. The door to their bedroom was wide open. He remembered when leaving the room, he had closed it behind him. He concluded that Sharon might have gone to the bathroom and forgot to shut the door as it was their norm.

Kamau, having read some romantic ideas from the Daily Chronicles, a locally published magazine, now wanted to put the ideas into action. He glided stealthily past the open door to the bathroom. His gun was tucked in his pair of trousers so that it could not ruin the romantic move. He wanted to creep to where she was, hold her in his arms, and unleash a warm kiss to her lips, then spice it with the words “I love you my nutter butter.” Kamau opened the door, sneaked in, and shut it silently with his right foot.

He could feel the empty room laughing at him with his amorous idea. After cursing himself bitterly, he closed the door and ran to their bed-chamber. Two M16 were pointed at his swirling head; his wife, who was shaking on the bed,

was also being held at gunpoint. His pistol was no match for the guns of the three masked men dressed in long black coats. Before he could contemplate on the successive turn of events, gunshots raked the air. Kamau fell, banging his head on the marble laden floor.

CHAPTER 11

Panic had spread its roots deeply up to the core of the gang's heart. They were now like chicks in an open field without their guardian mother. Some members of the gang had fled, in fear of being arrested or gunned down by the police or other gangs; now that Kamau, their leader, was unavailable. Simba had an uphill task in calming down the remaining members. Most of their off-book operations had to be halted for fear of exposure, now that some of their connections and protection in both the underworld and the standard field had vanished with Kamau's absence.

The mill's operation had not been affected; however, only maize flour was leaving the mill. This was a big blow to their underworld business, as most of their clients had to look for other drug connections. Most of Kamau's competitors whom he had driven to their burrows were now backing to business, which was now booming due to increased demand and fewer suppliers in the market. With Kamau's absence, the mill had a daily check-up from the police and the quality assurance officers.

The Nyake General and Referral hospital was heavily guarded; police officers and sniffer dogs had been stationed

in all entrance and exit points. Those entering and leaving the premises underwent thorough scanning. All vehicles were parked outside the hospital premises except the ambulances that were bringing in patients.

Kamau's eyes were heavy, he tried opening them, but the eyelids could not bulge. His head was aching; he could feel immense pain circulating through his head. He tried to move his hands, but they betrayed him. "Honey bunny." Kamau could hear the sweet voice, but he could not tell where it was coming from. Through his now half-opened eyes, he saw blurry images of moving figures in white clothing. Two of the figures were leaning closer to him.

Kamau gave out an approving smile. "God is truly faithful and forgiving, after all the sins I have committed throughout my life, I have been welcomed to His home by beautiful angels. I am going to hug Jesus and have a glass of wine with Him." Kamau assured himself. The assurance he had of meeting Jesus; gave him the power to fully open his eyes. Kamau's eyes grazed around the room with the hope of catching a glimpse of Jesus. The sight of sickly painted walls and the EKG machine pervading the room told him that this was not Abraham's bosom. He got angry

and shut his eyes. He called for a meeting with his mind to get answers on what he was doing in such a place. His head began to swirl; his memory was building up bit by bit, but with it came intense aching.

“Honey, honey.” Kamau was familiar with that voice that was spitting sweet words. He opened his eyes to an alluring smile from Sharon. He pulled her closer to him and gave her a long-elevated kiss on her dry lips. Kamau put his arms around Sharon and plastered her on his bosom. “I thought I had lost you, Love, I am so happy to see you alive.” Kamau held her tightly until their bodies became one. Sharon could feel her newly braided hair being wet to the scalp by Kamau’s tears. Her eyes too were brimmed with affectionate tears; she was glad her husband had made it out of the intensive care unit.

Kamau was discharged from the hospital after showing significant improvement. His home was fitted with the latest security technology in town. The state, having idolized its son Kamau, went the extra mile of hiring a private security firm to his disposal. Only close relatives, whom he never had, political figures, business associates, and close friends were allowed to visit him and Sharon.

The police were still investigating the people behind the couples' attempted assassination. According to their investigations, the attempt to end their lives was from well-placed people in the society. Kamau knew that the police investigations would take long or, moreover, yield nothing. He hired private detectives from Scotland Yard and three FBI agents to bind the pieces together in the shortest time possible.

Kamau was still unaware of how he was still alive. What he had managed to remember was hearing gunshots then going down. Sharon, who had remained alive during the assault, had been waiting for the right moment to feed him the life-saving information. The other characters in the piece of information were Simba and his pack, but since they were preoccupied elsewhere, it fell solely on her to tell tales.

On Tuesday morning, Kamau was sitting at his backyard, affording the comforting warmth of the virgin sun. He was enjoying the sight of birds victimizing his orchards. He remembered Matthew 6:26, which had been read to him on his hospital bed by pastor Kibor. "So, God has decided to feed His hungry birds on my fine orchard." He laughed at

his idiotic thought and thanked God for keeping him and Sharon alive. Carrying a glass bowl full of popcorns, Sharon came and sat on Kamau's sturdy lap. She half-filled her mouth with popcorn, slightly chewed them, then emptied all the contents of her mouth into Kamau's, who was expecting a kiss instead of her mouth's contents. They laughed and kissed passionately then fed each other handfuls of popcorns while throwing some to a dole of diamond doves roaming the backyard for breakfast.

“That night before you went down, the room was abounded with your scream; I can still hear your scream ringing in my ears. Simba and his men had come to brief you that late night on the new business strategies since you were hard to be seen during the day. They found the gate slightly open, getting in, through the help of their flashlights, since the security lights had been switched off by the assailants; they traced several footprints on the dewed lawn leading into the house, then up the stairs to our bedroom. They came in through the open door and struck down the assassins. When the gunshots volleyed at the attackers, you thought you were the one hit, become unconscious, and smashed your head on the floor.” Sharon finished her story by ardently punching Kamau's head, got up on her heels, and Kamau

chased her into the house where they made love after a month of dry spell.

Kamau was now backing in business after full recovery. He had a closed-door meeting with the Prime Minister early Monday morning and later had lunch with some of the political bigwigs who promised to throw him a party for defying death's wish. In the afternoon, together with Sharon, they launched several programs to help women and the youth in Ukambane constituency and jerked his baby projects that had stalled due to his absence.

On Thursday morning, the mill workers found Kamau inspecting what they had achieved in his absentia. Simba, who had acted as the mill's CEO on behalf of Sharon, came running and embraced Kamau tightly with his powerful arms, almost breaking his ribs. The unbreakable bond of the S.S.K squad was still flowing in their blood. After exchanging pleasantries, Kamau was briefed on the working condition of the mill and their personal business.

That night, Kamau met his underworld brothers and sisters to appreciate them for saving his life and Sharon's, furthermore, to discuss on how to get their products back in the market. He lauded them for remaining loyal to the

course during those trying times. Those who had left the pack, according to Kamau, had to either return or risk being silenced. He threw honeyed words on Simba for keeping the gang together. Time had come to sharpen iron with iron.

That same night at 11:30 pm, Kamau, Simba, and some strong men from the gang embarked on a journey to clean and claim their drugs' market and territory from the invaders. The time had come for them to make their hands dirty. This time though, to have a level field in the drugs market, they were not going to drive their competitors to their burrows; they would eliminate or force them to surrender and join their gang.

To remain as a monopoly in the market, the people's honorable bought the regional commander of police. His other duty was to ensure that Kamau's products in the mill and when in transit were never inspected by any agency, whether governmental or private. His crew was also to be untouched and ran outside the books or declared as ghosts.

After a fortnight, Kamau was handed two files, one by the FBI and the other by the Scotland Yard detectives. They had managed to pull the assigned job in record time after

being promised hefty cheques by Kamau. The local police were still sniffing around for pieces of evidence to piece together. They were far from coming up with something concrete.

Kamau handed over the confidential files to Simba without even going through them. “Those files contain reports of our attempted assassinations and the culprits behind it, check if the reports match; then within two weeks, bring me the names of the culprits and the best course of action to take against them because we must retaliate before they throw out their second blow.” Simba, who had never seen his self-proclaimed brother serious like this before, knew better than to argue. “Yes, brother, it will be ready by then.” They saluted each other, then Simba left Kamau’s presence. Kamau had gone through a lot; he was not yet ready to poison his head with the names of his assassins.

The mill was back again on its feet, in full operation, minting enough money from the *milling* of flour and drugs. Despite this, Kamau lived a low-profile life. Through the cash flow from the mill, he eradicated poverty from his constituency and also stretched his hands to their neighbors. Kamau was now using his political seat to

protect his business and serve the people who never voted him to represent them. Kamau understood the fact that if everyone had a satisfied stomach, his business operations would face fewer troubles.

Honorable Kamau gave his area of jurisdiction a new face. This was made possible by the numerous completed projects and state of the art infrastructure. The state reciprocated to this by proposing to make Ukambane the capital city. Still, Kamau was not ready to have more people prying their eyes to his business or his creation. His political achievements were also able to attract international eyes.

Kamau was nominated to the Universal Leaders Awards, the most coveted award in the political world. He was the only nominee from the African continent to make it to the awards hosted in the United States. Sharon and Simba accompanied him to the glamorous red-carpet event, He received an accolade for outstanding government service and poverty eradication. He exchanged contacts with the political heavyweights and potential investors, and business moguls in all the business sectors, both legal and illegal. Being the home's government messenger to the

overseas, he had some contract documents to be signed by various heads of state.

Kamau's fame had earned him more foes than friends; he had to look at his steps and over his shoulders or risk elimination. On his return journey, he did not board the state's luxurious private jet that he had been provided. He had to source for raw materials for his mill on the way home. When Sharon and Simba landed at the Neema Johnson Airport, they saw a blue Mercedes Brabus G-wagon, which had no plates coming towards them. It stopped abruptly, turned, and sped off from the Airport. Simba phoned Kamau at once and congratulated him on making a wise decision by refusing to board the plane; otherwise, he would have been assassinated or kidnapped. His death warrant had been issued by several people. Kamau and his men were now forced prematurely into the hunting grounds.

When Kamau landed in the state, he briefed Mrs. Johnson and other government officials on his overseas tour. When he was done feeding them, he went home, where Simba presented him with the files containing the names of the assassins, the person behind it, and the course plan of

action. Kamau, for the first, timed opened the files. The contents of the files from the FBI agents and the Scotland Yard detectives were the same. This meant that the report was accurate without any biases. “After paying this person to curl up and forget about politics, he still wants to be in the game by eliminating me.” Kamau stood up, picked the table in front of him, and smashed it on the wall. He picked up the file containing the remedies for his troubles. The report lighted him up; he looked up at Simba and, for the millionth time, admired his expertise in problem-solving techniques. “Thank you, Simba, this will correctly work. They nodded at each other. “The people’s honorable, let’s get our hands dirty.

A white dusted Ranger Rover Velar drove into the Executive Car Wash. It was parked at its usual place. A hulking driver in a black suit and green felt stepped out of the car and handed the keys to a waiting car wash attendant; the attendant parked the car at his place of choice at an elevated shade for easier scrubbing. The driver sat outside the car wash office. From the way he was swaying his phone, it was evident that he was locked in a game.

Within no time, the car was back to its original color; the driver, whom the attendants referred to as Peter, paid for the service and headed to his car. He found the car's back doors open; this was strange because a moment ago, they had appeared shut; he was about to survey the back seats when he got a call. "Hello, Boss, am on my way, yes, give me twenty minutes, ok sir" The car rumbled out of the car wash at top speed, all its windows were shut to the top.

The car had a rich strawberry smell emanating from the back seat. "Those poor attendants must have wasted lots of their sweet detergent in my car. He gave out a chuckle and turned on the stereo. The car was pulled over at the Royal Executive hotel, where Mr. Opore and his family were having lunch; the family left the hotel under the surveillance of three bodyguards and headed to the humming Range Rover. Another car, a blue Cadillac CT4-V, pulled over in front of the Range Rover. "I will board the Range with my family and one guard, the rest of you make yourselves comfortable in the other car.

Before they could board their respective vehicles, an ice cream vendor came towards them. "Sweet ice, sweet ice, grab one, and ice the heat away in one lick." Hermione, Mr.

Opore's youngest daughter, without warning, left her mother's hand and ran to the vendor. "I am in a hurry, one guard to stay with my wife and daughter, the rest hope in the car." There was an empty 300ml spray bottle of Concept Car Perfume and a box of Cuban cigars. "I will have the cigars, you can keep the bottle." Mr. Opore was handed the box of cigars, and the perfume bottle was thrown out of the car. Peter was still wondering how those goods got into the car when his head was showered with a wad of notes. "Thank you for the cigars; you really know my taste and preference."

Mr. Opore complained about the strong strawberry smell in the car. He asked for his favorite Aqua Air freshener to be sprayed in the car in large quantities to counter the earlier smell. The car was cruising at high speed due to less traffic on the road. Mr. Opore was enjoying his cigar when their car was hit on the left side by an overtaking Toyota Lexus that was cruising at high speed. The cigar slipped from his fingers, landing close to his left brown boot. Their car immediately burst into flames. The doors could not budge an inch, they tried breaking the windows, but they were bulletproof. The car lost control and flew out of the road, landing on its side into a cornfield, exploding into

massive flames. The whole cornfield was set ablaze in the process.

CHAPTER 12

Kamau was summoned by the Prime Minister to the statehouse for an urgent meeting. He had to cancel all his meetings for the day, including taking Sharon out for lunch. A motorcade was sent to pick him up from his official residence at 9:30 am. Mrs. Johnson was waiting for him outside the massive mahogany double doors at the entrance of the statehouse. “Good morning Mr. Kamau.” “Good morning Ma'am.” They hugged and strode silently to her office.

They were served coffee by the stewards, where Kamau found it welcoming after being extracted from his house without being given a chance to have breakfast. “During our previous meetings, I made you two offers; of becoming an ambassador or my deputy. I hope you thought about them, and now you have a positive answer for me.” Mrs. Johnson looked at Kamau with a saintly concern all over her face. Kamau emptied his cup of coffee, sat back on the swiveling leather burdened executive chair, and gave out an affable smile.

A burnt-over Range Rover Velar lay on its stomach at the Ukambane Police Headquarters’ yard. Members of the

Forensic unit were busy looking for answers in the charred vehicle. The four occupants of the fateful vehicle lay motionless at the Nyake General Hospital dead-room. They had sustained ninety percent burns making them unfit for being alive. The firefighters had taken a considerable amount of time to reach the scene, with a claim of water shortage at their station. The locals watched helplessly at the inferno grazing down on their fields and the unfortunate occupants of the Range Rover.

The much-awaited forensic results were out within three weeks. From their report, the fire was caused by excessive use of an alcohol-based car air freshener, which was ignited by the smoldering ash from a cigar. According to the reports, there was no foul play. To add to that, Mr. Oporo had no sworn enemies as he was a humble and friendly person, according to his wife. The case was closed, and the burial arrangements were set in motion. The state had lost one of its heroic sons to a tragic accident.

There were celebrations in Kamau's tent. They had managed to eliminate their potential long time threat in a clean way that was untraceable. Kamau praised his gang for their efforts to make sure he remained at the top of the

food chain. The remaining players in the killing game knew that Mr. Opopore's death was an assassination and not an accident. This made them cut off their claws and flee the area for good to avoid the disastrous blow. The realization that Kamau was unstoppable by any force had dawned heavily on them. Kamau and his disciples promised to attend the late former legislature burial. They wanted to hold a party in their hearts when their sworn enemy would be put in his eternal resting place.

Kamau, flanked by his wife, was sworn into the second most powerful office in the land on a fine Thursday afternoon. The masked dreamer, who was about to start living beyond his dreams, was supposed to move to his new office as soon as possible due to a pile of work waiting for his signatures. His predecessor, a cousin of the serving Prime Minister, was battling numerous court cases on various counts of corruption and embezzlement of state funds. This had made him be declared unfit to run the public office. The word that was being spread by the wind was that he was being thrown under the bus by strong hands. Whatever the truth was, he was climbing out from under the bus, and soon he was going to dust himself of all the charges.

Ukambane parliamentary by-election had attracted many contestants. Kamau, having his business interests at heart, had to make sure that a close associate of his had claimed the seat. He, therefore, endorsed Simba to run for the seat, having proved himself useful to his course on numerous counts. Kamau pumped all the necessary materials and skills to his disposal. Nevertheless, Simba being a skilled player, knew what was to be done to win the seat.

Kamau was sent on official duty in Somalia on behalf of the Prime Minister. He was set to attend the All African Heads of State summit on Industrialization and Poverty Eradication. Being a business-oriented fellow, he was prepared to draw the ball too towards his side. Hiding behind the political mask, he paid a visit to his other side of the law business partners. He had unsettled bills for the transportation, supply, and security of his drug business with the pirates.

The ousted deputy prime minister, Honorable Kyle Wamunyinyi, who had got wind of Kamau's illegal dealings, hired three veteran private detectives to follow Kamau in Somalia. They had orders to collect substantial evidence, enough to put Kamau away for life. They

followed the unsuspecting Kamau to the northern coastal towns of Haradhere and Bossaso, where the payment for the services rendered and signing of new contracts was made. All his activities were captured by a powerful lens. His photo embracing Ishmael Mohammed Abdi, the most dreaded deputy leader of the pirates, kept Mr. Wamunyinyi talking to himself of how he would destroy Kamau.

The people's honorable charming business tongue had made him get a dozen contracts signed. Most of the contracts were from investors who had promised to start their investments within a fortnight in his state. With these achievements at hand, he beamed all the way back home, without any knowledge that his infamous achievements had been printed in deadly hands. Back at home, Mrs. Johnson was contented with Kamau's proficiency that she called a press meeting to hail him for the achievements with only three weeks in office. This act of valor had accelerated the strong storm heading his direction, carrying his downfall in great measure.

With Kamau's new post came significant responsibilities. He was hardly seen at home most of the time. Sharon, who was now expecting their first child, had gotten used to this.

Due to his preoccupation, he hired bodyguards to hover around his wife wherever she went. In addition to this, he had acquired a sea of enemies who would gladly break-down his wife, given a small opening.

Now that Kamau was holding a prominent office in the state, he had many connections on which to channel his drugs. Being in the shadows and under the wings of most police bosses and military commanders, his shipments of drugs around the state and across the borders moved with ease under a heavily armed security. His Somali counterparts made sure that his products reached the overseas markets without any detection. The considerable tax-free returns from the sale of drugs made it possible for Kamau to open up another mill and completion of his projects in Ukambane. He wanted to leave behind a record-holding legacy that would take any other person an eternity to break it.

Kamau walked to his office one Friday morning to find his Attorney waiting for him in his Secretary's office. An early morning visit by a wig wearer wiggled him out as it meant one thing; he was in trouble. This Attorney, who knew Kamau inside out, had one job, which was to keep his client

informed of any impending danger and to represent him in court if the matter went out of hand. He was well fed to keep his eyes and ears open. He had done some digging and come out with a looming potential threat that needed immediate action to keep his client away from rotting in prison. Kamau was briefed of what was being cooked for him. This realization paralyzed him to the nerves. He needed immediate salvation to salvage his reputation in the state. After Simba joined the duo in Kamau's office, they had a long closed-door discussion.

The embattled former deputy Prime Minister left his home, where he was under house arrest in a Sikorsky S-92 heading to the Supreme Court. He was in the company of his five prominent lawyers who were armed with huge files. After thirty minutes of flight, their helicopter started belching out tones of smoke. The pilot tried making a distress call, but his line was not working. The helicopter's blade ripped off from the axle. The now lifeless helicopter with a horde of shrieking passengers, made a forceful nosedive into an abandoned dirt road, burying its nose some inches deep into the hard ground.

An anonymous person made an emergency call to a police station. The call was answered immediately with the piercing shriek of sirens. A white ambulance, which was escorted by a police Land Cruiser, glided into the scene. Four men dressed in white aprons, surgical- masked faces, and gloved hands alighted from the ambulance and headed towards the crashed helicopter. One of the men was carrying an orange-black box. Three police officers stood at a safe distance, answering calls over their walkie-talkies. The pilot's headless body was strapped on a sit in the cockpit. The other four mutilated bodies lay motionless on the floor of the helicopter. One body was missing. Mr. Wamunyinyi's body was not in the helicopter or anywhere near it; it was now evident that he never boarded the plane. One of the men in white aprons moved away from the scene to make a call. "Execute plan Angel." After the call, he disfigured the phone and pocketed the pieces. The helicopter was almost dancing up in flames; they exchanged the black box and cleared their traces. They did not want to leave any clue to the big-eyed forensics team. One of the police officers made a call requesting for firefighters and another ambulance. He claimed that on their arrival, the helicopter blew up, hitting the paramedics

with its explosion, making them to be rushed to the hospital.

The massive mid-morning traffic jam had slowed the pace of the police officers escorting Mr. Wamunyinyi to the court. He had requested the police to transport him in a civilian vehicle owing to the craftiness of Kamau. He was sure he had beaten Kamau pants down by failing to board the helicopter, which its crushing was all over the news breaking the headlines. He was sure Kamau would strike again; he was clinging to the files containing the evidence he believed would confer him back to his status and cement Kamau to the grave. He requested the police to make an extraction plan to beat the jam as he had one and a half an hour to be at the court. A chopper was on the way for the extraction.

They were stopped at a roadblock along Gojoo road for inspection. All the vehicles were undergoing a thorough inspection irrespective of any rank or social class. Immediately they were pulled out of their car, an Airbus landed on the road. Mr. Wamunyinyi, while still cuddling his files, ran to the helicopter thanking the heavens for sending the rescue in time. Four Swift Guards stepped out

of the chopper and took Mr. Wamunyinyi by the hand to the chopper. The police officers who were escorting him were stopped from entering the Airbus as it was now the work of the Swift Guards to deliver the package.

The Swift Guards, a security department under oath to serve and protect the sitting Prime Minister, was silent all the way to their destination. Mr. Wamunyinyi, who was enjoying every second of the ride, was knocked back into his senses. The Airbus, instead of landing at the court's grounds according to his expectations, landed outside the Swift Guard's safe house in the outskirts of the capital city. He was thrown into a well-furnished room where his files were taken from his bosom by a pair of strong hands. He was ordered to sink himself in the leather couch; he checked his watch and realized that he was running late for the court session, which he had worked hard to get.

“Whatever will happen here, you will have to forget that it ever happened.” Mr. Wamunyinyi looked up at the guard addressing him with a firm commanding voice. A healthy-looking file was thrown on his lap; he dug into the file at once. A picture of Kamau in a white suit giving relief food to a group of hunger-stricken people made him burst into

tears. “This son of a b...” The sight of four Beretta M9 pointing at his bald head made him swallow his words. “Focus on speaking positive things about Honorable Kamau, that’s why we are here. His insides were screaming, now that any tear or complain from him would earn him a bullet. The file in his shaking hands was full of Kamau’s up to date achievements since he was elected into a public office.

Mr. Wamunyinyi watched helplessly as the file containing his lifesaver was being fed into a shredder. “The file in your hands is the one you will present in court; also, you should be thinking of some apologetic words to use while there.” Mr. Wamunyinyi looked at the stout guard addressing him and felt a surge of venomous hatred boiling in his body. “What if I say no?” He smiled with satisfaction thinking he had won. “We will kill you.” The four guards chorused their answer with finality.

Kamau, who had been issued with an arrest warrant earlier on, was on the spectators’ bench on the front row. He exchanged the look of all is under control with his defense attorney, who was standing at the counsel table. On the plaintiff’s table stood Mr. Wamunyinyi, who, for the first

time, admired Kamau's slyness. At the gallery, Simba and Sharon were chatting happily while throwing a glance at Kamau from time to time. Mr. Wamunyinyi read the fifteen pages worth of praises on Kamau to the confused courtroom occupants. Pictures of Kamau unveiling various projects, feeding the poor, and giving motivational speeches to students decorated the court's sixty-five inches wall-mounted screens.

The strange twist of events hit the jury hard as they could be seen scratching their heads. Embarrassment was eating Mr. Wamunyinyi in huge chunks. He was regretting choosing this path and wanted to end it. He was going for a pistol strapped in a holster at the waist of a guard standing some meters from him. Before he could reach it, the judge smashed the gavel on the block, calling for order in the court. After the court's adjournment of twenty minutes, it was ruled that Mr. Wamunyinyi should pay Kamau a sum of five million for defamation as per the previous allegations and five million to the court for wasting its time. The final nail had been driven deep into his coffin.

Outside the court, Kamau approached Mr. Wamunyinyi, who was trying his best to flee the flashes from the media

cameras. “That was a bold move over there, thank you for your cooperation; all the earlier charges against you will be dropped; besides, the court’s fine will be taken care of. You have been retired, go home and enjoy life with your wife and kids; one more thing, remember to cut off your mouth. Here is your pension, good luck.” Kamau gave him a distant smile, patted his back, and walked away. Mr. Wamunyinyi pocketed the five million cheques into his coat’s inner pockets and dove into his waiting Hyundai Kona.

Kamau threw a mega party to commemorate his record-breaking achievements and celebrate Simba’s win on the parliamentary by-elections. He scooped ninety-five percent of the total cast votes. In attendance was his family, the Prime Minister, who was the chief guest, all the big political wigs, business associates, and friends, including Mr. Wamunyinyi, who had decided to move on. When the high-toned, up to the minute dressed Kamau marched to the glass-floored stage to give his much-awaited speech, the auditorium erupted in joyful shouts. “Honorable Kamau for prime minister, honorable Kamau for prime minister, yes...yes.” Kamau tried to calm down the congregation, but his amplified voice was swallowed up.

Mrs. Johnson gave Kamau a poisonous look then quickly duplicated it with a plastic smile before the paparazzo's flashed their cameras on her.

During the event, Kamau launched a multi-million initiative dubbed *Vijana Na Kazi*. This was to counter the youth unemployment in all the constituencies in the state. He called upon Mrs. Johnson to present a cheque of sixty million shillings to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. That amount of money, which a half of it was from Kamau's pockets, was to be used to kick-start the initiative with immediate effect. On the same day, two hundred and forty bright students from poor backgrounds were awarded scholarships to international universities of their choice.

Kamau invited the chief guest to the stage to address her people. She was escorted to the stage with a few handclaps from the now tired congregation. After throwing praises at Kamau for his achievements, she promised her government would complete the pending projects to help the women and the elderly within the coming month. For this, she got additional claps from the backbenchers. Mrs. Johnson finished her speech by firing bullets of warning to the public servants who had accumulated wealth through

illegal dealings, corruption, and embezzlement of public funds. She promised her citizens that all the public and civil servants would go through a lifestyle audit beginning with her in one week's time. It downed heavily on Kamau that he had more bodies to burry for his survival. It was clear that Mrs. Johnson had gotten suspicious of Kamau's immense wealth. She also wanted to terminate any possible threat to her sit.

Kamau was not ready to be caught by anyone's trap or spill more blood. He disappeared during the lifestyle audit in the name of going for a medical check-up. At the mills, he had suspended the packaging and transportation of drugs due to the hot climatic condition surrounding his sources of protection. Despite all the precautionary measures he had taken, the Prime Minister's boys were able to collect enough evidence to cage him. It was now a matter of time before the information was made public. All the security forces and other public servants who had thrown their alliance behind him withdrew in fear of being discovered and punished by the forces propelling Kamau's downfall. His political mask was being peeled, and this time he was finding it hard to hold it back. Although the waters were

getting deeper and deeper, he was not yet ready to be drowned to his grave prematurely without a fight.

During his previous visits to the statehouse, he had managed to stumble upon a top-secret document. The document contained a detailed report on how the Prime Minister had sent troops to stop a group of Somali immigrants, fleeing civil war from their country, to enter her state, the troops who had orders to shoot to kill anyone who tried to sneak in through the border, ended up gunning down dozens of families, mostly women and children. Armed with that document, he was going to blackmail her so that he could live on borrowed time while planning the next move.

To show Kamau that she was not shaken by his planned blackmail, she leaked a part of a document containing an investigative report on his drug trafficking to the media houses. Due to his commanding of a substantial, loyal following, when he called a press conference to defend himself, they quickly fell on his bait. The public, which had been blinded by his servanthood, was ready to fight his battles. According to the polls that were trending, Kamau was leading by eighty percent as the people's favorite

prime minister. The drug trafficking allegations against him had worked in his favor. Cancer that had spread on his support from the public servants was finally being cured as they came out publicly to offer their support. The gods had finally spat on his head.

Kamau had been lucky in his political journey. He had managed to hide behind his political dream for long; those who had tried to dig into his past or present side hustle were either dead, business associates, or made to disappear. Now that the opposing forces were more substantial, he had to come up with a harmless plot to protect his interests. He remembered when he had to pay a group of doctors a considerable sum of money to give the press fake diagnostic results of three families that had been hospitalized after consuming flour from his mill. The flour had been accidentally mixed with some percentage of cocaine during packaging. A week ago, the Anti-Narcotics Agency officers in association with the D.E.A had raided his cargo ship as it neared the Majimazuri port. Still, luckily for him, he had taken a break on the drug shipment. A new plan of action had struck Kamau from the adverts that were popping up on the screen of his Mackbook Air as

he tried to surf through some documents over the internet. Picking up his maroon coat from the hat stand, he ran out of his office, nearly knocking down his secretary, who was about to knock at his door. He got in his newly acquired speed monster, Tesla Roadster. He was going to break the news to Sharon, then, later on, they could drive to Simba's place to share the gospel. Reaching home, he found Simba and Sharon in a heated discussion. He never bothered to ask what the debate was all about; being his close and only family, he assumed it was all about the betterment of their lives; in addition, he had stopped two mouths with one morsel.

Kamau, who was not seeing with his boss eye to eye, sent his personal assistant, Mr. Muhoro Mohammed, with a letter to the statehouse requesting a month's leave from the office to attend to some personal pending issues in the overseas. By that time, he was in a plane bound to New Zealand. On landing, he went straight to Vladi Private Islands' offices in Wellington. Due to his worldwide known reputation, he was served quickly by the company heads. Soon, he was on another plane destined to the British Virgin Islands accompanied by agents from the Vladi Private Islands Company.

Using the company's chopper, he was flown to the south coast of Tortola to the Buck Island for a tour on his newly acquired property. The island, with an approximate area of forty-three acres, was now under his name, with the beneficiaries being Sharon and their unborn son. He had bought the island using cash from his home bank accounts and backup cash from the offshore accounts. The main ideas behind the acquiring of the island were to decongest his fat home bank accounts that were in the freezing radar, to relocate his drugs production center, and for retirement purposes.

Jetting secretly back into the state, Kamau showed off his new keys to the Buck Island to his family. The documents Sharon was given to sign pulled an enormous smile across her baby face. The duo threw a private party to celebrate Kamau's achievement. The S.S.K squad left the country after two days of Kamau's arrival in the state. They were going to tour the island with the aim of proposing various structures to be put up there. On the island, after coming up with various architectural proposals, they went to play on the white sandy beaches and posed for a dozen photos. On various occasions, Kamau saw tears dropping from

Sharon's face. He wiped them from her face using his palms, and each time gave her a warm embrace.

Simba proposed that they have an aerial view of the island to determine its vastness and beauty from an angle of elevation. After being seconded by Sharon, Kamau approved it. Their veteran pilot flew them around the island in mid-air for several rounds before Simba suggested they have a look of the island from the sea, at a distance of two hundred meters from the island and at a much higher height. Kamau, who had been tired by the tour, had no left energy to argue with his family. He left them to enjoy every moment of the tour.

The helicopter was now hovering at the height of 25000 feet above sea level. "Hey, the people's honorable, came and have a view of your island from this spot," Simba shouted to Kamau, who was busy wiping Sharon's tears while inquiring why she was in such moods. Kamau unbuckled the safety belt and went over to Simba. Simba, who still had his safety belt on, opened the chopper's door and beckoned him to move closer, at first; Kamau was shaken; he looked at his wife, who gave him the go-ahead nod. Immediately Kamau was bending near the open door

looking out against the strong winds; he was pushed out of the chopper.

Kamau was falling fast; he was gaining momentum as he descended head-first towards the sea. Opening his eyes, he could see a large boulder floating on the water. His head was in linear proportion with the top of the boulder that had a sharp projection. Kamau closed his eyes and asked God to at least draw him away from the boulder, but after all his transgressions, was God going to save him?