



KILLED BY FATHER'S GOAT

By Jeremiah Kipainoi
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"Killed by Father's goat"

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Book and Cover design by Jeremiah Kipainoi

ISBN: N/A

First Edition: September 2018

About the Author



Jeremiah Kipainoi is a multi-award-winning journalist, a multimedia storyteller and content creator. He believes that, for meaningful change to be made, one must first imagine how a better future will look like. By looking back into the past, Kipainoi believes that a better future can be achieved.

He is passionate about Civic Life and has been involved in production of indigenous documentaries in Kenya and Tanzania and runs the End FGM Podcast.

His Audio, Video and Photography work can be found at www.kipainoi.com/work and articles at www.kipainoi.com/blog

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I sat down, digging my eyes into the agreement as my step father dredged his fist on the rough table surface on which the title deed and agreement lay.
20 acres for two million, read the agreement.

Next to it was a lawyer's stamp.

A stench of cash and an air of distrust wafted across the two trees we sat under.

I, Ole Dikila, hand over this land, on behalf of my new wife and her children... to Mr. Amhulf, on 20/12/2012.

Sign!

Sign... scribble, sign...sigh!

My late father's pen had refused to take the responsibility of signing off its owner's land!

"Ero!" Said my visibly trembling stepfather, who was my uncle just a week earlier. "Shomo yau enkalamu!" I shot out and emerged with my badly-bitten pencil. He looked at it as if I had brought him a grevy Zebra's rib!

I was in class six then.

"Get me my lalem!" He thundered!

I crashed away again, closing my eyes as I fumbled for a foot-long double edged sword in my new father's dark Manyatta house. Here it is, "I puffed as I handed over the meat-stinking diamond steel sword! He wiped off some saturated fat using his *shuka* and started sharpening my pencil, chipping away pieces as if he were making a toothbrush from *osokono* tree!

"Hapana tumia penseli!" Said a visibly angry Mr. Amhulf.

There was no way he would allow a 2-million-shilling agreement to be officiated by traces of pencil charcoal. It had taken him fifteen years to get this close to getting this land. He would not leave loopholes!

My stepfather shot up. "Come with me!" He said, half lifting, half pulling me like a cornered hare, making his usual long strides to his dung house. "Run to Ole Tepesi's shop and buy a working Bairo!" He said, stashing two ten-shilling notes into my sweat-oozing palm.

I dashed out, not because he asked me to, but because the mouth-watering Munono prepared for Mr. Amhulf was turning grey in the fiery oil, a sign that I would miss a piece of meat if I wasted any time. My 12-year old instincts did not register that I was blistering my already fragile legs to sign off my heritage.

My father had been jailed two years before then for cutting off a man's ear. The man had asked to buy his land. My father was the kind of man whose blood and sweat were dedicated to his lineage. I remember we had to nurse him for weeks after he broke his arm and sprained his ankle chasing away trespassers as they sought short cuts to get to work in neighboring fields. "This land was fought for by your great grandfather!" He would tell us. "I will die protecting it!"

That is what happened.

No sooner had he left prison than he whipped a man to death. Reason, trespass!

He was sentenced to death, and the executioner was, unfortunately, coming to exercise his annual mandate that day!

"Give me bairo!" I said to the wrinkle-ridden Ole Tepesi at the shop. My big toe was bleeding but that did not concern me. I only hoped to get some change for **Koo**, the round piece of green sweet that children my age

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daydreamt of those days. The old man, Ole Tepesi, had been running his business even before my mother was born. I remember the tales of near-detention escapades she told us. "We would go to the shop in large numbers, and confuse him with coins." She would say, rather nostalgically!

There was change! One shilling!

"Four Koos please!" I muttered!

What else would a boy my age wish for?

I scribbled my initials on the once-white shirt turned brown.

J.K, it read!

I speeded back home and as I went through the cows opening, still relishing the last traces of sticky sweet, I heard mother's wails!

"She will never get over father's death," I thought.

I walked round my late father's house, stretching my hand over to my new father. He was seated there, head bowed between his hands. Next to him lay the man, *Mr. Amhulf*... eyes aghast, mouth ajar and nose fuming with foam.

A big piece of meat was stuck in his throat!

My father's goat had killed him!