

**COMPLETE PLAY PORTFOLIO:**

***LAST LAUGH***

**and**

**MINI-DISSERTATION**

**Theatre-for-Development in Zimbabwe: the Ziya Theatre Company production of *Sunrise*.**

**SAMUEL RUKUNI**

**04426282**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR DAVID MEDALIE**

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I herewith declare that ***LAST LAUGH***

and

**THEATRE-FOR-DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE: THE ZIYA THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION OF *SUNRISE*.**

are my own work and that I have acknowledged all the sources that I have used by means of complete references.

S. Rukuni

04 February 2013

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1.

**ABSTRACT**

This dissertation for the M.A. in Creative Writing consists of a full-length play, titled *Last Laugh* and a mini-dissertation. The mini-dissertation explores the phenomenon of Theatre-for-Development, which differs significantly from the performance tradition of classical African drama. The study identifies ways in which Theatre-for-Development practitioners, animators or catalysts, (interchangeable names given to agents who teach target community members theatre-for-development skills) abandon the conventions of classical African drama performances, in terms of the form of plays, stage management and costumes. They find different and less formal ways to tackle the social problems which the target communities experience.

The origins of Classical African drama are traced from the western tradition, from which it borrows heavily, and there is some discussion of the socio-historical conditions that prevailed during the time when African playwrights performed those plays, and the rise of nationalism in colonised African states, which in part influenced their production. This study then examines how the socio-political dynamics in the Zimbabwean post-farm-invasions era gave rise to Theatre-for-Development projects in the newly resettled farming communities that faced social development challenges. Despite the land gains peasants enjoyed, the resettled communities found themselves in places far away from schools, hospitals, shops and social service centres. That was the source of their problems. It will be shown how government sponsored Theatre-for-Development groups to mobilise the people, through theatre, to initiate home-groomed solutions to their social and economic problems during a time when the government was bankrupt and the country's economy was shattered by the destruction of the agricultural and mining sectors, triggered by the invasions of the white commercial farms. The Ziya Community Theatre's production of *Sunrise* is analysed in the light of these considerations.

Key terms: Classical African theatre, Theatre-for-Development, theatre-for-conscientisation, agitprop, participatory theatre, community-based-theatre, catalysts, theatre practitioners, animators, post-farm-invasions era, socio-historical context, post-independence and neo-colonialism.

2.

*Last Laugh*

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Manangaō ō .....	Crispenō father
Crispenō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ...	Conman
Vhenyasiō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō	Barman
Chivasaō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō	Butchery/Shop Assistant
Rebeccaō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Chivasaō wife
Elizabeth Mapiyeō ō ō ō ō ō	Policewoman and brothel queen
Regisō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Mapiyeō first boyfriend
Rameckō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Mapiyeō second boyfriend
Regis ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō .	Policeman
Gasilaō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Teacher
Makarudzoō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Teacher
Mai Tambuō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō .	Villager
Mai Gladysō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō .	Villager
Sidhuzaō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ..	Shop owner
Mai Sidhuzaō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō	Sidhuzaō wife
Brightō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō .	Sidhuzaō son
Doreenō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ....	Sidhuzaō daughter
Handoō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō ō	Chivasaō uncle

Maoneiõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Handoç wife
Gameraõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ	Politician
Workersõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Farm workers
Guardõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .	At Peppysonç farm
Peppysonõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .	White farmer
Mataraõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ	Foreman at Peppysonç farm
Old Womanõ õ õ õ õ õ õ	Villager
Mbamboõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .	Village Headman
Moyoõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Businessman
Policemanõ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Regis
Court Orderlyõ õ õ õ õ õ .	Simbarashe Musengi
Magistrateõ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Tymon Makunde
Timeõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Teacher
Graceõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Sex worker at Mapiyeç brothel
Teressaõ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .	Sex worker at Mapiyeç brothel
Patrons 1õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .	Customer at Mapiyeç brothel
Patron 11õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ	Customer at Mapiyeç brothel
Soldier 1õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ	Enforces demolition of shacks on government orders
Soldier 11õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	Enforces demolition of shack on government orders
Agent 1õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ ..	To eliminate members of the opposition parties
Agent 11õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ	To eliminate members of the opposition parties

Stephen ã ã ã ã ã ã ã ã ã

Politician

Audience ã ã ã ã ã ã ã ã ã

Watch a play

1.1

Act 1 Scene 1

*Lower stage: Full lights. Drawn boards are set with pictures of poles and two dagga huts and a granary. The granary is on a foundation of four huge stones on each corner, suspending a floor of thick logs. All are sagging grass- thatched roofs, exhibiting a similar pattern except the granary roof's salient outlook of a delinquent old man's straw sunhat worn at a rakish angle. Old Mananga enters his compound from the direction of the granary. He sits on a fallen mortar under a mango tree.*

Mananga: *[Yellow T- shirt reveals most of the ashen skin of his back through wear and tear.]* We share figs with birds in the trees! *[Violently jerks, takes tenacious grip of a spot on the waistline of a densely patched blue cotton pair of trousers he turns inside out, snatches a greyish black speck he squashes between thumbnails.]* Satan! You colour my thumbnails red with my own blood - the little I get from *masekesa*<sup>1</sup> and baobab powder we mix with water, making paste to cheat our intestines that it is porridge! My son leaves me his child and never returns. *[A voice is heard from behind the hut towards the path behind the granary.]* Is this voice yours, Crispen?

*[Enter Crispen.]*

*[Crispen shakes hands with his father and sits on a millstone.]* Where have you been for so long that you come without even a bag?

Crispen: Our custom does not allow me to answer that before I ask after your health. How are you, *Chirandu, Gono, Mhumba, Moyo*?<sup>2</sup>

Mananga: *[Elated by totemic veneration.]* We are all well. Your child is doing wonders at school. He is always at the top of his class. It's why I ask you

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<sup>1</sup> Wild fruit which can be ground into edible powder

<sup>2</sup> Totemic veneration for the Shona clan, who belong to the *heart* totem.



where you have been all this time, forgetting that you should take care of your own blood.

Crispen: Father, I have come back to stay home forever.

Mananga: You, staying here? Bald-headed children with beards and grey hair will begin to be born in the village!

Crispen: Then shall it be so. *[He takes out a wallet full of bearer cheques.]* This is just three hundred million dollars for Hedrick's uniforms, school fees and your food for a few weeks.

Mananga: *[Smiling]* Now Hedrick will tell his friends that he has got a father. *[He looks at Crispen, who is looking up.]* What are you looking up at?

Crispen: Can you see the hawk in the tree? There it flies away on seeing us. It was chasing a dove that has flown into the hut through the open door. *[He picks a long stick lying on the ground and makes for the hut.]*

Mananga: What do you want to do with that? Kill the dove? It came to seek help from us. It is not allowed to kill them when they come home for help.

Crispen: *[Comes back and sits on the millstone.]* God or maybe your ancestors had given us meat.

Mananga: Let it rest until it has got enough strength to fly away. If there is war or famine in your country and you seek help from another, do you like it when a spear is pointed at your chest?

Crispen: No. I would not like it done to me when I seek refuge in another country.

Mananga: I hear Chaka's grandsons kill foreigners in Natal. A knobkerrie is poised to smash your head, as you do to a snake in a fowl-run, if you dare raise it an inch over the Limpopo. *[He slaps the side of his neck, scratches and takes off his T-shirt and repeatedly bites along its round collar. He spits a reddish blob away from Crispen.]* Armageddon, a tooth for a tooth and

gnashing of teeth is the only language the colony of these lice and their eggs understand. *[Spitting and biting.]* But you do not buy us soap. *[Spitting.]* Why?

Crispen: It is a long time since I have been in a job.

Mananga: Is it not the work of evil spirits to make it taboo for you to work and support your child just as many young men of your age do?

Crispen: Evil spirits? No. It's our government, which is failing to take care of its people by creating employment for them.

Mananga: What do you mean?

Crispen: Stop singing evil spirits, evil spirits. Vote them out in the next election.

Mananga: And get killed?

Crispen: You will not be killed. In Zambia and Malawi, Kaunda and Banda were voted out and nobody was killed.

Mananga: You want the war back? Blood, sweat and tears again? No!

Crispen: You old people in our country are a real problem. Drought makes it worse.

Mananga: Care International, CIDA and United Nations give us food.

Crispen: Things will begin to change when your generation is gone.

Mananga: What? I don't want to hear that at my home! *[He beats the hard ground with his walking stick.]* Build your own home and vomit as much politics as you like there. Not here.

Crispen: Let's leave it, father.

Mananga: A person who goes to jail never comes back the same. Never, never!

Crispen: We go to jail because there are no jobs on the labour market any more.

Mananga: Is stealing people's things a job?

Crispen: If a job is a means to survive, then stealing to live is also a job.

Mananga: No. No. No.

Crispen: A jailed teacher taught us in jail that the results of what you do make your deed right or wrong.

Mananga: That teaching puts everything upside down. Even your mind is now upside down.

Crispen: Not at all. That man taught us that the end the result of any action justifies the means and life is noble together with the effort to sustain it. That's utilitarianism which seeks happiness for all.

Mnanga: To hell with your uteri- utilian- no matter if they are Italians! Having a thief for a son at home is more shameful than being discovered, in broad daylight, heaving the burden of your entrails into a well from which your community drinks. *[There is a soft rustle of leaves behind them.]*

Crispen: What's coming from behind the tree-trunk? *[Standing up.]*

Mananga: *[Jumping up from the mortar.]* Snake, snake- bring that thick stick!

Crispen: *[Giving it to his father.]* Do you want to kill it yourself?

Mananga: Why do you give me the stick, kill it yourself, it's going away.

Crispen: But you asked for the stick. *[Dashes and strikes it right on the head.]* It's done with. *[They both take a closer look to give a name to its type.]* I have never seen a snake like this in all my life. Look, its backbone is like a ridge or a knife and its body is colourful beads!

Mananga: My God! Where has this come from?

Crispen: From the tree.

Mananga: No, a *ndara*<sup>3</sup> snake is a bad omen to come into a home.

Crispen: Bad luck?

Mananga: Yes. One who kills it must go for a cleansing ceremony. A rite must be performed on you, my son, or evil shall be your shadow until you breathe your last.

Crispen: Ha- a- ha-a-a.

Mananga: Believe me, my son. Someone must have sent it.

Crispen: You old man, when will you rid your head of all that mumbo-jumbo? *[He tosses it on a stick to throw it away.]*

Mananga: Build your modern home and forget what our ancestors require of us. Not here!

Crispen: I won't go to any cleansing ceremony.

Mananga: I'm not forcing you. That snake is not thrown away before we consult the departed. Put it down.

Crispen: *[He slithers its length from the stick back onto the ground.]* How?

Mananga: By pouring snuff on its head so that the evil spell it brought us gets back to its sender. *[Retrieves a little snuff from a buck-horn ornamented pouch and throws it on the serpent's head.]* Go tell your sender that you found our forefathers ever-alert to sway us out of harm's way. *[To Crispen.]* Now you can throw it away. *[Exit Crispen.]*

Not even one coming from the dead will convince these! It is always when overtaken by the stride of evil that their lesson comes too late to be of any use to save them. No wonder many parents regret their seed and curse the night they sowed it.

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<sup>3</sup> Type of snake.

## ACT 1 scene 2

*Matara School. Miss Gasila and Miss Mainini Makarudzo are sitting on one side of the table in the staffroom. A box of soap, plastic bottles of cooking oil and a packet of salt can be seen in one corner.*

Gasila: How many bars of soap do you still have?

Makarudzo: Two boxes.

Gasila: That's forty eight bars of soap. In two days you will have nothing.

Makarudzo: What about you?

Gasila: I have five two-litre bottles of cooking oil, a fifty kilogram bag of salt and three twelve-kilogram packets of sugar. Everything I have is worth five billion.

Makarudzo: My stock is now only two billion. By next week we will have nothing to sell. do not know what to do with my passport that has run out of pages to be stamped at the border.

*[A knock is heard at the door.]*

Gasila: Come in please. *[Two elderly women come in.]* Oh, it's Mai Tambu and Mai Gladys. How are you, my good old girls? Take chairs, please. *[They sit on chairs.]*

Mai Tambu: We're well but problems always spur people onto each other's doorstep.

Mai Gladys: Monkeys from Mount Ngwana descend on our fields with the first ray of

light every day.

Mai Tambu: The trails they have drawn on the length and breadth of the field, while stealing maize, show better than those lines you mark with ash on your sports grounds.

Gasila: I have just one fifty kilogram bag. I want cash so that I can cross over the border on Friday. I have to come back in time for school.

Mai Tambu: Do you still take your job as a job? I mean the way it used to be.

Makarudzo: Yes.

Mai Gladys: Don't ask a teacher that question. They are treated worse than a labourer whose payment for digging a six square metre latrine pit is a cup of tea without sugar and milk.

Mai Tambu: I have stopped Tambu from coming to school. How many teachers were at this school last year?

Gasila: We were thirty-three and now we are only five left.

Mai Tambu: Five teachers cannot do what was done by thirty-three. Tambu is big enough to bring me a grandson from the bush between home and school.

Gasila: You are right. Teachers hardly have time to teach because they are always busy looking for money to buy food.

Mai Gladys: No one can live without food.

Gasila: Children can do anything when they do not have teachers at school. An idle mind is the devil's workshop.

Makarudzo: Have monkeys not eaten more than what you stand to harvest?

Mai Gladys: We now sleep in the fields.

Gasila: That is bad for you. They give you a hard time.

Mai Gladys: I do not know who whispered to them, through the air that blows to the mountains, a new knowledge that scarecrows are not real human beings.

Makarudzo: Is it?

Mai Gladys: Yes. Their babies now ride scarecrows, eat cobs sitting on their shoulders and sometimes hold the reins of their ears, taking turns to sway and swing in the wind.

Gasila: If they no longer fear scarecrows, why don't you beat tins loud enough to scare them?

Mai Tambu: They don't run away from the noise. Instead they watch your movements and if you remain in one place, no matter how loud you beat the tins, they merrily chatter and flex limbs, peering over their left and right shoulders as Tambu does her hip hop dance moves.

Mai Gladys: I will not win the battle against monkeys if you do not give me salt to pay people to harvest our green maize. They will eat everything.

Makarudzo: Cash is the problem. Now we buy one rand for two million dollars.

Mai Gladys: Yes, I know that cash is the problem. I am selling two goats.

Gasila: All right, go and bring the goats. I will slaughter one, eat the meat and

keep the other for Christmas.

Mai Gladys: [*Clapping her hands.*] Thank you, Gasila.

Gasila: Don't worry. I will ask two boys to bring the salt to your home in a wheelbarrow, after school. The bag is over there.

[*She points at the bag in one corner of the staffroom where there is a pile of groceries.*]

Mai Gladys: Today I will spread the word that I have got salt in exchange for work. It will take two days to clear the field.

Gasila: When the monkeys come and see the field clear, it will remind them of the old wisdom that you shall not reap where you did not sow.

Makarudzo: Is salt so much in demand?

Mai Tambu: Salt has never been in such a short supply as it is. Do you know that men lose what makes us enjoy them most in direct proportion to a lack of salt in their meals?

Makarudzo: If Paul, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, was hauled to the Areopagus for being a preacher of foreign divinities in Athens, let's give Mai Tambu the floor to read us a little from women's infinite book of secrecy about the effect of salt on our men's performance in bed. [*There is another knock on the door.*]

Gasila: Come in please. [*Enter Biggie and Crispen.*] You're too late, Crispen. Mai Gladys has taken the last bag of salt. May you please sit on the chairs?

Crispen: May you help me with water to drink?



- Gasila: Let me get it for you, my brother. *[Goes to a fridge in the tearoom and brings him a jar full of water.]*
- Crispen: Thank you. *[He takes the water and drinks.]*
- Makarudzo: Your box of soap is still there, Biggie. Take it from the corner. It is the last one.
- Mai Gladys: I am going before you change your mind. Let us go, Mai Tambu. *[Mai Tambu and Mai Gladys leave the staffroom.]*
- Gasila: Go well. Brighton and Simba will bring your salt.
- Biggie: *[Settles in a chair and cradles a plastic bag full of bearer cheques between this arms that he rests on the table.]* If I have missed the salt, I am taking everything you have. I have just sold two oxen and have the money on me.
- Makarudzo: Do you want everything that we have got?
- Biggie: This is twelve billion. How much is the value of all you have?
- Makarudzo: My stuff is two billion and Gasila's is 5. Now I can't say it for her.
- Gasila: Five billion.
- Biggie: *[Handing them a plastic bag full of bearer cheques.]* Count seven billion. *[They count bearer cheques together until it adds to seven billion and return the remaining sheaf of bearer cheques to the plastic bag.]*
- I am going to take my scotch-cart from home. Thank you very much.
- [Biggie goes out and leaves Crispen with the teachers.]*
- Gasila: Have you heard what I said, Crispen?

Crispen: Yes, I heard. Butõ .ummõ [*He rubs the tip of his nose with his thumb.*]

Gasila: But what?

Crispen: May you help me with your bicycle, madam? I want to go to the shops and will be back with it very soon.

Gasila: How do you know I have a bicycle?

Crispen: Teachers are public persons everyone knows about.

Makrudzo: But how can someone give a bicycle to a stranger?

Crispen: Do you mean I want to steal her bicycle? Better I leave.

Makarudzo: You may also go well, my brother.

*[Exit Crispen.]*

Gasila: I didn't like everything about him. His person reeks so much of sweat that when he asked for water to drink I almost told him water for a bath was what he badly needed.

### ACT 1 Scene 3

*The upper stage is lit by full lights. The shelves of Sidhuza's General Dealer's store are packed with groceries, clothes, utensils, hardware and maize-meal. Sidhuza and Mai Sidhuza drink tea, seated on chairs behind the counter. Their son and daughter, Bright and Doreen, are busy packing groceries on shelves and entering the records of prices in books of accounts.*

Mai Sidhuza: If fuel prices shot two hundred percent up, it means ten kilograms of maize- meal now cost a hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

Sidhuza: It can't be that. It's much higher because fuel is not available at service stations but on the parallel market where it costs five times that price increase the government announced! [*Sidhuza strokes his goatee beard and puts on an infectious smile.*]

Mai Sidhuza: Does this increase come for a commodity which is not available?

Sidhuza: Yes. Put that ten kilograms at two hundred and twenty five thousand or no one may afford it. It's now four million to transport a tonne of maize- meal from Masvingo town.

Bright: Daddy.

Sidhuza: Yes, please.

Bright: Blue soap bars have gone up again!

Sidhuza: What percentage?

Bright: Hundred and fifty.

Sidhuza: It was sixty thousand; mark it up at hundred and fifty. No choice but to pass on the increase to consumers!

Doreen: Cooking oil has gone up by the same percentage.

Sidhuza: *[After working on a calculator.]* It is now eighty thousand a bottle - 750ml.

Mai Sidhuza: Government salaries are so low their families cannot be comfortable without cross- border trading.

Sidhuza: Most of our customers now buy blue and green soap bars from teachers and nurses who bring them from South Africa.

Mai Sidhuza: Prices go up while their salaries are stagnant.

Sidhuza: Yes, man.

Mai Sidhuza: All civil servants have become public vendors. They start to sell groceries at their first step out of the office door or work places.

Doreen: Not at their first step from the office door, mummy, our teachers are selling things in the staff room and villagers are coming in to buy every day.

Sidhuza: Yes man, killing two birds with one stone. Then even our merciful devil frowns with envy at how two jobs can be properly done at the same time.

Bright: *[Ripping a cardboard box of biscuits open]* Shirts, shoes and pairs of trousers which were marked at a hundred thousand dollars now cost well over a million. *[Enter Crispen soaked in sweat, wearing a green pair of trousers and a green T- shirt beneath blue overalls.]*

Crispen: Good afternoon, VaSidhuza. *[All look at him. Bright and Doreen disappear into a storeroom.]*

Sidhuza: Afternoon, man.

Crispen: It's very hot.

Sidhuza: Very, very hot.

Crispen: I have come very far. May you please help me with some water to drink?

Mai Sidhuza: You must be very thirsty.

Crispen: My throat is dry.

Mai Sidhuza: *[Lifting her bulky figure from the chair.]* You need cold, cold water from the fridge.

Crispen: Yes, that will do. *[Holding the big cup.]* Thank you very much. *[Drinks and gives the cup back.]* I'm feeling better now, a lot better. Thank you, thank you, and thank you very much.

Mai Sidhuza: Thank you once would have been enough.

Sidhuza: Your face is quite familiar to me. Are you not Mananga's son from Chipengo village?

Crispen: You have stabbed the baboon in the mouth.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. You lived here a long time back?

Crispen: Quite right. I was employed as Mr Moyo's herd boy.

Sidhuza: During the war?

Crispen: Exactly.

Sidhuza: Were you old enough to remember how we were badly beaten by Ian Smith's soldiers after a landmine which comrades had set blasted their trucks and killed many of them at that turn-off near the cattle dip-tank?

Crispen: I can remember that this whole place was enveloped in belching blue-black smoke all over the sky but not a single shot was fired. We fled to the mountains, leaving the cattle in the veld.

Mai Sidhuza: Was there no shooting by the boys in ambush?

Sidhuza: No ambush. Takawira was not brave. Had it been Musa's group, those Boers would have been slaughtered like rain-soaked chickens. *[Sidhuza*

*takes a scale and empty plastic packs and places them on the edge of the counter, out of the way of customers coming in.]*

Crispen: The war was nasty and that's why old people bow down to anyone who threatens its return.

Sidhuza: Most of the people who saw, experienced and lived through it cower into submission at its mere mention by the ruling party.

Mai Sidhuza: But the ~~born-frees~~ give it a damn. *[Mai Sidhuza brings Sidhuza a twenty- five kilogram packet of salt. Sidhuza strips it open, takes a cup and works it into the bag and brings it out full of salt that he puts in plastic packets, one after another.]*

Crispen: They say, ~~What's~~ the war got to do with us?+ The so- called born- frees just can't wait for a regime change.

Doreen: Yes, that war is history to us now.

Bright: All who fought played their part then, should we not play our own part as well if there is a need to change the present system?

Sidhuza: Eee- ee-e! These walls have got ears. Leave that subject or you will be arrested for belonging to the opposition party. *[Sidhuza measures twenty one-kilogram packets of salt and closes them by tying their open ends with ready cut pieces of string.]*

Mai Sidhuza: Many lost their lives while a host of others are now lame from floggings at kangaroo courts held by National Youth Service cadres at base camps - the Green Bombers.

Bright: Green Bombers are big green flies.

Sidhuza: Yes, man, because Zimbabwe is rotten now.

Crispen: No one disagrees with that.

- Bright: Hitler and Mussolini did that in Europe, creating secret police, Storm Troopers to wield absolute power
- Doreen: Idi Amin, Banda, Siad Bare and Mobutu Sese Seko in Uganda, Malawi, Somalia and Zaire are our own African examples.
- Crispen: Methods used to stay in power are learnt from big books and need a head as hard as rock to put them into practice over the people they rule.
- Mai Sidhuza: Truth comes from books. All of us read about Hitler, Idi Amin and Banda but did not guess at that time that such things would happen to us!
- Sidhuza: Teachers, nurses, doctors and learned civil servants are persecuted and more than half are now in the Diaspora.
- Crispen: In United Nations language they call it a humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe.
- Sidhuza: I'm forgetting to ask your name which slips off my memory as I try to recall. Is it not Christopher or Chriō ?
- Crispen: Not Christopher, I am Crispen. You nearly got it though.
- Sidhuza: Oh! Yes, man. My memory isn't that bad after all this long time. Where do you stay?
- Crispen: I stay on the farms.
- Mai Sidhuza: Invaded farms? [*Mai Sidhuza opens a packet of biscuits and chews them with a rapacious appetite.*]
- Crispen: Yes, I work for Peppyson, whose farm was not invaded because he supported comrades during the war of liberation against Ian Smith - giving freedom fighters clothes, food and medicines.
- Sidhuza: Oh! Yes, man. Many such white farmers' farms were not touched throughout the country.

- Crispen: I have been unlucky not to find your local councillor on business Peppyson sent me. *[Enter customer.]*
- Sidhuza: Good afternoon, comrade.
- Customer: Afternoon, VaSidhuza. *[Handing a bundle of banknotes]* Comrade or not a comrade, the suffering is now the same, VaSidhuza. Give me maize-meal please.
- Sidhuza: *[Counting the money.]* Is this eight thousand?
- Customer: Yes.
- Sidhuza: Everything has gone up because of fuel prices that went up a few days ago. Ten kilograms is now two hundred and twenty-five thousand.
- Customer: We can't do anything about it when we have to eat.
- Sidhuza: Fuel prices on the black market are five times higher and if I had followed the same rate it was going to be four hundred thousand!
- Customer: You will kill us. Don't do that, Sidhuza. *[He pulls out more bearer cheques from his wallet and piles them on.]* Only God knows where we are going this time around. What causes all this?
- Sidhuza: Sanctions.
- Customer: Whatever creature these sanctions are, they cause us a lot of harm.
- Sidhuza: It is not only sanctions. This time oil prices have gone up everywhere in the world.
- Customer: Our children know nothing about world oil market prices or these sanctions. All they know is to cry when hunger gnaws.
- Sidhuza: *[Pushing the pack towards him on the counter.]* Next time, be careful where you cast your vote.



Customer: It's no use voting otherwise in our country. You can't vote them out because the vote is rigged before it is cast. *[Goes out carrying his pack.]*

Sidhuza: What's the business you want the councillor for?

Crispen: What business can there be besides this madness about maize?

Sidhuza: Peppy's farm was spared the Third Chimurenga farm invasions?

Crispen: Yes.

Mai Sidhuza: Everyone talks about that. *[Mai Sidhuza throws the empty plastic packet which contained the biscuits into a dust bin behind the door.]*

Sidhuza: Someone told me he has a lot of maize. Is it so?

Crispen: No farmer harvested so much maize.

Mai Sidhuza: True?

Crispen: He used to feed livestock with yellow maize but now he is also selling it because of the acute maize shortage countrywide.

Sidhuza: What about white maize?

Crispen: Anthills and anthills of them if not mountains in four big sheds. He intends to sell forty tonnes right now.

Mai Sidhuza: Forty tonnes?

Crispen: Forty tonnes, yes. He likes to sell his maize to villagers out here rather than to farm invaders whom he is unhappy with for displacing white farmers.

Sidhuza: Yes man, blood is thicker than water. Crispen, baboons may fight each other over a scorpion but stand as one when one of them is attacked by leopards.

Crispen: Peppy arranged with the councillor that village heads collect money from people to buy fifty kilogram bags of maize for a hundred and twenty thousand dollars each.

Mai Sidhuza: So is the councillor not there?

Crispen: Aha. I have been to Matara School where Teacher Gasila told me that the councillor went to town this morning. I had gone to Teacher Gasila to collect some money she owed me for maize I delivered to her last month.

Mai Sidhuza: Were you given the money?

Crispen: No. She asked me to collect it next week after her business trip to South Africa.

Mai Sidhuza: She will have it then.

Sidhuza: How is the maize transported here?

Crispen: Peppy has five tractors always on the road.

Mai Sidhuza: True.

Sidhuza: Where does he get fuel?

Crispen: He imports diesel from South Africa and supplies maize to villagers in Chekenyere, Muzinda, Zaka, Chipanza and Ndanga daily. *[Enter customer II]*

Customer II: *[Holding a receipt.]* I have come to collect those bags of cement.

Sidhuza: You bought fifteen. *[At the top of his voice.]* Bright, please help with fifteen bags there in the storeroom!

Mai Sidhuza: Have you brought a scotch cart?

CustomerII: Yes. Women have no power for this.

Sidhuza: Women complain about lack of power for hard jobs yet never seem to lack it in clamouring for equal rights. Yes, man.

CustomerII: Ha-a-a-a-a-a-*[Disappears into the storeroom]*.

Mai Sidhuza: You leave business matters and take a swipe at women from nowhere, Baba Bright!

Sidhuza: Now that you haven't got the councillor, is it not possible for me to buy some of that maize?

Crispen: It's possible.

Sidhuza: How much is it per tonne?

Crispen; Two and half million together with transport charges.

Sidhuza: Can I get six tonnes?

Crispen: Certainly. A tractor will deliver it tomorrow.

Mai Sidhuza: What about four tonnes? No cash available for six at the moment. I'm afraid only four will do.

Crispen: No problem. Four can still be all right.

Sidhuza: What about tomorrow but one? Our manager, Chivasa, will bring the money.

Crispen: That's fine. Tell him to ask for Crispen at Peppy's farm and I will be waiting for him.

Mai Sidhuza: It's lucky he has just arrived. *[Mai Sidhuza points outside.]* He's back. *[Chivasa enters.]*

Sidhuza: You took hold of the first crowing cock's beak to be back from Chireya village so early!

Chivasa: I woke up very early.

- Sidhuza: Did you agree on the price for the ox?
- Chivasa: Yes. They will bring it tomorrow.
- Sidhuza: Yes, man. It's lucky you came at the right time. This man here is Crispen Mananga who works at Peppy's farm where we can get four tonnes of maize at two million five hundred a tonne including transport.
- Chivasa: *[Shaking hands with Crispen.]* That's very cheap. Where have you been all along when people are nearly starving in our homes?
- Crispen: People from all over flock with bags of maize on their heads, in wheelbarrows, scotch carts, trucks and tractors every time Peppy opens the doors of his shed to put his maize on sale.
- Mai Sidhuza: How often does he put his maize on sale?
- Crispen: Thrice or four times a month.
- Sidhuza: Sure?
- Crispen: God is my witness. His stocks are likely to last until next harvest, so establishing yourself as a regular customer enhances chances to make a fortune like most of the businessmen over Chiredzi River are doing right now.
- Sidhuza: Even billions can be made at this rate of inflation.
- Chivasa: Our dollar's tumble accelerates daily.
- Sidhuza: Chivasa will come there the day after tomorrow and let's call this deal closed.
- Crispen: White or yellow?
- Sidhuza: How yellow is it? Is it that from Kenya or South Africa?

Crispen: Bring me your bicycle so I can bring you a sample for you to decide tomorrow morning.

Sidhuza: It's not necessary. I want white maize because people prefer it.

Crispen: The problem in the farms is scarcity of sugar which you have a lot of here. Can you give me two cartons whose payment Chivasa will collect when he comes?

Mai Sidhuza: Do you hear that, Baba Bright?

Crispen: The supervisor, foreman, farm manager and all farm workers would be delighted to see this rare commodity. They will snatch-buy at once!

Sidhuza: It's bought equally fast here and this is not enough for our customers.

Mai Sidhuza: Our customers here will not have enough.

Sidhuza: Vapositori Church congregation assembled at the dip-tank has already paid for half of it.

Crispen: Those people do have a good taste for tea.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. Tea is their heaven on earth.

Mai Sidhuza: *[To Chivasa.]* Go and have lunch with him so that you may know each other better for tomorrow's sake.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. Have you seen him enough not to forget and end up giving cash to the wrong person when you get to the farms there?

Chivasa: I can't be a child or a fool to give so much money - ten million - to the wrong person.

Crispen: No, he seems to wear a clever face.

ACT 1 SCENE 4

*Full lights on the upper stage: Pamuzinda Cocktail Bar; patrons dance to sungura music by Alick 'Power' Macheso. Most patrons share opaque beer and only a few hold clear beer bottles.*

Chivasa: I have called you about something very important, my dear.

Vhenyasi: What's that?

Chivasa: Someone from the farms came to arrange with Sidhuza that I go there the day after tomorrow to pay for four tonnes of maize and bring it by tractor the same day.

Vhenyasi: Four tonnes of maize! Is there anywhere in this whole country where so much maize can be found?

Chivasa: Don't you know that nowadays these commodities in short supply are withheld by these whites the government chased away?

Vhenyasi: Yes, the means to get maize nowadays is through shady deals.

Chivasa: He promised me fifty-kilogram bags at hundred and twenty thousand each. Can't we go together on our bicycles?

Vhenyasi: Will I be able to buy my own?

Chivasa: Yes, as much as your money suffices.

Vhenyasi: It's all right. Free transport back with our bicycles on top of the sacks in the trailer while we will be perched on either side of those gigantic mudguards in front with the driver between us! Ha-a-a-ha-ha-a. I will enjoy that joy ride.

*[Enter Hando.]*

Hando: What do you plan to do? I can see that you are so taken in by your conversation.

Vhenyasi: Casual talk.

Hando: It can't be casual conversation but something out of this world.

Vhenyasi: Killing you for a man's heart to use in rituals for the success of our business.

Hando: You are therefore unfortunate to stalk quarry that has seen you beforehand.

Chivasa: You are my uncle for whom ancestors will punish me if I hide a plate of food from your sight.

Hando: So let me know. [*Hando looks at Chivasa and then at Vhenyasi, narrowing his eyes with curiosity.*]

Chivasa: Sidhuza will send me to go and buy four tonnes of maize at the farms a day after tomorrow.

Hando: Where is the maize?

Chivasa: Peppy's farm.

Vhenyasi: Fifty kilograms can also be bought at hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

Hando: [*Selects bearer cheques from his wallet and gives a bundle to Chivasa.*] Please, *Muzaya*<sup>4</sup>, bring me two bags from that two hundred and forty thousand.

Chivasa: Have you counted it correctly?

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<sup>4</sup> Nephew

- Hando: You can double. check. We are facing starvation and the little left is for the children for tonight.
- Vhenyasi: You don't bother to know how the maize is going to be brought here.
- Hando: Maize ferried from there on a donkey's back tastes as sweet. I am so delighted that at last I have found maize.
- Chivasa: We are going to bring a tractor from the farm.
- Vhenyasi: Are we ever going to live decent lives with this poverty and suffering added to our lives with each rising sun?
- Hando: Only God has the solution.
- Chivasa: Let's not look to God for solutions every time we have a problem. [*Chivasa points his finger to the sky without looking up in the direction his finger is pointing.*]
- Hando: And what then?
- Chivasa: Care International helped us with food but was stopped by the President - a human being - who can be got rid of if he has become a problem. Is there any need to cry to God?
- Vhenyasi: Politics is a game by human beings. It is the people who fight it out and not God. None but us are there to change the status quo.
- Hando: But do you know that what you are talking about is not allowed?
- Chivasa: Who doesn't allow us? [*Thinking puts creases between Chivasa's eyes.*]
- Hando: Close your beaks or they get burnt as is done to a hen fallen into a damnable habit of turning and sucking its own eggs.
- Vhenyasi: Then our President is that hen whose beak must be burnt for preying on innocent citizens!



Hando: Where have you got permission to talk like that?

Vhenyasi: I need no permission from anyone, I am permission itself. M.D.C. has a true modern patriot in Gamera.

Hando: Politics is not allowedō

Vhenyasi: Shut up! A human being is a political being. To buy bread or maize becomes political if you ask why it is expensive or not. [*Vhenyasi stamps three times on the floor with his left foot to make his words firm.*]

Chivasa: Go on; tell him, Vhenyasi - ho-ho-hoo oo!

Vhenyasi: That question directly reflects on the economics of your time, which in turn has a direct bearing on the politics of your society.

Chivasa: Where do you get all that from?

Vhenyasi: I read all that from a book on Social Political Philosophy. It states that every human being in any country must, as a citizen, have freedom of political expression and association by right. Who should forbid a person to talk? Bullshit!

Chivasa: Where did you get that book?

Vhenyasi: Gamera gave it to me when I asked him where he got his ideas.

ACT I Scene 5

*Full lights on the lower stage. The six o'clock bell rings at Peppy's farm. Farm workers rush on parade, clad in blue overalls. At last Peppyson walks on with Kuda Matara closely behind. Matara has a big black book in his hand: This surprises all the workers as they never see it leave the supervisor's office. They whisper in muffled voices among themselves.*

Peppyson: Shut up! Lazy gorgon medusa... *[Everyone falls silent.]* I have come to announce that there are new rules concerning your working conditions. You black, black, eh, I mean eh, I don't mean the colour of your skin but your misdeeds on my farm. You kill elephants and mice alike with snares you make from wire and copper cables you steal from me. You steal irrigation pipes and sell them to metal workers, welders and tinkers in rural and urban centres alike! Please, be warned, I have electrified all fences and big magnets are on their way to be fixed on my pipes to glue you on them alive until the police come to arrest you. I am leaving Matara to clearly spell out the new rules. You must sign against your name if you agree with them or leave my farm immediately. Come over, my boy. *[He pats Matara on the back and leaves abruptly.]*

Matara: Hate neither my lips nor my person but the one who sets these rules - the white man.

First: you are not allowed to stay with your wife or husband if your spouse is not employed here. You are given to Saturday to evacuate your spouse.

All: Ha-a-a-ha-ah-ah-ah

Matara: Don't shout! He instructed me not to tolerate questions but will let you ask questions when I finish. I also hate this.

The second one: visitors are prohibited on the farm's premises but can be entertained at the main gate area in the presence of a security guard and the foreman.

All: Ho-o-ho-ho-hoo [*Some shuffle feet and throw their hands in the air, dejectedly.*]

Matara: Let's stop shouting and change this rule to: visitors are expressly not prohibited on this farm workers' compound.

All: Yees- yeees, yeeees [*There is ululation.*]

Matara: I am foreman here and security guards are also here. Who is he to interfere with our own private affairs?

All: He- e- eeee! Yee-eees-ees!

Matara: Enough, enough of that. The third one: no foodstuffs are to be brought from home, town or anywhere. Food can only be taken from weekly rations or groceries bought from the Farm Supermarket. You are going to be given weekly food rations from Saturday this week whose cost of twenty thousand dollars is to be deducted from your salary.

All: Hi-i-i-hi-i

Matara: Quiet please! Fourth and last one: all workers are required to attend a roll call every midnight at this parade venue or get fired on the first record of absence. [*All shake heads, murmuring disbelief.*] These are all the rules and if you are not prepared to sign against your name, come and have your wages and leave the farm with immediate effect. [*Nobody dares come up.*] If no one is coming up then all follow me to the office to sign - one by one as usual - and your signature shows that you have agreed to work under these conditions!

Worker I: Noooo! Peppyson lives with his wife and children but denies us the same matrimonial bliss or fulfilment of our conjugal rights. Being black, jobless,

starved, poor or nude does not mean that I have become less human. My conscience will never forgive me for signing that, no wonder Martin Luther King reminded his persecutors, %ou don't have to love me to stop lynching me.+I wish all workers understood how I feel just now.

Matara: *[Opens the big black book.] What's your name?*

Worker I: Martin Mbeya.

Matara: Follow me to the office for your wages.

Worker II: I can't make it in life without peanut butter and *mufushwa*<sup>5</sup> from home. I should not be forced to buy from anyone's supermarket where prices are thrice those in other shops.

Worker III: My reason is racism. I am leaving but I am going to report him to the war veterans for what he is doing to us here.

Worker IV: No comment - I am just leaving - shaking the dust from my feet.

Worker V: The money is paltry. It's as good as no wages at all. Give my wages to old Wadyegora. I know he will leave this place without both pension and energy to seek any other form of employment. *[The motley throng is quiet.]*

Matara: *[Uneasily.]* Is there any other one resigning? *[No one speaks for what seems like eternity.]* I am also resigning. I am writing my name first. *[He opens the book. Wielding a red pen, he cancels out the first name.]* I have cancelled my name. Ho- ho-dyo- o- ho-dyoro - I am laughing at how this white man will be shocked. I will go to Botswana and leave this madness in this country before I also become mad myself. Quickly give me your names now.

Worker I: Martin Mbeya.

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<sup>5</sup> Dried vegetables

Worker II: Stanely Chikwati.

Worker III: Vitalis Chikonzero Maguru.

Worker IV: Davy Gunguvo.

Worker V: Zvidzai Leslie Chidhakwa Chomudhamhu.

Worker VI: Rameck Jasi.

Worker VII: Stabile Nyandoro.

Worker VIII: Boniface Mukwena.

Worker IX: Farai Kadani.

Worker X: Nason Chieza.

Worker XI: Shepherd Chikwati Tembo.

Worker XII: Shemmy Majata Chapfedu. *[Matara counts all the names he has cancelled.]*

Matara: We are all thirteen and I am leading you to go and collect our wages and leave this fucking Shit Farm immediately.

## ACT 1 Scene 6

*Spotlight on the lower stage shines on Vhenyasi. It is the Pamuzinda Cocktail Bar complex, just outside the house.*

Vhenyasi: Three minutes past five now, yet we agreed on half past four. Shitō  
*[Chivasa pushes his bicycle besides Vhenyasi.]* Is this waking up early?  
Half past four? I was up at four, cooked and ate *sadza*, had a bath and  
waited for you, tortoise.

Chivasa: Tortoise? I sleep with my woman who needs some of her goodies in my  
possession that I give her at her hour of need, not you senior township  
bachelor who leaves your wife unattended back home.

Vhenyasi: Breed like mice but those children will compete with goats for figs in trees.

Chivasa: The ancestors advised to hold fast onto that you have got, as they do not  
give twice. Do you have your money on your person?

Vhenyasi: Yes.

Chivasa: Let's go.

Vhenyasi: This is the beginning of a long cycling stint. Tomorrow, by this time, I will  
be cycling home with one of the two bags for Christmas and New Year  
holidays.

Chivasa: We are just acting as responsible fathers. *[They ride off at high speed.]*

*Full lights on the lower stage: They are on the farm. They push their bicycles, their shirts soaked in sweat.*

Chivasa: This river is full of sand. Who is that person coming? [*Squinting eyes in recognition.*] He is the one, I am sure.

Vhenyasi: Who? [*A man's figure appears in front, going in the opposite direction.*]

Chivasa: Mananga. Our problem to find him on the farm is solved.

Vhenyasi: Are you certain it's him?

Chivasa: Yes, it's the same clothes he was wearing.

Vhenyasi: This is too pleasant to be true. [*They meet him.*]

Chivasa: Certainly it is. Good morning, Crispen.

Crispen: Morning. You have done well to be here early. It's about half past six.

Vhenyasi: Precisely twenty past six on my watch.

Chivasa: We have come and you seem to go in the opposite direction. Where are you going now?

Crispen: Peppy sent me to Cargill Cotton Marketing Board to place an order for herbicides. Some workers who were weeding in his maize fields left yesterday, so he wants to use chemicals. [*Crispen slowly scratches the tip of his nose with his forefinger.*]

Vhenyasi: Why did they leave?

Crispen: They refused to sign to work under new working conditions which include that they are not allowed to stay with their families in the farm's compound and that they are no longer allowed to have visitors on the farm's premises.

Chivasa: We black people chased these whites and believed that we would rule but it is clear that they have everything under control wherever they are.

- Crispen: What can our kinky haired bastards do without their technology, wealth, knowledge and experience in agriculture, mining and manufacturing industries?
- Vhenyasi: Time shall come when our leaders will swallow their pride and beg them back.
- Crispen: One white farmer shouted at people at a station who had stopped him for a lift, ~~W~~ide on the soil you took!+
- Chivasa: How far are we from the farm where you work?
- Crispen: Not far from here. Let's go back there now. I will rush to Cargill later.
- Vhenyasi: Let's make it fast. *[He doubles his stride and disappears round a bend on the road.]* Is it not far where we are going?
- Chivasa: Just a little way along this road now. *[The three walk towards Peppy's farm.]* We have walked for about a kilometre now. Do we go beyond that hill? *[He adjusts his sling bag on his back.]*
- Crispen: Peppy's farm is just a few hundred metres to the left. When we get towards the main gate you shall remain behind while I get in and arrange everything with the supervisor, foreman and farm manager.
- Vhenyasi: At which place shall we wait for you?
- Crispen: It's now a little distance left. Aren't you hungry after cycling for such a long distance from Chiredzana?
- Chivasa: How can we not be hungry?
- Crispen: Do you eat dried game meat?
- Chivasa: Yes.
- Crispen: Do you like it in peanut butter?



Vhenyasi: Peanut butter is best.

Crispen: Impala, eland or antelope meat is abundant here on the farms. *[They approach a compound just adjacent to an invaded farmhouse.]* This farm next to Peppy's belonged to Tom Preston and was occupied.

Vhenyasi: So he left?

Crispen: He fled to South Africa. I want to go there to fetch some vegetables to mix eland meat in peanut butter. Do you all eat peanut butter?

Chivasa: Is there a Shona who would not eat peanut butter except after doctors' advice?

Crispen: Eland is *Mhofu* in shona, and its meat is delicious. My father slapped his thigh, mistaking it for a puppy sneaking to lick from his plate!

Chivasa: Ha-ha-a-a. That's lies.

Crispen: True. God is my witness. Give me your bicycle so I can be quick to collect vegetables from that compound so we can proceed.

Chivasa: Give him yours, Vhenyasi. You know the problem with mine.

Vhenyasi: *[To Crispen.]* Have it.

Crispen: *[Cycling away]* I won't be five minutes in there. Don't worry, we are almost there.

Chivasa: If I had money to buy five bags for resale, I would make a lot of money out of this man.

Vhenyasi: This is a chance of a lifetime to make enough money to buy oneself one or two herd of cattle.

Chivasa: My father-in-law's advice is always that a lost chance is never found again. *[Crispen returns, cycling majestically with a lush green bundle of vegetables clasped in his left hand.]*

- Crispen: Now, let's go straight and settle everything. Just after that high ground is the main gate into the farm where there is a security guard.
- Vhenyasi: Does it matter if the guard sees us?
- Crispen: Peppy does not allow visitors there, so you remain behind while I go to tell the farm manager and supervisor that you have come.
- Chivasa: You know best how you have planned to do your things, carry on while we await the outcome.
- Crispen: Once the white man leaves for his appointment at Cargill, the foreman simply orders a few workers to load the tractor.
- Chivasa: How long will that take?
- Crispen: Not long. My wife will be busy preparing food for you. What's the time now?
- Vhenyasi: Seventeen past eight.
- Crispen: If Peppy drives along this road, just get your bicycles upside down, pretending to repair some mechanical fault, giving the impression that you are obviously on a very long journey somewhere. *[He walks up the road.]*
- Chivasa: Sidhuza makes money from maize- meal now.
- Vhenyasi: And sugar, cooking oil and soap.
- Chivasa: His dream to buy a lorry is coming true
- Vhenyasi: Opportunists prosper, charging exorbitant prices for these basic commodities in short supply throughout the country. *[A boy passes them, heading towards the farm.]*
- Chivasa; *[Looking at the boy.]* Why are these children staying here where there are no secondary schools? He is too big to be still in primary school.

- Vhenyasi: Is there not a single secondary school here?
- Chivasa: None. It's only primary schools established by converting white men's farmhouses and most of what they call classrooms is grass-thatched sheds. *[Crispen appears, walking with exaggerated composure, holding a little stick in his hand.]*
- Crispen: I have seen them all and everything is going on as arranged and planned.
- Chivasa: So I give you the money? *[He unzips the sling bag.]*
- Crispen: Yes, let's see.
- Vhenyasi: Here is mine for two bags, two hundred and forty.
- Crispen: Wait, let me have Sidhuza's first.
- Chivasa: It's already counted; ten million
- Chivasa: *[After counting it.]* This is not ten million. It's ten million two hundred thousand. Get back your two hundred thousand dollars.
- Chivasa: I think it's ten million only. Give it back to me so that I can count it all over again. *[After counting once more.]* I am correct. Take back the two hundred thousand. A white man doesn't tolerate shortfalls with cash; otherwise our deal ends up a total flop.
- Crispen: *[Takes all of it]* I have talked to the foreman and supervisor on your behalf to cut the price for fifty-kilogram bags to a hundred thousand dollars only.
- Chivasa: Very good, very good, *bhururu*<sup>6</sup>.
- Crispen: We are black brothers who must understand each other's problems during this time of hunger, when everyone needs a helping hand. *[Chivasa and Vhenyasi hand him their money.]*

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<sup>6</sup> Friend

Chivasa: This place would be a better place to live in if everyone had that sort of heart and mind you have got.

Crispen: Just be on the lookout for the white man.

Vhenyasi: We will act as you advise us.

Crispen: Be patient, for patience always pays at last. Your food must be ready by now. Let me go to have everything done. *[He turns and leaves at a calculatedly reluctant pace.]*

## ACT 1 SCENE 7

*Full lights on the lower stage: Vhenyasi and Chivasa with their bicycles.*

Vhenyasi: We have waited long enough here. Should the manager be taking this long? It's like waiting for Godot!

Chivasa: I am getting anxious.

Vhenyasi: There is something I wanted to ask you.

Chivasa: And forgotten?

Vhenyasi: Yes.

Chivasa: Have you ever walked into a room and completely forgotten why you walked in?

Vhenyasi: Sure.

Chivasa: Dogs live the rest of their lives like that.

Vhenyasi: You mean I am one?

Chivasa: No. I'm just helping you remember. Are you sure what you are?

Vhenyasi: I am sure I can't be barking.

Chivasa: I just have to refresh your mind with jokes to wash out the tension so you can recall what's slipping off your mind.

Vhenyasi: I can't get it.

Chivasa: Did you hear the story of a young white mother and her daughter in a black people's township?

Vhenyasi: No.

Chivasa: Seeing five black boys sharing a cigarette, the little daughter asked the mother, %s that out of love?+

Vhenyasi: And then? [*Vhenyasi holds Chivasa's shoulder.*]

Chivasa: The mother replied, %No, it is poverty.+

Vhenyasi: Tell me where you got all of this.

Chivasa: Not until you tell me what you have just forgotten.

Vhenyasi: Oh, yes, now I remember. [*Vhenyasi shakes Chivasa's shoulder with a little force.*]

Chivasa: Ya-a-a-a. Tell me.

Vhenyasi: I wanted to ask if you brought your camera to take photographs of ourselves with those green cane fields providing a scenic background.

Chivasa: Oh! I forgot to bring it.

Vhenyasi: Just look at that mobile irrigation equipment for overhead spraying.

Chivasa: Is there any sense destroying that in the name of the Third Chimurenga revolution?

Vhenyasi: Look how different this is from occupied farms which exude dust, sand and more dust and sand when wind blows from one bare farm to another.

Chivasa: All the occupiersqfields are as bare as recently graded roads. [*Sound of a car from the direction of the farm. Both quickly turn their bicycles upside down.*]

Vhenyasi: What answer do we give if we are asked what the problem is that has occurred to both our bicycles at once?

Chivasa: Drop yours and help attend to mine, quickly!

Vhenyasi: White folks are too smart to easily outwit.

Chivasa: True.

Vhenyasi: He would question the coincidence of two bicycles breaking down all at once. *[The car roars past, leaving them in a cloud of dust.]*

Chivasa: Shit!

Vhenyasi: Not a white man after all!

Chivasa: Must be a farm manager.

Vhenyasi: Ha-a-a-haa-a. *[Both pick up the bicycles and rest them on stands.]* These whites make us shudder at the mere thought of their presence!

Chivasa: That spirit of awe in us for white skinned people is inherited at birth.

Vhenyasi: What? No. It's inculcated rather than hereditarily bestowed. It's nurturedō *[Sound of another car from the same direction and only Chivasa quickly upturns his bicycle.]* It's him this time. What speed is that?

Chivasa: Those old cars are a miracle to be still on the roads. *[Sets his bicycle the right way up.]* Land Rovers are wonderful on rough roads.

Vhenyasi: He is young to be the owner of this farm, if it's him.

Chivasa: Yes, he took over from his father.

Vhenyasi: Now they begin to load the tractor.

Chivasa: We must expect them to be ready in half an hour's time.

Vhenyasi: *[Looking at his watch.]* Eleven past ten. All seems to go ahead of schedule.

Chivasa: Mananga should be helping the workers to load, and four tonnes being no joke to load, their black skins will ooze salty sweat.

*The scene is the same: full lights on the lower stage. Chivasa and Vhenyasi still wait with their bicycles.*

Vhenyasi: *[Eyes on his watch.]* Uncle, we have waited enough. It's exactly eleven o'clock.

Chivasa: Let's not crawl anywhere near the gate or we may end up spoiling everything.

Vhenyasi: What, Uncle? He hinted that the operation should be secret but I am now beginning to smell a rat.

Chivasa: What do you say?

Vhenyasi: It's too long now that we should be kept waiting when he has taken so much money from us. What if ð

Chivasa: No. Let's wait here where he told us to wait.

Vhenyasi: No, *Sekuru*, <sup>7</sup>It now begins to dawn on me we might have been duped!

Chivasa: Is it?

Vhenyasi: Yes, if in the first car was the manager, who is doing that job at the farm-who organises the loading of the maize?

Chivasa: What?

Vhenyasi: If the white man sells four tonnes, why shouldn't he expect to see customers?

Chivasa: No. This maize was not supposed to be sold to Sidhuza but to the councillor.

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<sup>7</sup> Uncle



Vhenyasi: My sixth sense keeps on nagging at me that all we should expect to see of him now is a clean pair of his heels.

Chivasa: So-?

Vhenyasi: Let's follow him up and get to know everything even if it is going to be the worst.

Chivasa: No need to argue endlessly. If you see it fit that way, let's go. *[They get to the gate manned by a security guard.]*

Guard: Hello, Chivasa. I heard that you were waiting for something over there. What are you looking for here on the farms?

Chivasa: Is it you, Chishamba?

Guard: Yes, I'm two years at this job here.

Chivasa: Who told you I was around?

Guard: Tinashe Mananga.

Chivasa: Who is that one?

Guard: That young boy who passed by where you were.

Chivasa: Is he related to Crispen Mananga?

Guard: Yes, brother.

Chivasa: Is Crispen still inside? It's him we are waiting for.

Guard: Inside what?

Vhenyasi: Inside the farm.

Guard: It's prohibited. Look at that notice: TRESPASSERS ARE PROHIBITED. THEY CAN BE PROSECUTED.

Vhenyasi: Ah, ah, ah ah! How do we find him then?

Chivasa: Is he not in there? Oh, no. Where is he then?

Guard: Where? I refused him entry

Chivasa: Is he not working here?

Guard: It is close to a year since he was fired from here. *[Chivasa and Vhenyasi lock eyes.]* He told me he wanted to see his young brother in there and I refused to let him in.

Vhenyasi: You barred him entrance?

Guard: Mananga steals so much as to make himself a fugitive on the police wanted list.

Chivasa: Is the police after him? How come? *[Chivasa's face shows raw disbelief.]*

Vhenyasi: Let's find his young brother.

Guard: Yah, you get him in the compound. Skirt this fence and sneak over to speak to him. *[They ride off.]* They must have fallen prey. Only God knows the depths of sea where he got this rare charm, victims always wake up as if from a dream when he is already through with them!

*Full lights on the lower stage: Chivasa and Vhenyasi look over the fence, calling Tinashe without betraying their presence. Tinashe comes to them.*

Tinashe: Are you looking for me?

Vhenyasi: Yes, are you Crispin's brother?

Tinashe: I am. *[Indicating by a nod towards him]* Are you not VaChivasa?

Chivasa: Do you know me?

Tinashe: Yes, I knew you when I saw you over there.

Vhenyasi: We gave your brother ten million six hundred thousand dollars to buy us maize from Peppyson.

Tinashe: Oh, God! Sorry, sorry, you have been conned!

Chivasa: Shit!

Vhenyasi: It's his modus operandi! He's a polished conman!

Tinashe: He doesn't buy even clothes with that money . only gambling, drinking and flirting with prostitutes until all of it is spent.

Chivasa: Ancestors laughed at me. *[He holds his waist with both hands, staring blankly at the bare ground.]* Where will I tell Sidhuza I buried all that money? Ten million dollars!

Vhenyasi: Let not your heart sink, uncle. He is on foot and we are on bicycles and can get him.

Chivasa: Can we? I'm hopelessly uncertain. *[Looks at Vhenyasi's bicycle.]* Your rear tyre is flat!

Vhenyasi: *[Looks at it.]* Oh, shame. Tinashe, please bring me a knife. *[Tinashe brings the knife.]* It will not take long to mend.

Chivasa: I am feeling hungry and thirsty. Bring me some water to drink, please. *[Drinks a lot of water.]* You are very fast. You have finished mending quicker than I had expected!

Vhenyasi: Tinashe has helped.

Chivasa: Now we must ask Chishamba where we can get him.

Vhenyasi: Yes, his possible immediate port of call.

Tinashe: Where there is beer, women and gambling. Try Masvingo for a start. I am sorry and ashamed my brother has done this to you. I feel for you surely.

Chivasa: We know it is no fault of your own.

Vhenyasi: We may get him after all. We should ask Chishamba how best to track him now that we have nothing to hide from anyone any more.

CURTAIN

1.2

ACT TWO Scene 1

*Lower Stage: Spotlight shines on guard. Handcuffs dangle from a buckle on his pair of uniform trousers. In his right hand is a long black baton stick.*

Guard: *[Aloud]* I have my own problems - a professional teacher dismissed for opposition politics, which M.D.C party now doesn't give me a cent for my family to survive - the price of revolutionary sacrifice - but these two are neck-deep in their own shit with Crispen. Why do black people steal from each other so shamelessly? Even our leaders crafted their own elongated arm in the art. Our lives and hopes have always been that blue pool, on black tarmac road, that keeps out of reach no matter how near it appears when you drive into it. *[The guard shows the fingers of his left hand and holds them with his right hand, picking one after the other from the index finger to his thumb, counting slowly.]* First was the fight against colonial masters for so-called freedom and they called it the second Chimurenga, naming it after the first one when our forefathers fought and were defeated in resistance against colonisation; then, secondly, came independence that is no longer there; thirdly, they brought the Economic Structural Adjustment Program that they called ESAP; after ESAP failed they brought another one, the fourth, an Economic Reform Program they did not give a name, maybe because the abbreviation was not tongue-friendly to pronounce or they did not want it to last in our memories; *[He holds the thumb more firmly than he had been doing to the rest of the other fingers before it.]* and now these vengeful farm invasions they call the Third Chimurenga Revolution! *[The guard makes a fist with his left hand which he raises high up above his head.]* They want us to clench a slogan-fist to God in the sky and show Him how miserable they have made our lives! Ha-a-haa-ahaa. Our forefathers were right to advise us to laugh at misery in order to conquer the pain. *[He turns around and sees Vhenyasi and Chivasa coming.]* And these two cyclists are back again!

Vhenyasi: We come to tell you what now must be clear to you

Guard: Crispen has stolen from you?

Vhenyasi: Yes, ten million six hundred thousand.

Guard: Oh, gosh!

Chivasa: He promised to buy maize for Sidhuza from Peppy.

Guard: He no longer works here, also there is no maize farming here at all. You can see for yourselves that it's only sugarcane farming going on here.

Chivasa: Nobody knew all that. Now just help us where we can look for him from here, please.

Vhenyasi: That's our million-dollar question now.

Guard: He asked me if there was meat at Garry's butchery on a farm ten kilometres from here.

Vhenyasi: Might he have gone there?

Guard: I don't know.

Chivasa: Where is that?

Vhenyasi: Ha-a-ha-aa. This thief is cunning and could have asked you about Garry's place to mislead us on any attempt we would make to track him down.

Chivasa: So must we not try there first?

Vhenyasi: No. We may try Garry's farm first. Perhaps fortune has played him into our hands in making him release that piece of information unconsciously. Who knows?

Guard: Yes, if he has not gone there he has gone to Manjerenje Dam tuck-shop where they sell Chibuku ~~scuds~~<sup>8</sup>of beer.

Chivasa: It seems the spirit that guides him to steal forgets to remind him to buy new tyre sandals for his cracked feet.

*Full lights on the lower stage: Garry's Citrus Farm: Two workers picking oranges and stashing them into sacks.*

Worker I: Have you heard that Garry is going to Cape Town on holiday for a whole month?

Worker II: White farmers are blessed.

Worker I: They go on holiday while we writhe in food shortage blues, scorching drought and a little foreign currency from those who send money to their loved ones from abroad in exile.

Worker II: That affects young learned chaps like you, not old men like us.

Worker I: Come on, *Madala*,<sup>9</sup> where is your mind? Everyone wallows in this mess.

Worker II: But the white farmers who have taken their wealth out of this country will laugh as they watch through the window of time. *[He stashes more oranges in the sack.]*

Worker I: Yes, those whose farms were taken fled to their countries of origin.

Worker II: Where? This is their home. Do you think most of them still communicate with their kinsmen in Britain after two hundred years? No, they have no

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<sup>8</sup> Beer brewed by The Zimbabwe National Breweries packed in returnable hard plastic containers shaped like the Scud Missiles Iraq used to strike Tel-Aviv during the 1990 Gulf War.

<sup>9</sup> Old man

other place they can point a finger to and call home. Africa is their home and if one of them tries to claim a part of England as home, those who are there will lock him up in a sanatorium.

Worker I: That is correct. This madness scattered everyone like sand on the sea shore, whether you are black or white, *Madala*.

Worker II: Others went to Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Mozambique.

Worker I: Mozambique is better now but we used to laugh at them, running away from a civil war. Now we flee our own country for the same reasons.

Worker II: Drought is from God but these farm invasions are man-made.

Worker I: Is there a solution?

Worker II: Yes, vote them out.

Worker I: How? In elections they dig holes in the playground and train themselves to dodge them before the match.

Worker II: Our people are meek like doves, ducks, lambs or pigeons. Why not take the cue from events in the DRC, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Rwanda or our Mozambican neighbours a decade and a half ago?

Worker I; Very few old men are like you, *Madala*.

Worker II: My name is Joϕurg. I didn't grow up here looking after cows and goats. Those who know me well call me Joϕurg *mufaname*<sup>10</sup> I am a different character with different characteristics.

Worker I: How can one start a war here?

Worker II: The army just splits into two camps and fire starts with both parties sharing all the weapons in the national armouries.

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<sup>10</sup> My young man



- Worker I: Can our docile kinsmen do that?
- Worker II: Not until oppression, suffering, hunger, disease and death leave them no choice.
- Worker I: Pick oranges and stop babbling, old man. You said you are not learned a few moments ago but where do you get all that stuff?
- Worker II: I listen to Shona news over the radio.
- Worker I: The authorities will make you vanish into thin air like cigarette smoke in this whirlwind if you do not teach yourself to say the right words.
- Worker II: Is this poverty and suffering not enough of a tomb?
- Worker I: To have a tomb is better than to end up not known where you are buried. There will be no grave to show your grandchildren.
- Worker II: Look, those two brave this heat by cycling at this hour!
- Worker I: They seem to be looking for people to ask something.
- Worker II: Yes, they have already seen us. *[The cyclists rest their bicycles on stands, they greet one another and Vhenyasi describes their ordeal to their prick-eared audience.]*
- Worker I: Everybody knows Crispen for that on all surrounding farms.
- Worker II: Garry's eyes are red from looking for him for an electric pump he stole.
- Worker I: He lied to the people who were repairing it in Chiredzi that Garry had sent him.
- Vhenyasi: Did they give it to him?
- Worker II: Why not?
- Worker I: He showed them a letter bearing this farm's official stamp together with old identity documents he got when he was working for him long back.

Worker II: What a bad day for you!

Worker I: Try, if you can, to catch up with him at Manjerenje dam turn-off. One thing for certain is that he is running away right now. There are two drinking outlets there.

Vhenyasi: Is there anything on sale to eat here?

Chivasa: We are very hungry now.

Vhenyasi: None of us dreamt about anything like hunger. Crispen promised us game meat in peanut butter as soon as our maize would be delivered!

Worker II: Such are the wiles of a sly thief.

Worker I: There is no *sadza*<sup>11</sup> here except paw-paws and bananas from our Whiteman's shop when it opens at two o'clock. *[A bell rings.]* That's two o'clock and we are going for lunch.

Vhenyasi: Do you go for lunch at two?

Worker I: We are working overtime this week and do not have a lunch hour but just a lunch break.

Chivasa: Bicycles are hell to ride on empty stomachs and also without water.

Worker II: *[After sneaking into the compound he brings water.]* Water is everywhere on this part of the farm. The rest of the farm is dry land for wild animals. Irrigation here is for fruits only.

*Full lights on lower stage: Vhenyasi has bought fifteen bananas and two paw-paws.*

Chivasa: I will eat bananas, just the bananas, not those raw paw-paws. They will scald the corners of my mouth with that milky sap dripping on them.

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<sup>11</sup> Thick porridge made from maize meal; a Shona staple food.

- Vhenyasi: *[Handing him ten bananas.]* Iqñ giving you ten because you are not eating paw-paws. *[Aside.]* He doesnq know the pangs of hunger yet. He forgets that he is away from Sidhuzaq butchery where he is always roasting beef behind everyoneq back. *[They quickly eat and get onto their bicycles.]*
- Chivasa: You ride too fast. Iqñ tired.
- Vhenyasi: Listen to that birdq song. Itq sweet.
- Chivasa: *[Trailing a long distance behind Vhenyasi.]* My energy is spent, all so spent that I would rather walk this bicycle.
- Vhenyasi: *[Stops and waits.]* Is it for lack of power to cycle that you remain far behind like that?
- Chivasa: I had too much liquor last night. Blessed are you who do not drink for you shall inherit this journey.
- Vhenyasi: I have heard voices which seem to come from people at the beer hall ahead. Listen now. *[Faint voices catch their ears.]*
- Chivasa: *[Listens quietly again, looking blankly ahead.]* Thatq it! We have finally got there.
- Vhenyasi: We must approach at hawk speed to catch him unawares.
- Chivasa: We will get him.
- Vhenyasi: Once the two selling points are in view we part, each closing in at once to give him no chance to escape. *[They storm the places simultaneously.]*  
Good afternoon, bar lady.
- Barlady: Afternoon, brother.
- Vhenyasi: Iqñ Vhenyasi from Chiredzana. My uncle and I are looking for someone, Crispin Mananga, who has conned us out of ten million six hundred thousand.

Barlady: Oh, bloody bastard! He's a well known thief here and passed this place around ten o'clock in the morning. *[Chivasa joins them with a crestfallen face.]*

Chivasa: He's gone. Everyone here says he bought two scuds finished one at a single gulp, and got away drinking the other.

Barlady: He bought them from me and all of us were convinced from his manner that all was not well.

Oldman: He kept turning to look back where he had come.

Barlady: He left change he couldn't wait for.

Vhenyasi: Which way did he go?

Oldman: He took that road to Chekenyere. If you are going to Chekenyere, look for him at Mbambo village. He has relatives there.

Chivasa: Thank you all. We better give it another trial in what now looks like a wild goose chase.

Oldman: You try him at Chekenyere; it's too early to give up when you have lost so much money.

*Full lights on the lower stage: The road to Chekenyere stretches westwards. It is desolate until an old woman eventually falls into view from the opposite direction. A black walking stick supports her frail figure.*

Chivasa: At last we have met someone to ask.

Vhenyasi: *[Checking time]* A few seconds to four now.

Chivasa: We must have covered enough ground to close in on him now. *[They come within a few yards of the old woman.]*

Vhenyasi: Afternoon, *Ambuya*<sup>12</sup>

Oldwoman: *Hevo, vazukuru*<sup>13</sup>

Vhenyasi: Have you met a man in blue overalls, green shirt and green pair of trousers on this road?

Oldwoman: That one? Oh, I met him a long way from here. His speed was as good as yours on your metal horses.

Chivasa: Was he running?

Oldwoman: Not running. His single stride covered the space of four normal ones! He seemed to befriend a whirlwind! You can't catch up with that one, a springbok fleeing a veldt fire.

Vhenyasi: How far is Chekenyere from here?

Oldwoman: Don't think about distance when you are on a journey or you will end up throwing away those metal things. You just tell yourselves that you will get there at last. Tighten your belts, *vazukuru*.

Chivasa: Thank you, *ambuya*. [*She passes, shaking her head*] What do you think about what she says?

Vhenyasi: Can't you see that she is too old to properly remember or make out the difference in time between an hour and a minute?

Chivasa: You are right. Her eyesight is so frail that she sees a standing person as walking, one walking as running and the one running as flying.

Vhenyasi: She would have struck you with that black walking stick to hear that.

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<sup>12</sup> Grandmother

<sup>13</sup> Grandchildren.

Chivasa: Hunger and laughter fight inside my empty stomach. There is a war raging inside.

Vhenyasi: What? *[He casts a knowing look at him.]*

Chivasa: Please let me eat that paw-paw or I faint.

Vhenyasi: *[Retrieves the paw-paw from the bicycle carrier and slices it.]* Has your hunger made it ripe or you forget the danger to the corners of your mouth?

Chivasa: That's history. The hunger inside me, if transferred into a child, would instantly kill it.

Vhenyasi: Let's sit down, eat and rest for a while. I also need to munch more of it now.

Chivasa: Take a look at that man coming over.

Vhenyasi: A suitcase and paper bags! A gentleman from town is a rare sight these days.

Chivasa: Yes, he must have got off a bus or something. *[Enter Gentleman]*

Gentleman: Hello guys.

Chivasa/Vhenyasi: *[At once]* Hello.

Gentleman: Are you eating raw paw-paws without water to wash or drink?

Vhenyasi: Yes. We have no water.

Gentleman: *[Taking out a loaf of bread from one of his paper bags]* Have this, my brothers, you must be hungry.

Vhenyasi: Thank you very much, brother.

Chivasa: *[Clapping his hands]* I didn't think I was going to make it. You saved me indeed.

Gentleman: I can see that you are from a very long way and need some cooked food.  
Is it all right where you are coming?

Vhenyasi: *[Tearing a piece from the loaf]* Not at all. I was about to ask if you have met a man in blue overalls, green trousers, green T- shirt and tyre sandals?

Gentleman: Crispen? I saw him. That bloody bastard got into the bus from which I dropped. He has gone to town.

Chivasa: Gone! Where?

Gentleman: Masvingo. I know him very well but don't like him or want to see him any more in our village where he comes to visit relatives but ends up stealing from people. He sometimes takes money from people to whom he sells things that are not there.

Chivasa: Oh, Jesus! Is he known for that this far?

Gentleman: I know him, believe me. My name is Michael Mbambo, headman of this village. I am a laboratory technician at Masvingo General Hospital.

Vhenyasi: Mbambo?

Mbambo: Yes.

Vhenyasi: We have already been told about you at Manjerenje turn. off. We have been conned out of ten million six hundred thousand back in the farms.

Mbambo: *[Amazed]* Lord, forbid! How?

Vhenyasi: Crispen arranged with a businessman we work for to sell him maize from Peppy's farm.

Mbambo: *[Scratching his head.]* Do you want to get him?

Chivasa: How do we get him? We come from very far - Chiredzana Business Centre.

Mbambo: That's not a problem. *[Scratches his head again]* The bloody bastard has sold himself to me on your behalf unwittingly.

Vhenyasi: How?

Mbambo: He told me that he is going to attend court on Tuesday next week. Look, today is Thursday and you have ample time to plan.

Chivasa: Where is the court?

Mbambo: Masvingo. The case involves some cattle he stole here two months ago and he is out on bail.

Chivasa: Another theft case? A writer would make a good novel of his stories!

Mbambo: Our search ends here, Brother Mike. It is good we met or we would have never known Crispin is already aboard a bus.

Chivasa: All we have to do now is go back home.

Mbambo: Don't worry guys. Come and put up at home with me. It's already too late to get back to Chiredzana in that state. Moreover it is dangerous to cross the dam wall after sunset because the hippopotamuses will be out to graze as soon as nightfall and you can't be there earlier anyway.

Vhenyasi: What shall we do? Uncle, do you hear him? He says we can sleep at his home and go home tomorrow.

Chivasa: We are tired and must thank him for his hospitality. Rest is all I need now; we can go with you, brother.

Mbambo: You have got him definitely. You can go to Masvingo on Tuesday or a day before, make a report to the police there and get him arrested right in court! Instead of being sorrowful now is the time to shout EUREKA! EUREKA!



## ACT TWO Scene 2

*Full lights on upper stage: Sidhuza and Mai Sidhuza are sitting in the lounge after supper. Sidhuza is reading the Herald newspaper while the latter is knitting.*

Sidhuza: I have been listening and listening to every sound in the air for the sound of a tractor coming full with our bags of maize.

Mai Sidhuza: I told you that my heart missed a beat at the thought of giving him so much money.

Sidhuza: What do you mean? It's all over and we won't get him.

Mai Sidhuza: They sent Magasi with word about the theft. No anticipation of tractor sound now. [*Mai Sidhuza unrolls a new cotton ball of wool and works on it.*]

Sidhuza: That's better; I had already been teaching Brighton how to drive a new Nissan Cabster lorry I had already bought in my dreams. [*He turns an imaginary steering wheel in the air with both hands.*] Dreams!

Mai Sidhuza: He-e-hee-e. I would rather laugh at misfortune.

Sidhuza: To release the pressure and make your will-power strong enough to carry on.

Mai Sidhuza: Yah, it drives away stress, depression and restlessness - all recipes for suicide.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. Many end up a tree with a rope. Have you made up your mind for it?

Mai Sidhuza: I wouldn't die for this. I didn't arrange this deal. [*Mai Sidhuza works the knitting-needles on the wool without looking at her hands.*]

Sidhuza: Aren't you the one who advised Chivasa to consult Chikwama before buying, to make sure the sale was genuine?

Mai Sidhuza: What could I have done, already smelling a rat? I honestly didn't trust him from the moment I set my eyes on him.

Sidhuza: There is always some element of gambling in today's business; hence one must expect to lose sometimes. [*He scratches his head thoughtfully.*]

Mai Sidhuza: But one is also expected to play one's cards all right. [*She yawns.*]

Sidhuza: Yes, man. Now that it has happened, do you expect me to cry or piss in my pants for you to see how it really pains me, losing so much money to underwear-less tramp?

Mai Sidhuza: Hee-e-eee. Let's call it off, my husband darling. How did you see that he did not have underwear?

Sidhuza: Didn't you see his arse hanging through the little windows on his torn overalls and worn-out green pants?

Mai Sidhuza: [*Yawning deeply.*] These shortages bring us all this hell.

Sidhuza: White business people deliberately withhold basic commodities to stir civil strife in retaliation for their farms, industries and mines taken over by the government.

Mai Sidhuza: So we should be careful not to scratch at each other's faces in the house or in business with Chivasa and Vhenyasi when they come because we know the root of the problem. [*She unwinds a considerable length of wool from the ball.*]

Sidhuza: Yes, man. White fellows would have the last laugh to see a video footage of Mai Sidhuza's knitting tools all over my face tonight and then see my hands at Chivasa's throat tomorrow, demanding every cent of ten million!

Mai Sidhuza: That will make them laugh at us.

Sidhuza: Haa-a-a-a-a-aaaaaaa! They laugh at black people the way we laugh at baboons fighting over a scorpion - a hollow, distraught black laughter, reverberating throughout the whole continent. You must hear Gamera's explanation of it all.

Mai Sidhuza: I used to read about it in those newspapers you buy, people buying bags of sand mixed with maize and drums of water laced with diesel or petrol. Today the same misfortune has visited our own doorstep.

Sidhuza: This is just the beginning of a falling economy. These shortages slowly come into reality.

Mai Sidhuza: What will we do? The situation is very bad already. I will call Gamera to tell us how he views our present situation.

Sidhuza: Worse times are ahead. Imagine what it will be like without any trade with other countries.

Mai Sidhuza: All that is already happening.

Sidhuza: Your Head of State's head is harder than a rock. In the newspaper today it is written, %He says a big NO to Commonwealth, I.M.F. and the World Bank. He says he doesn't smart from recently hurled smart sanctions on his globe-trotting antics.+

Mai Sidhuza: The sad part of it is that all this does not affect them. Those who cause all these problems do not suffer the negative results of their selfish decisions.

Sidhuza: Yes, man, instead they ban newspapers.

Mai Sidhuza: Jeremiah in the Bible laments, %Why does the way of the wicked prosper?+  
Let's go to bed, Baba vaBright, it is already very late.

Sidhuza: Time?

Mai Sidhuza: A quarter to midnight. *[They lock eyes in surprise.]* We will never solve this  
country's problems sitting up all night, losing precious rest.

Sidhuza: Only if you were Margaret Thatcher . the Iron Lady. *[Switches off lights in  
the lounge and heads to their bedroom.]*

*Spotlight on the lower stage shines on Chivasa and Vhenyasi. They have arrived at  
Sidhuza's house early in the morning where they wait, hesitating to knock.*

Chivasa: It is good both of us having come, I am scaredō

Vhenyasi: If ancestors have inflicted a wound on you, it is their desire that flies lick it.  
*[Vhenyasi makes to knock.]*

Chivasa: No. No. Wait, I'm forgetting the first proper words to startō to beginō

Vhenyasi: Take heart, I will do all the talking for both of us.

Chivasa: I think I heard someone walking inside.

Vhenyasi: *[Knocks three times.]* We may appear the more stupid, standing on the  
doorstep without knocking.

Chivasa: I don't know what blinded me about asking for advice from Chikwama first.  
She asked me to confirm with Chikwama, who also works for Peppy, if  
there was maize on sale at the farm before giving Crispen the money. Mai  
Sidhuza made that plain as plain clear to me.

Vhenyasi: If you had told me about that important precaution I was going to urge you  
to take it as warned. It means they did not entirely trust this Crispen.

Chivasa: These are *winds* and *winds* are the work of evil spirits.

Vhenyasi: You are telling me that now but what has happened can't be undone.

Chivasa: This time someone is coming.

Mai Sidhuza: *[Loudly.]* Come in please!

*Full lights on the upper stage. The two climb up. In the lounge Sidhuza and Mai Sidhuza offer Chivasa and Vhenyasi seats on the settee.*

Sidhuza: Magasi, you sent yesterday to tell us that Crispen got away with the money.

Vhenyasi: Please forgive us, grown up men losing so much money in broad daylight. I'm sorry, VaSidhuza and Mai Sidhuza, because this loss draws you back considerably in your business. He just outwitted us and we only realized we had been duped when he was long gone.

Chivasa: We got information on the same day that he had got onto a bus to Masvingo but had just wanted to check at Jerera in case he had made a stop-over there.

Mai Sidhuza: *[Rubbing sleep from her eyes.]* Listen, Chivasa and Vhenyasi; Baba Langton and I should share the pain and burden this misfortune brought us with one heart and not blame each other for anything or you for that matter.

Sidhuza: We discussed this at length last night. Yes, man, every one of us must feel peace of mind so that we can work and plan for our future. Did you make a report to the police? *[Mai Sidhuza walks out of the lounge and disappears into the kitchen.]*

Vhenyasi: We hadn't any time for that with the urge to get hold of him all over our minds.

Sidhuza: Reporting to the police nowadays is a sheer waste of time unless you have money to buy their attention.

Vhenyasi: The man who told us that he got into a bus to Masvingo is the one at whose home we slept on the day the money was stolen. [*A clanging of utensils is heard. The sound of singing comes from boiling water in a kettle.*]

Chivasa: It was him whom Jesus sent to us. That man!

Sidhuza: He must have helped when you needed it.

[*Enter Mai Sidhuza, eating a pancake.*]

Vhenyasi: That man told us that Crispen will be in court on Tuesday in Masvingo for another case, stock theft, for which he is out on bail.

Mai Sidhuza: How did this man know about it? [*Mai Sidhuza, chewing, looks at Chivasa.*]

Chivasa: He is headman of a village called Mbambo, where Crispen visits his relatives who live in the same village.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. He can be got in court if we go and report this case in Masvingo tomorrow. Tomorrow is Sunday.

Vhenyasi: The man could not believe our luck that Crispen just told him about that court date without having been asked.

Sidhuza: We have got him for sure. You two prepare for that journey tomorrow, well before Tuesday. [*Sidhuza opens the window.*] It is stuffy in here.

Mai Sidhuza: The earlier the better, so that no room is left to let him off the hook.

Vhenyasi: This time he will never ever suspect any net has been cast.

Mai Sidhuza: If that court case is there and he has gone to attend it, then he is already in the net under water.

Sidhuza: Yes, man. Our job remains just to haul him onto the surface on dry land on Tuesday. [*Sidhuza strokes his goatee beard with the fingertips of his left hand.*]

Chivasa: Oh! I have given myself to God in prayer for his punishment. All I now live hoping to witness and enjoy is the sight of him being overtaken and taken the better of by fate. [*Chivasa shakes his head.*]

Mai Sidhuza: No hard feelings, please.

Chivasa: I would suck enjoyment out of it like a bee takes to nectar.

Mai Sidhuza: I can imagine how bitter this experience has made you.

Chivasa: [*Chivasa knits tattoos of rage on his brow.*] I could kill him with my bare hands if I meet him and could enjoy it just the way a weasel sucks eggs.

Mai Sidhuza: [*Mai Sidhuza giggles with mirth.*] Learn to forgive.

Chivasa: [*The folds of skin on Chivasa's forehead are still erect.*] If I see him breathe his last, up my throat will well a delight that will get my voice box torn to shreds from the last laugh, that last laugh I shall have when I see him punished by the will of the Heavens. I yearn for the worst to happen to him. I do wish for that for the rest of my life.

Sidhuza: If you had boasted to be clever boys, around the township today your tails are tucked between your legs. Yes man, isn't it so? Crispin rules the roost.

Mai Sidhuza: Forget that, I see Chivasa has visibly lost weight in two days. I will give you two kilograms steak to roast and eat the whole day with Vhenyasi.

Sidhuza: I will phone Hamadziripi and ask him to permit you to come to Masvingo with Chivasa tomorrow. I am going to report the case today and you will come tomorrow for statements.

Vhenyasi: That's fine. He will understand it.

Mai Sidhuza: Don't carry home any of that meat, Chivasa. You are from the forest where you were without any food.

Chivasa: We spent the whole of our first day eating raw paw-paws.

Sidhuza: Yes man, raw paw-paws? You may take the whole day off to rest and fix problems that have arisen at home while you've been away.

Mai Sidhuza: [*Standing up.*] May I make you some tea?

Vhenyasi: No, thank you. I guess we rush to do our *braai*. Roast meat beats everything.

Chivasa: I do agree with Vhenyasi. Thank you, Mai Sidhuza.

### ACT 2 Scene 3

*Full lights on lower stage: A two-roomed asbestos flat-roofed house and two grass-thatched brick kitchen huts form Chivasa's home just beside a dusty main road. His wife is sweeping the yard as Chivasa smiles all his way into the yard.*

Chivasa: Mai T! Mai T!

Rebecca: *Shewe-e-e...*

Chivasa: Leave all that and come closer to hear good, good- the best news I bring you, my wife.

Rebecca: What's the news?

Chivasa: Mai Sidhuza and Sidhuza were not mad at me at all! Instead they sympathized with us.

Rebecca: Your happiness made me think that the thief has been caught!



Chivasa: No, my wife, I had sleepless nights how they were going to take it. *[They get into a kitchen hut. Chivasa sits on a chair]*

Rebecca: Were they not angry with you or even demand that you pay them back? *[She unwraps a reed mat, spreads it on the floor and sits on it]*

Chivasa: Not anything of that sort. Instead they gave us two kilograms of beef to roast.

Rebecca: You lie. Where is it then?

Chivasa: She said I was not supposed to carry any of it home but just have it all for a nice *braai*.

Rebecca: That was good of her; your spirit was so low when you came last night. I gave you all a woman can but you could not be as lifted in spirit as you look now.

Chivasa: At least I am relieved, Mai Tariro.

Rebecca: With your stomach full of meat you are the Biblical Rich Man before poor Lazarus like me.

Chivasa: Even if you were there you were not going to taste it. Not a bite because she was saying all of it was for me and Vhenyasi only.

Rebecca: And not a little for Sidhuza?

Chivasa: Not a little for him.

Rebecca: He's greedy, comic and full of funny stories. He is always reading the newspapers and always says, *%es man+* to the one he talks to, no matter if she is a woman, girl, his daughter or wife.

Chivasa: Ha-aaa. You got what he is like. *[There is barking]* Who is there?

*[Enter Gamera, clad in a brown jersey and once-white-but-now-cream pair of trousers. He is bald-headed and barefoot.]*

Gamera: Hold back your dog.

Chivasa: *[Coming out of the hut]* It does not bite during the day like this. Come peacefully, VaGamera.

Gamera: How is your family, *Hungwe*?

Chivasa: Bring chairs out here, Mai Tariro

*[She brings the chairs]*

Rebecca: How are you, VaGamera?

Gamera: I'm fine and you?

Rebecca: Alright. *[She spreads her reed mat and sits]*

Chivasa: How are you, VaGamera?

Gamera: Everyone is alright except lack of food all over.

Chivasa: That has become a song on everyone's lips.

Gamera: I heard you were robbed where you went.

Chivasa: It's true. True like the sun rising from the east every day. Who told you already?

Gamera: Word, like seeds, is wind-dispersed. How did that happen?

Chivasa: After taking money promising to bring us maize, he ran away, leaving us keeping guard the proverbial millstone like dogs.

Gamera: What son of a fucking devil's bitch! I'm sorry, very sorry; evil visited you to lose so much money, most of which was not yours.

Chivasa: Sidhuza and his wife have shown me deep, deep understanding not to make me pay them back their money.

Gamera: True God's son and daughter. How were you going to repay that?  
Working for them the rest of your life?

Chivasa: It had become a nightmare for me, VaGamera.

Gamera: He understood that he had also given in to temptation, sending you for maize he had not seen. You all fell for the trap! They are just being rational.

Chivasa: I don't know why my ancestors left me on bare ground like that.

Rebecca: Thank them for softening your employer for mercy.

Gamera: True indeed. I had come just to see you and share what weighs you down to make it lighter. Mere talking sometimes heals.

Chivasa: I am glad for your kind words. *[The dog barks again]* Who is that again? *[The dog barks more viciously and Chivasa swiftly rises from the chair to restrain it.]* Shut upō Shut up, President! Sit down, President. Shut upō away, President! *[Enter Maonei]*

Maonei: *[Flies into the homestead with her thick upper lip tucked into her snout-like nostrils]* Are you back at last? I thought I wasn't going to see you again.

Chivasa: Why never seeing me again? Would I desert my home?

Maonei: Why not with a sack full of bearer cheques you got without shedding a trickle of your sweat?

Chivasa: *[Looks at Rebecca first and then at Gamera with an eye pleading for intercession]* Are you angry with President that wanted to bite you?

Maonei: What does that dog know about money you stole from my stupid husband?

Chivasa: What do you mean, Mai Hando?

Maonei: Pwatō Pwatō Pwat do you mean? Is that questioning a pump from God to fill my children's empty stomachs with manna? *[She holds her hips with both hands and kneads the bare ground with the toes of her bare feet, causing a belching thin cloud of dust]*

Chivasa: Sit down on that mat, Mbuya<sup>14</sup>. I didn't expect youō

Maonei: Pwexpect. Pwexpect, pwexpect what? I don't care about your education, arithmetic or maths that you use to steal money from people. I want my money here and now or I strip naked for you to watch and enjoy a film for which you will not pay a single cent.

Chivasa: Give me time to find means to repay your money. It was stolenō

Maonei: *[Unbuttoning the third button of her blouse from top to bottom]* You will first see the two strips of shrinking bark of my once full breasts and take a photograph if you wish! From there I will lead you to the scenic terrain of forest at the centre of my womanhood. *[Keeps on undressing]*

Gamera: *Yowee-e-e! Yowe-ee-e. Hezvoko- Bwa<sup>15</sup>- a-a* Stop, stop, stop please. *[Taking out some money from his pocket]* Here is your money. How much is it?

Rebecca: Hi, thank you, VaGamera. Where would I have gone for shame!

Maonei: *[Looking at the bundle of bearer cheques in Gamera's hand]* Two hundred and forty thousand.

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<sup>14</sup> Grandmother

<sup>15</sup> Oh! There it drops ( slogan for MDC)

- Gamera: *[Counting out a bundle]* There you are, Mai Hando. Chivasa is going to give me my money back when he gets paid. He is working.
- Chivasa: May our Lord bless you for what you have done for me today. Very few people help each other like this.
- Gamera: That's what friends are for.
- Rebecca: What were we going to do if you were not here?
- Gamera: Having been here would not have helped much if I had not carried this money with me when I left home.
- Rebecca: VaGamera, I'm giving you a cock to relish with your family today as my expression of heart-felt gratitude.
- Gamera: Thank you. My mouth has wounds from termites we are eating *sadza* with for the past week. We can no longer afford meat from Sidhuza's butchery.
- Maonei: *[Putting the money inside her bra]* Go and eat that cock today and tomorrow they wake up demanding payment for it. They will tell you this money you gave me is the price of that cock.
- Rebecca: You have been given your money. What else do you want here? Relocate your reeking skeleton anywhere that is not my home please, please.
- Maonei: I'm not talking to you.
- Rebecca: *[Standing up and pointing a finger at her]* Go away or do you want me to sink my clean set of teeth into the stinking flesh of your rotten arse you go about showing people? Satan! Be gone!
- Gamera: I gave you money to avoid this. What else do you want here? A married woman who was once a school teacher must at least deserve some semblance of respect.
- Maonei: You are all thieves that come to each other's rescue. *[She leaves with her head lifted high on a craned neck.]*

Chivasa: Mai T, wipe off the footmarks of her cracked feet or the police may mistake her trail for tyre-prints of a stolen vehicle on my yard and arrest me.

Maonei: *[Turning her face to them]* Pwolice, Pwolice, Pwolice- who doesn't know all of them are thieves whose shame they hide in the heat of their canvas khaki uniforms.*[Exit Maonei]*

Gamera: How does Hando put up with such temptation personified?

Rebecca: He has got used to it and no longer finds anything wrong with her at all.

Gamera: Hunger is now blowing a whistle whose shrieking sound people must learn to bear without fussing or fighting.

Rebecca: *[Bringing a basketful of nuts to the centre]* You may eat these nuts but help me crack them. I want to make some butter.

Gamera: Don't complain if we eat most of these nuts.

Chivasa: That's what I was about to say.

Rebecca: It's food's purpose to be eaten. Only Care International or World Food Programme may save the situation.

Chivasa: Someone told me yesterday that some unprintable topmost authority shouted at the international media that his nation does not need food aid.

Rebecca: It's true that there are rich people up there in no need of food aid.

Gamera: *[Cracking nuts]* Do these few by any means deserve the title of a nation?

Rebecca: They are the nation because poor peasants and all workers everywhere do not have any voice.

Gamera: Very good. That is what I always teach people to understand. It is in the people's power to change them.

- Chivasa: Our people are too scared for that. They wait for God to intervene.
- Gamera: I go about preaching to people that this hunger and misery are a result of a human art called politics.
- Rebecca: *[Pouring cracked nuts into a dish]* All what you say requires a change of government.
- Gamera: True. Many people have been killed for that. Their excuse to kill is simple: MDC is a party belonging to former white colonialists, waging a war to re-colonise the country.
- Rebecca: Do you see how they justify their illegal crushing of the opposition? It means therefore that while you say your party is a Movement for Democratic Change, the government takes it for a military front and the whole country as a war zone.
- Chivasa: And every member of the MDC party as an undesirable military opponent.
- Gamera: So far-fetched is their logic that the party membership card is their opponent's gun which must be surrendered on capture.
- Chivasa: How will our party win militarised elections? That's why most of the people have given up everything to God.
- Gamera: Our not distant history left a generation of war-scared old peasants, remnants of the war of liberation who time slowly fizzles out of the way. It is too late for our Head of State to emulate Fidel Castro, Gadaffi or that nut in Korea, criticising imperialism when he is already losing sight and teeth from age. Africa is a civil war zone and Zimbabwe is no exception.
- Rebecca: No more war please.
- Gamera: Being a black African, one becomes the recipient of a two-fold curse by predestination. Give me some more of those nuts to crack, Chivasa.
- Chivasa: What is that you call predestination?

Gamera: It's a teaching in whose belief a person exists under control of supernatural powers which have already predetermined how one would live one's own life.

Chivasa: Ah-ah! Aa-h! Your books have taught you strange ideas.

Rebecca: Which are the two curses to which predestination has given us, being black oppressed people?

Gamera: Firstly, the black skin is associated with the dark side of life; black people are seen by some whites as less human and on the lowest rung on the human ladder after the Indians, Asians, and Coloureds down past the Black man to the apes.

Chivasa: He-e-ee-de! So the whites are on top?

Gamera: Yes. Secondly, most of our political leaders are ideologically bankrupt despots who crave personal power and wealth at the expense of taxpayers and all the citizens.

Rebecca: Do you see dictatorships becoming a thing of the past in Africa?

Gamera: Not in the foreseeable future. African masses will, for a long time, remain political victims, submerged in mud pools of poverty while vengeful whites unzip their pink mouths in laughter.

Chivasa: Hahaha-a! Hoo-ooooda! *Huya uzwe iwe!*<sup>16</sup>

Rebecca: That's why they chased you from where you were teaching, is it not?

Chivasa: These people from university see clearly, with insight into what happens from top to bottom of society. Why do they hate the truth?

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<sup>16</sup> Come and hear!



Gamera: Many people believe a social contract in our country may resolve this crisis but how will two people talk peace when the other one is holding out an axe?

Rebecca: You said African dictatorships would be there for a long time. Now you say a social contract would not work. Why are you so pessimistic?

Gamera: After Kaunda, Chiluba in Zambia stole with his own Movement for Democracy party there. He also became a villain in the end. What guarantee is there that our own M.D.C will not steal and become corrupt once in power? Can you see M.D.C leaders already grow potbellies and tennis-ball cheeks?

Chivasa: Then it's not worthwhile to clamour for a new set of political fraudsters, knowing they will do the same at the end of the day.

Gamera: It's a wheel turning and turning, in whose labyrinth it sets people's lives for generations to come.

Rebecca: No beginning or end? But why are you, university lecturers, treated like this?

Gamera: Violence is now the order of the day - beating and killing of members of the opposition party by ruling party youths they train in their own concentration camps.

Chivasa: Now they are abducting us, using the C. I. O, police and military intelligence cops.

Gamera: We will be left without a choice except going into exile.

Chivasa: I will follow brothers and sisters already in the Diaspora.

Gamera: When we go to other countries they cry, %Brain Drain!+

Rebecca: It's true; our country has gone to the dogs. Who did you say was saying that in the Great Hall at the University in 1988, when he addressed the students?

Gamera: Edgar Tekere. The topic was *Whither Socialism in Zimbabwe: are we still on track?* He said then that the socialist revolutionary train had already been derailed and His Excellency was hanging in the clouds with only his legs that could be seen desperately dangling, kicking out in the empty blue sky! *[He rises from his chair]* I'm going, please.

Rebecca: Wait a little for your cock. *[She throws a few nuts in the hut, making a cackling noise at which fowls rush into the hut, gobbling up the nuts.]*

Gamera: I thank her for saving my mouth whose skin inside is in tatters from jaws of termites I have been eating with *sadza* the whole of this week. *[She comes and hands him the cock]* *Mazvita, Mazvita*<sup>17</sup>.

Rebecca: You go and have something with which to eat *sadza*, VaGamera. The cock is not fully grown.

Gamera: I'm going home straight. Hear from your husband why I thank you already on my toes. *[He goes with the cock clasped under his armpit]* Goodbye.

Chivasa: *[To Rebecca]* He said the cock would make a change from termites, which were tearing the skin inside his mouth.

Rebecca: He has helped us and a good person's visit gives blessings to a home.

Chivasa: I am proud of what you have done, Mai T. A good turn deserves another!

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<sup>17</sup> Thank you, thank you.

1.3

ACT 3 Scene I

*A cardboard signboard, erected on a wooden pole, on which is written: Makuva Street.*

*Masvingo City.*

*Lower stage. Time Machigo staggers home, drunk. He meets a policeman and a woman.*

Policeman: He's drinking in the street. That is an offence.

Woman: *[Has an umbrella and a sunhat].* That's your job, all right, but can't you leave him alone?

Policeman: These drunkards must have respect for the law.

Time: Hello, Babylon Officer. *[Drinks from his bottle]*

Policeman: Who is Babylon Officer? Have Iō

Time: Showing off in front of your fucking bitch? Even a dog without a tail would laugh at people taking bitches home this HIV&Aids age. *[The policeman takes the beer bottle from his hand.]*

Policeman: You are under arrest for public drinking, my friend; you get to Chikato Police Station with me right now. *[Makes to handcuff him]*

Time: I am not resisting arrest. No handcuffs, Mr President Methusela's dog.

Policeman: Move! I have to get you also for insulting His Excellency.

Time: Do we pass through your whore's place so you can feast on a can full of worms before proceeding?

Policeman: Your mouth is foul.

Time: You swine are not paid enough but still bother us whose cash is *unspendable*.

Policeman: Your money is yours.

Time: Why don't you hunt down thieves, robbers, rapists and a hell lot of other criminals?

Policeman: This is also part of my job.

*At Chikato Police Station. The two get into the Charge Office, leaving the woman outside. In charge is a woman, Sergeant- Mapiye.*

Mapiye: What's his case? *[Gives Time a cold stare]*

Policeman: *[He points at Time and shakes his head.]* I have arrested him for public drinking and insulting his Excellency, the President.

Mapiye: Were you drinking out in the street?

Time: Yes.

Mapiye: Come over to the counter, you dare insult his Excellency?

Time: No, I insulted President Methuselah. *[He belches loudly.]*

Mapiye: You belch once and fill the whole place with the smell of beer. Your breath reeks of alcohol. *[She points a finger at him and shakes it for emphasis].* You should be locked up in the cells until you get sober.

Policeman: Let me lock him up at once and go back on patrol.

Mapiye: Who is Methuselah?

Time: Our president.

Mapiye: He- e- e-hee! This one will rot in detention.

Policeman: He boasts he has got *unspendable* money.

Mapiye: Pay two Z\$ 250 000 fine for public drinking. What's your name? Write out a ticket for him. *[Policeman writes it out]*

Time: Time Machigo. Give me a ticket to pay the fine tomorrow. I have got no money on my person. *[He beats at his pockets and shoots a pleading look at Mapiye].*

Policeman: He insulted me, calling me President Methusela's dog. Lock him up and I will do a docket and charge him for contravening the Public Order and Security Act. I will do the docket tomorrow.

Mapiye: All right. *[Exit policeman]* Did you insult him and the President? If so, that doesn't allow for a fine at a police station level but at a magistrate's court. Did you insult him and the president?

Time: I insulted both. He was showing off before that bitch out there. *[He points outside.]*

Mapiye: *[She looks in the direction that Time's finger points.]* Is there any woman out there? You tell lies.

Time: Look, they are going together. Yes, there they are, see them in the light of that big street lamp.

Mapiye: Let me peep through the window. *[She cranes her neck].* You were right to insult them both!

Time: Ha-a-a-. Why?

Mapiye: Simply because they are both mother-fuckers! *[She points her middle finger up and spikes once, twice and thrice in blank midair.]*

- Time: So why should I go to court? *[A grin shows on his face.]*
- Mapiye: Give me money so that I can release you right now. *[She curls her upper lip into her nose and smiles.]*
- Time: How much?
- Mapiye: A hundred thousand dollars and then no story about a POSA docket with that dog you named. I'm the Officer in Charge here, and that one is under my authority.
- Time: Do you mean it?
- Mapiye: Just as God meant to create Adam and Eve. *[She bats her eyelid into a coaxing wink.]*
- Time: I honestly haven't got money on my person but promise to bring it early in the morning tomorrow. Look here are my bank cards that I keep in case
- Mapiye: You are drunk. You keep on saying, %~~to~~tomorrow, tomorrow+. Which tomorrow do you mean when it is already five minutes past five in the morning?
- Time: Then I can go and withdraw money at an ATM right away.
- Mapiye: POSA is real big trouble these days. They detain you without trial until you lose your job. Where are you working? It is better you go to court for public drinking only.
- Time: I'm a teacher at Masvingo Christian Secondary School.
- Mapiye: *[She draws close to him and holds his shoulders in both of her palms.]*Where do you get money to drink so much when teachers are the poorest paid civil servants? You sell pieces of chalk?

Time: Hee-eee-e! No, no, I'm a sole proprietor of a chain of businesses. Every week I send my family money at home, which they fail to spend and always end up sending it back to me.

Mapiye: You make the best out of every glass or bottle of your beer. Are you married?

Time: Two months to go to start looking for one to marry.

Mapiye: Do you fear a police lady's kiss?

Time: *[Blinking rapidly].* Why?

Mapiye: You have become very tense from the time I held you like this. *[She shakes his shoulders in a rocking motion and lets go her hold.]* How much are you going to give me?

Time: *[Heaves a loud sigh].* Make the figure.

Mapiye: *[Her hand reaches for a pen on top of a big file. She holds and bites it slowly, eyes searching Time's face.]* I gave you fifty thousand, how much do you want to add to that?

Time: I don't know.

Mapiye: I want to be honest with you; we are both civil servants who languish in the same oppressive system. No more decent salaries. *[She paces to and fro in front of him.]*

Time: I know.

Mapiye: What I am doing here is to bail you out of shit because a docket involving His Excellency may land you in detention without trial for as long as it takes to make you rot. *[She pats him on the back.]* Do you know that, my dear boy?

Time: Yes. I understand. I will even make it Z\$ 500 000.

Mapiye: *[Eyes dilating with disbelief].* Are you serious? Will you give me that much?

Time: *[Tucks his hands into his trouser pockets and paces the room].* I made six billion yesterday. Please help me to spend all of it today or tomorrow we wake up to find it valueless.

Mapiye: Incredible! That's fine. You will then go for your court case involving that dog of yours on Tuesday. I will tell you how to beat him in court. These ones, fresh from training depots, always fight losing battles. Just wait for me outside, the one I have been waiting for has come and we will drive to town as soon as I get through with him. *[Time walks out of the Charge Office. Enter Crispin]*

Crispin: Hello, Serg. *[Smartly dressed in denim jeans]*

Mapiye: Why didn't you come yesterday?

Crispin: I hadn't got the money.

Mapiye: Do you have all of it now?

Crispin: I have two million now; I will bring the other later.

Mapiye: Give me. *[She stashes it in her hand bag]* Here is your docket and you know best how to take care of it.

Crispin: *[Looking at it.]* What did these people do to know about my court date? I mean Sidhuza, Chivasa and Vhenyasi? Did they consult a *N'anga*<sup>18</sup>?

Mapiye: It is the work of the long arm of the law! It always catches up with culprits. That is none of your business. You were going to be arrested at court tomorrow.

Crispin: Thank you for saving me. What if you didn't phone me?

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<sup>18</sup> A Shona traditional witch-doctor and fortune-teller.



Mapiye: Being protected in crime saves nobody. That word is for Christians and innocent people, not criminals and the police. We are the same.

Crispen: What do you want me to say then?

Mapiye: I keep you out of jail for personal benefits; it's a game in which, for now, I am sure I will stand to benefit.

Crispen: Whoever gave out this information about my court date deserves death by stoning like a dog or Stephen in Acts of the Apostles.

Mapiye: Have you no shame uttering blasphemy regarding a saint whose innocent blood you bring upon yourself?

Crispen: Is it blasphemy?

Mapiye: You ought to be grateful that I have taken care of your mess. When are you bringing the outstanding amount?

Crispen: As soon as I make it available, no doubt.

Mapiye: All right, Leave this place as fast as you got here. *[Mananga leaves quickly]* Time! Time, are you still there?

Time: I'm here.

Mapiye: Come in.

Time: *[Inside]* You are killing me with this hangover at this place!

Mapiye: You don't even thank the good Lord you are not locked up! Let's go, it's already after six and my shift is over.

Time: I'm ready to go.

Mapiye: That government-marked Land Rover Defender over there is for you and me for now, my Time!

Time: With pleasure, my dear.

Mapiye: I will drive your Methuselah's dog to court with all the papers except one thing that I will make sure will be missing. So you go to court on Tuesday at nine o'clock and ask for it in court. I'll tell you what it is.

## ACT 3 Scene 2

*Full lights on upper stage: Courtroom number 9. On a raised platform is a vacant high back and headrest chair for the magistrate. Below to the left is the prosecutor's position while below and directly in front is the bar. The courtroom is packed. Prison guards stand by in green uniforms.*

*[Three booming knocks herald the magistrate's arrival into the courtroom from an inner-room beyond the court. He is accompanied by the public prosecutor who has a bald patch that stretches from his forehead to the back of his head. The magistrate sits on his chair in a black gown.*

Court Orderly: Silence in court!

Prosecutor: *[Hands magistrate a docket from a pile on his table]* Time Machigo! Time Machigo!

Time: *[Presenting himself from the gallery]* I am here, Your Worship.

Court Orderly:*[Directing Time]* Stand in the dock.

Prosecutor: Time Machigo, you stand accused of contravening the Miscellaneous Offences Act. The state's case is that on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2006, you were found drinking Castle Beer from a bottle at two o'clock in the morning in Makuva Street, where you were arrested by a police detail on routine patrol. Do you admit or deny the charge? Not clear to me why an

Interpreter is needed. And the Interpreter disappears from the dialogue soon after this. I think it would be better to remove the Interpreter altogether.

Time: I deny it.

Prosecutor: Accused person pleads not guilty, your worship.

Court, Your Worship, should proceed and accused person should stand trial.

Magistrate: Proceed.

Prosecutor: Time Machigo, this court gives you this chance to ask the policeman who arrested you questions which prove to this court that you did not commit the offence for which you stand trial. Do you understand?

Time: Yes.

Prosecutor: Go ahead.

Time: At what time did you arrest me?

Policeman: Half- past two in the morning.

Time: Was the woman you were walking with also a police detail?

Policeman: *[Blinks successively]* What woman?

Magistrate: You are advised to answer the accused person's questions, not ask him any.

Policeman: No.

Time: What was your relationship to her?

Policeman: A friend.

Time: Are you allowed to be helped by women friends on patrol?

Policeman: No.

Time: Didn't I scold her for milking me of my money the whole day and for ditching me to go with you for the night at the last minute when the beer hall was closing?

Policeman: You didn't scold her. You scolded me, calling me President Methusela's dog. *[Laughter from the gallery]*

Magistrate: Advise arresting detail to answer accused person's questions, no irrelevant digressions from state's case as outlined.

Prosecutor: State witness is advised to answer accused person's questions without mentioning issues irrelevant to outlined state's case. Carry on, Time, with your questions.

Time: If you arrested me with a beer bottle, how much beer was in the bottle? Three quarters, half or a quarter full?

Policeman: *[Looks at the public prosecutor first and then at the magistrate before blinking thrice]* Three-e- half full.

Magistrate: Which of the three approximations asked by the accused person would you like this court to take record of?

Policeman: Half full.

Time: Are you in a position to produce the exhibit of an approximately half full bottle of beer in this court as evidence to prove your case against me?

Policeman: *[Blinking rapidly]* I can go and collect it from the exhibit room where I left it. *[Time raises his hand]*

Magistrate: Accused person's hand is up, he has something to say. Let's hear him.

Time: I did not have beer when we quarrelled over a woman. He could go and buy beer and bring it here if no one from this court goes with him to check that he's going to the police exhibit room, not any other place.

Magistrate: Why have you not brought the exhibit to court?

Policeman: I now realize that my superior was rushing me

Magistrate: What? It was not your superior's responsibility to take that exhibit; your superior would never have prevented you from bringing an exhibit to court. You are either an insufferable liar or an outright miserably incompetent policeman.

Magistrate: *[Looking at Time]* How long were you given to pay the fine?

Time: Seven days.

Magistrate: Why did you not pay?

Time: I didn't commit the offence and I feel no obligation to pay at all.

Magistrate: Have you understood what is written on the receipt for the fine?

Time: Yes.

Magistrate: What do you understand it to mean?

Time: It requires me to pay the fine within seven days. If I fail to pay within seven days the period can be extended to fourteen days, after which I can come to court. I refused to pay the moment it was issued to me and that's why I am in court today.

Magistrate: Step down, court to proceed.

*Three booming knocks*

Court Orderly: Silence in court!

*The prosecutor and magistrate briefly retreat into an inner room.*

*In the inner room*

Magistrate: *[Takes off his black gown and hangs it on a hanger]* Prosecutor, look here. Time insulted the president and that's a serious offence.

Prosecutor: He's not on trial for that. His case is for public drinking, and for insulting the president, I made him pay us Z\$9m. The Public Order and Security Act will make us rich. *[He sits on a chair and takes out a once-white-turned-brown handkerchief and wipes beads of sweat sprinkled on his bald pate]*

Magistrate: Many sections of this Public Order and Security Act are unlawful. It must be repealed.

Prosecutor: That piece of law is worse than Ian Smith's Public Order Maintenance Act, or even apartheid. It's better for the victims to pay us than go for detention without a fair trial. *[He smiles and wipes the bald patch on his head less energetically this time.]*

Magistrate: How much money and time do we need to put Time's matter to rest?

Prosecutor: We have fifteen minutes' break, we'll use it to get our booty. Let me phone her. For the sake of transparency, I'll put the speaker of the cell phone on. *[He dials the cell phone and someone answers it].* Mapiye, please give him that amount now, no more and no less.

Voice: I've given your Court Orderly the amount we agreed upon.

Prosecutor: We are not going to finalise this case until you pay in full. ~~ove~~ the authority to remand him in custody or set him free.

Voice: Yes, I know. I know that the same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay.

Prosecutor: Yes, and you should also know that the frown on the face of the goat will not stop it from being taken to the market.

Voice: I know, that ~~s~~ how this government ~~s~~ laws work. *[There is a knock on the door].*

*Enter Court Orderly*

Magistrate: How much are we getting each? *[He strokes his beard].*

Prosecutor: Three million for each of us. At last I ~~am~~ going to buy a new pair of shoes.

Magistrate: *[Smiles]* You need to add another million to buy a decent pair.

Court Orderly: Who will prosecute the prosecutor, now that he buys shoes with  
bribes?

Magistrate: Share the money among us and ask no questions.

Prosecutor: We should charge more for court-case-fixing as the Pakistanis do in cricket match-fixing *[Looking at the court orderly as he stashes a canvas bag with money into a corner].*

Magistrate: We all come to work to make money, dirty money. There are no salaries  
any more.

Prosecutor: All workers live on bribes or steal this and that, here and there.

Court Orderly: We can't count out nine million now; let's share this money when we close this shop at 4 p.m.

Magistrate: Simbarashe Musengi, go and call the court to order, please. *[Court Orderly turns around and looks at the canvas bag].*

*Back in the court room*

Court Orderly: *[Smiling]* Silence in court.

*The Magistrate and the Public Prosecutor come in and take their seats.*

Magistrate: *[Turns the pages of a big black book and writes in it quietly. He looks up at the accused.]* This court has established that the accused is a very intelligent person whose smart questions have proved beyond reasonable doubt that he is not guilty and is therefore discharged by order. You are free to go home.

Time: Thank you, your Worship.

*Full lights on upper stage: Magistrate, Public Prosecutor and Court Orderly are in respective positions. The courtroom is packed. Prison Service men's hawkish eyes scan all and sundry.*



Prosecutor: Crispen Mananga! Crispen Mananga! Crispenõ *[Crispen gently walks and stands in the dock]*. Crispen Mananga of Chipengo Village under chief Nhema, you stand accused and it is alleged that on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September this year 2006 you unlawfully sold five herd of cattle belonging to Mr. Desmond van der Merwe. You sold the cattle to one Mr. Moyo for Z\$ 80 million. It is the state's case that you approached Mr. Moyo and misrepresented to him that you were Desmond van der Merwe's farm sales manager and cheated him to pay the amount for the beasts whose actual value is Z\$ 400 million. Do you admit or deny the allegations?

Crispen: I did not commit the crime.

Prosecutor: The accused person denies the charge, Your Worship. Enter a plea of not guilty, Your Worship, and the case goes on trial. Crispen Mananga, you are now granted this chance by the court to ask Jaison Moyo questions. His answers should help this court to judge whether you are guilty or not regarding the allegations levelled against you. You may start.

Crispen: Did you know me before the occurrence of this case?

Moyo: No.

Crispen: Do you trust strangers?

Moyo: No.

Crispen: Where did we meet to begin talking about selling each other these cattle?

Moyo: You came to my butchery at Chekenyere Township

Crispen: When was that?

Moyo: On the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2006

Crispen: What form of transport did I use to get there?

Moyo: Your feet.

Crispen: May you describe my attire on that day?

Moyo: Blue overall and tyre sandals.

Crispen: Do sales managers on commercial farms travel on foot in overalls and tyre sandals or drive cars, putting on nice clothes?

Moyo: I don't know about that.

Crispen: If you don't know that, an answer to a common sense question, would you not also be the type of person who may be unable to know the person who sold you Desmond's cattle?

Magistrate: Advise the accused person to ask questions about events and facts involved in this case.

Prosecutor: Accused is required to ask questions about what took place pertaining to this case. Carry on.

Crispen: What made you believe I was responsible for selling these cattle?

Moyo: You had receipt books and date stamps bearing the name of the farm, Rowen Estate.

Crispen: How much money did you pay me?

Moyo: Z\$ 60 million

Crispen: Where are the receipts I issued you for the purchase?

Moyo: You didn't give me any receipts but promised to give me once I paid the outstanding Z\$20 million.

Crispen: When you buy cattle, don't you need a police clearance?

Moyo: It's needed.

Crispen: Why didn't you obtain it?

Moyo: You told me it wasn't needed because Desmond van der Merwe hated both police and government for occupying white commercial farms.

Crispen: Did you realize what you were doing was not lawful?

Moyo: Yes.

Crispen: Why did you do it?

Magistrate: It's not within your jurisdiction to ask that.

Crispen: On what date did I show you the cattle?

Moyo: On the 26<sup>th</sup> of September.

Crispen: Did you drive the beasts away on that date?

Moyo: Yes.

Crispen: Is 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006 the date for which you stand there bearing witness in this court that I committed the alleged offence?

Moyo: It is the date on which you committed the offence - yes.

Crispen: What do you say to evidence in my passport here, clearly showing that I was in Zambia on that date? *[Pulls out his passport]*

Moyo: You lie

Magistrate: Is that a valid passport with valid stamps?

Crispen: Yes, Your Worship.

Magistrate: Verify that, Mr. Prosecutor.

Prosecutor: *[After poring over its pages, looks at Crispen quizzically]* It is recorded with full official stamps indicating he crossed over to Zambia at Chirundu Border Post on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September and got back into the country on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2006.

Magistrate: On evidence borne on your passport this court categorically dismisses your case.

Moyo: I don't believe it! That man must have bought off customs officials. Nothing is impossible in our country today because government officials earn zero wages.

Magistrate: Advise him that he can be sued in High Court for such reckless statements if the customs officials concerned learn about such utterances in this court on this date.

Prosecutor: You may put yourself in big trouble. Do you hear?

Moyo: Yes, Your Worship.

Magistrate: Court adjourned.

#### *Inner room*

*The Magistrate, Court Orderly and the Prosecutor close themselves inside and lock the door.*

Magistrate: *[Puts his gown on the hanger]. Let's share this money. [He points at the green canvas bag in the corner.]*

Orderly: *[Opens canvas bag and pulls out bearer cheques in bundles that he looks at to estimate the amount in each bundle]* These are Z\$100 000 bricks. Is it not, Your Worship?

Magistrate: Yes, they look like Z\$100 000 bricks.

Prosecutor: True. Count out ten bricks for each of us so that they add up to my Z\$3 million First, then Chavarika's and, lastly, your Z\$3million.

Magistrate: Not that way. Give one brick to each one of us at a time. The first brick is put on your share and the second one on Simbarashe's and I will get the last share. Am I not being fair?

Prosecutor: That's fair. You have put yourself last: something I thought was possible only with Jesus! You amaze me, Mr. Chavarika. *[He wipes his bald pate with the handkerchief he waves in front of his face as a fan].*

Magistrate: Set the ball rolling, Simbarashe. *When the Court Orderly takes out the fourth brick to put on the prosecutor's share, it turns out to be a bundle of neatly cut hard paper cards that are tied with a few bearer cheques on either side of the brick.*

Prosecutor: God forbid! This is fraud. Who can believe this?

Orderly: Uncouth Criminal Investigation Officers beat suspects on the soles of their feet so that suspects can't report them for assault because wounds on the soles do not show.

Magistrate: They call it bastinado in Spain.

Orderly: Bastinado, bastinadoõ

Prosecutor: No, it's you who did this, Simbarashe. *[The Prosecutor rises from his chair and points his finger at the Court Orderly, snarls and twists his face into menacing folds].* Nothing of bastinado has taken place here, bastard. I want my money, Simba, or I squeeze the hell out of your balls, my dear Pygmy, Khoi khoi, Khoi San or whatever creed of a boy you belong to. I'll beat you up now.

Orderly: Have I refused an offer of a fistfight that you begin to talk about beating me up? Try it and see if you can. *[He clenches his fists, dances a boxer's ring-dance and beckons the prosecutor to start the contest].*

Magistrate: Did you see him take the money? Did you have any money in the first place? Mapiye or Time could have done this.

Prosecutor: Let me call Mapiye and put the cell phone on speaker again for all of us to hear what she's going to say. *[He dials the phone and it is answered]*. The bag is full of papers. What the hell do you think you are doing?

Voice: What papers?

Prosecutor: You have cheated us and I am going to get you arrested for this, bloody bastard, or ~~bastardess~~q

Voice: Remember that the Zimdollar is not easy to count. If you count Z\$9m one note after another, its value will be eroded by half with hyper inflation by the time you finish counting it.

Prosecutor: You cheated me; I will not rest until you get arrested for this. Now, that school teacher is a free man and we got nothing out of it. You will swim in hot soup for him.

Voice: *[Hissing]* Stop empty threats, I'm not a child. Time might have pulled a fast trick on me here or one of you that side has outwitted the rest of you. How do you get me arrested for this without you being held accomplice? My friend, it requires a lot of carefulness to kill a fly that perches on your scrotum.

Magistrate: Ha-a-a-a-ha-a-a-a-ha-a-a-a-a-ha-a-a

Prosecutor: Why do you laugh when we have lost so much?

Magistrate: Honestly speaking, who has lost anything, Mr.Chavarika? Even if you have lost something, you need to be calm. In Ghana, they say no matter how hot your anger is, it can't cook yams.

Prosecutor: What you say is true, Mr Tymon Makundewee. Mr. Musengi, I'm sorry for being angry with you. Time is the culprit here.

Magistrate: You can not be too sure, my friend.

Prosecutor: I have learned a good lesson today that it's as sure everyone in this country is a thief as it's sure that no virgin is admitted into a maternity ward. Do you forgive me, Mr. Musengi? I apologise for my outburst to you.

Orderly: Yes, I will even pray hard for you that you can get enough to buy a decent pair of shoes one day. You say you learned a lesson that everyone is a thief but have missed another one: that a short man is not a boy.

Prosecutor: True.

Orderly: And that lesson has cost many a bloke a handful of their teeth with these hands *[Slams his tightly clenched fist hard into his open left palm with a loud bang of flesh on flesh]*.

ACT III Scene 3

*On the lower stage: spotlight shines on Mapiye. She wears a red mini skirt and sleeveless yellow T-shirt in front of an elongated shack behind her landlord's house - number 48.*

Mapiye: Should I pay rent when Operation Murambasvina<sup>19</sup> is coming to Masvingo town this week? No. My plan on Rameck must work today that his wife is still away. Where would I go when this shack is destroyed? Vendors in Bulawayo, Harare, Gweru and Mutare had their wares confiscated by police. Elegant houses were demolished and in their place pit toilet looking structures were thrown all over for houses in the name of *Operation Garikayi*. My brothel is now on the line. Those horrible caterpillars and bulldozers are three days away, bearing down on my livelihood! My girls should work tirelessly around the clock from today. *[Looks at her watch]* It's too early but they should begin to prepare finding new clients. Theresa! Theresa! Theresa!

Theresa: Sissy! *[She moves straight to stand in front of Lizzy]*

Mapiye: Has your client gone or is he still in?

Theresa: He is gone.

Mapiye: He gave me a hundred thousand and promised another twenty to you. Is it so?

Theresa: He left me the twenty thousand I intend to buy salt with.

Mapiye: Has Grace's man gone?

Theresa: I don't know.

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<sup>19</sup> Government crackdown on shacks and backyard structures used as houses.



- Mapiye: How wouldnd you know when she is in the curtain next to yours?
- Theresa: How does that help me to know?
- Mapiye: You hear the sighing, heavy breathing, and groaning or moaning.
- Theresa: I was fast asleep when you called.
- Mapiye: Fast asleep?
- Theresa: He left me tired like a log. He was always on the mount throughout the night and madly at it like some lunatic, exhibiting a freshly acquired knack of riding a bicycle.
- Mapiye: Why do you let them do so to you?
- Theresa: What would I do when they have paid for it?
- Mapiye: Twice is enough or anything more should call for more money.
- Theresa: Ah! Some are fussy, Sissy Lizzy. You just let them empty their balls into a condom inside yourself. Havennd you got that sort of men?
- Mapiye: I get them. Not to me, Elizabeth, of the *Ngara* totem, to which I belong. I make them do so as I want or they wonnd have any more of me outside my terms. Is Grace in?
- Theresa: I donnd know, Sissy Lizzy.
- Mapiye: Grace! Grace! Grace-ee-e! Come please.
- Grace: *[Appears almost naked. Only a small towel is wrapped around her waist]*  
Whatnd up, Sissy Lizzy?
- Mapiye: Time is running out, girls. Any day from now bulldozers may flush out our haven.
- Grace: Is Operation Murambasvina on course here this week?

- Mapiye: Move out early today and bring the juiciest cunts for our clients.
- Grace: I will recruit them from the Civic Centre today.
- Theresa: I'm getting young girls from Muccheke Bus Terminus who are vending there.
- Mapiye: We will charge clients two thousand and give the girls thirty thousand for food or they die for loss of energy in this business.
- Theresa: It's a splendid arrangement.
- Mapiye: It's supposed to be if we are to make enough money to beat Murambasvina one way or another. Look, Rameck comes for his rent. You just leave all to me and see. *[Rameck stands before her]*
- Rameck: You must be making a fortune here these days with queues of Porsche cars here every time every day.
- Mapiye: You deride me. It's you moulding real money with your chain of houses filled with tenants and backyard shacks like mine for which you now come to collect liquid cash.
- Rameck: But these are being flushed out and this is the last payment I will get for it from you.
- Mapiye: Appetite for money never gets satisfied. You know very well that Murambasvina is round the corner but still expecting payment! Is your cherry still in South Africa shopping?
- Rameck: Yes.
- Mapiye: *[Smiling prodigiously]* Why do you cry over a single shack being pulled down at the back of just one of your several houses?
- Rameck: Isn't it money I would be losing?

- Mapiye: For me that shack is my source of livelihood and home which I would lose at once!
- Rameck: Everyone is affected one way or another. No one can help it.
- Mapiye: It's better with you men. A woman looks for a man to take care of her. Excuse me, may I get chairs?
- Rameck: You are quite excused. *[He casts a longing gaze at her swinging figure as she disappears into the shack, her buttocks bearing up and down alternately as if in song, 'May- June'; 'May- June'; 'May- June'. She brings back two chairs and offers him one before sitting on the other]* Thank you.
- Mapiye: No need to mention. *[She opens her thighs widely with the back-split of her skirt purposelessly shifted in front to reveal a ripe paw-paw complexion of skin towards the upper regions of her legs near her most intimate apparel, revealing only the lower linings of its seams to Rameck]* How had I forgotten to fetch you a chair, my landlord?
- Rameck: What were you saying before you went in for chairs?
- Mapiye: If you have become so forgetful, it would not surprise me to hear that you asked your mother where you left your balls, Rameck!
- Rameck: Are you beside yourself, Lizzy? A cop for that matter!
- Mapiye: Why? I was just reminding you to play your role as a man with a woman in need of masculine protection.
- Rameck: Give me my six hundred thousand for your rent, which is the purpose of my visit here.
- Mapiye: *[Pulling it out of her bra]* I didn't mean not to pay you. This six hundred thousand was the first sum I counted as the first thing when I woke up this morning. Here it is. *[She offers him the money]*

Rameck: Wait. *[A man whose footsteps Rameck had heard approaching remains frozen behind a corner, while the man eavesdrops]* I think I heard footsteps but no one appears.

Mapiye: The person might have gone past. Take your money, please.

Rameck: No. Last month you suggested I should offer you a proper room. Is it not so?

Mapiye: You have shown me enough that I am not the right woman for your likes, Rameck. *[Holds out the money to him]* Here is your money for rent and those few days before Murambasvina strikes at us are a year for me, Rameck.

Rameck: No, no I am not taking that. Add two hundred thousand to make it seven hundred thousand for two rooms at stand number 2, Musuma Street, Rujeko Township.

Mapiye: Seven hundred thousand for two rooms! Do you mean it? Thank you, Rameck, I can't believe it.

Rameck: I had wanted this long ago but you seem unable to leave room for anyone with that lousy constable.

Mapiye: *[Laughing]* I will not have any more of him. Married men are safer clients than single ones.

Rameck: Tell me when you need a truck at any time to transport your furniture there. Tonight I want to be with you at the Great Zimbabwe Hotel.

Mapiye: Are we going out tonight?

Rameck: Why not? I will leave ZESA at 11:30 a.m. and will arrange everything.

Mapiye: Do you mean it? My property is in danger, Rameck. Murambasvinaõ .

Rameck: Take these keys to your two rooms. What is the property like?

- Mapiye: Three beds, room divider, TV set, DVD, sound system, VCR, kitchen dresser and home theatre.
- Rameck: All that stuff needs two of these one tonne trucks. *[He stands and looks towards the corner of the house]* It looks like that person was there for a long time behind the corner of the house!
- Mapiye: Just check if he does not have anything he might have stolen in his hands.
- Rameck: You are a cop but don't seem to take me seriously when I observe little details about human movement around the house. Some things may not seem to matter now until something ugly shows its head.
- Mapiye: Don't worry, Rameck, it won't affect you, but me who stays here.
- Rameck: What if the house ends up in smoke? After all, now we are one.
- Mapiye: Oh! It's that one crossing the road over there?
- Rameck: Yes, it's that one in denim jeans and jacket.
- Mapiye: I know those clothes. I have seen them but fail to put a name to that person. I have definitely been near him enough to know him by name.
- Rameck: You might have known him if you had looked at him at close quarters the time he was still near. Leave it, Lizzy, I am going for now and you will hear from me.
- Mapiye: Bye- bye. *[Rameck leaves abruptly]* I can't believe this! It's too good to be true.

ACT III Scene 4

*Lower stage: Regis takes the centre of the stage in police uniform. He is a little way away from the shack behind house number 48.*

Regis: This is not a job any more. It once felt sweet to be saluted. Now, when they call me ~~constable~~ I feel like a dog. I wake up every day and go to work for nothing. I always feel better when Lizzy calls me Regis, stroking the hair on my chest, the only thing I have to show of my stripped manhood.

*Exit Regis*

*On the lower stage patrons drink opaque beer, 'scuds'. A few drink clear beers sitting on chairs and empty crates. A shebeen queen serves from the shack.*

Patron I: [*He is sitting on an empty crate for Castle beer bottles.*] Co-co-ome on, Mr. Constable. My thr-throat itches for at least a sip of beer. I know it is b-be- because you were on your way to this place to buy me beer.

Regis: Do you want a Scud or a Castle beer?

Patron II: [*Two small and identical lines of tear on both knees of his pair of trousers reveal thin stretches of his light skin underneath, only as far as the lines of tear stretch.*] Today his pockets are loaded. You were paid for the just ended Senatorial Elections you supervised.

Patron I: T-t-true, cats and dogs whi-whimper and g-ge-get crumbs from their masters t-ta-table.

Patron II: Are your cats and dogs the police and soldiers, or you mean Regis?

Patron I: Do you wa-wa-want him to bbe-beat me again? In th-th-the first e-e-elections my nose was b-bro-broken.

Patron 1I: The People's Party teaches you a lesson that you will not forget if you are lucky to live and tell it. Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah. Don't make me re-live that, please, please.

*A crowd of people wearing T-Shirts on which 'The Martyrs' is written comes to the shebeen, singing loudly and assembling in the shade under two tall gum trees.*

Regis: Gamera and his Martyrs Theatre-for-Development group always come as they promise. I can't believe that we are now members of our own group, the Gum Trees Theatre Company.

Patron 1: One day we are going to be viewed on TV.

Regis: Our play, *Whirlwind*, is based on a true story about what happened to Gamera when he was abducted by security agents. Let's join the group and play our part.

Patron 1: Do you remember your lines from last week's rehearsal?

Regis: It's not necessary in Theatre-for-Development; you can change the words in every performance depending on the situation, the mood of the audience and how the audience react. What is important is to communicate a message which carries the objective of the play. Do you remember the main message and aim in *Whirlwind*?

Patron 1: How can I forget that when I have all these scars? *[He shows a stump on the side of his face where an ear is missing and a blind corner on the ridge of his broken nose.]* The aim of the play is to show how Methuselah's security agents kill and torture members of the opposition political party so that the people will support the opposition party and vote for it in the next

election. So, the message is that the people must bring political change by voting the Peoples Party out of power during the June presidential elections this year.

Patron 11: The part that I play is the best. I play the part of the victim, Gamera himself, when he was abducted. I am the shadow of the living legend and it feels very good.

*The patrons join in the singing for a short while, after which Gamera beckons everyone to be silent.*

Gamera: *[Coughs to clear his voice]* I am pleased to see that the people in this community now know that we can change our lives through theatre. *[He breaks into song and dance and everyone joins him.]*

*Patron 1 and Regis run through the crowd and come back on stage to act in Whirlwind, as Agent 1 and Agent 11 respectively. Enter two plainclothes security agents wielding an iron rod, electric cable and a gun. Patron 11 plays Stephen.*

Agent I: Do you know where we are now?

Stephen: No. It has been a long twisting drive indeed.

Agent II: *[Spitting on his face]* Dirty dog.

Agent I: *[Forcing a gun into his mouth.]* Only trees, mountains and jackals will have a tale to tell. Where did your tennis-ball-cheeked president get bombs to sabotage police stations around the country?

Stephen: You stage-managed those bombings



Agent II: What? *[Trips him with one judo swipe]* This iron bar will help you if it breaks before your bones are crushed to maize meal. Lie flat, flat on your stomach and don't try to block this iron whip with your arms, or they will break and then you won't be able to use them to wipe your arse.

Agent I: It will make him talk.

Agent II: *[Beats him once, hard over his bums]* Bloody shit!

Stephen: Yoweō eō eō e. Why do you kill me?

Agent II: Remove those hands; you are a soldier who must be brave enough in battles. *[He slams him again on his bums and then there are several more beatings until Patron 11 passes out.]*

Agent I: He is dead. Why did you knock him at the back of his head?

Agent II: *[Coldly]*. To keep him flat on his belly.

Agent I: *[Points a finger at his face]*. You will be accountable if something goes wrong here.

Agent II: *[He pulls the flesh at the corners of his mouth back to a distance from his cheeks and shakes his head in defiance]*. Both of us will be equally accountable.

Agent I: What? *[He blinks and spits]*. Remember that after every change of regime through force, there are people who go to prison.

Agent II: *[He lights a cigarette]*. We both know it.

Agent I: Commissions of truth and justice did not end in Liberia, Rwanda or South Africa.

Agent II: *[He pulls at his cigarette]*. Look, now he stirs. It's your turn to work on him.

Agent I: *[Shakes him violently from a vice-grip of the flesh underneath the back of his collar with a flacon-talon-hold, tearing the shirt and forcing him to stand]* Hey, hey, where the hell do you think you are? A picnic, is it?

Stephen: *[Crumples down in a heap and struggles to sit up.]* I can smell blood inside my chest, kill me, please. Why can't you just finish me off, filthy cowards?

Agent II: Do you hear what he says? *[Puffs a train of smoke]*

Agent I: I won't do what you ask me to do. Who the hell do you think you are, to give orders and expect me to obey? *[Takes a letter out of his jacket pocket]* Do you see this?

Stephen: Yes.

Agent I: What is it? *[Shows him]*

Stephen: It's a letter.

Agent I: Is this not a letter from your president, Stephen, inviting you to attend congress next month?

Stephen: I don't know. I had not received it, and would not know.

Agent I: *[Tears the letter to shreds that he scatters before Stephen]* Join those tiny pieces into the original shape of this letter and quickly read every word as clearly as the birds' love songs that we are hearing. *[He takes out another envelope that is tightly sealed and addressed to Stephen]* Is Stephen not your name?

Stephen: It's my name.

Agent: After joining those small pieces and reading that letter, I will also teach you how to read another letter while it is still sealed in an envelope.

Agent II: Check the smell around us. He has messed his pants already- haa- aa- haaaa- aaa- aaaaaa! *[He throws away a stub of his cigarette].*

Agent I: A big man like you, loading your pants with shit! Haa-a-a-a-aaa. Ha hahahaaa- Oh! Ha- ha- ha-haa-aaa. *[To the audience]* Is this not enjoyable?

Audience: No-oooooooo.

Agent II: *[Forces an iron rod into his pants and forks out a smudge of fresh faeces on one end]* Do you see your fucking shit? *[Patron 11 stares him in the face]* Why do you look at me? Look at your shit.

Agent I: Are you not ashamed of yourself to be this kind of a brave man, a hero?

Agent II: Eat it! Eat it now.

Agent I: Be man enough, eat your shit or we leave you here, alone. *[To the audience]* Must this brave man not eat his own shit?

Audience: No! No!

Agent II: *[To Patron 11]* this is Hwange National Park, five hundred kilometres from Harare.

Agent I: You will be dinner to wildlife as soon as we drive off. Lions, hyenas, and wild dogs wait for us to go so that they can get started on their meal of your battered body.

Agent II: Eat or we leave you. Wipe this rod clean with your forefinger, the way we used to do to our mother's cooking stick we would lick wet at the taste of *sadza*.

Agent I: After that you must haul out all the stuff in your pants and swallow it in morsels.

Agent II: Come on. Eat your dung, my beloved brother.

Agent I: *[Picks up a thick copper cable and slashes him several times across his face, shoulders and neck, synchronising the sound of the lashes with his*

*voice as he shouts at every lash.] Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it. Do it. Eat it.*

Stephen: Yowe- e- e-e-e-e, yowe-ee-maiwe-e-e-ee-ee yoweee-eee.

Agent I: Finish him off and let us leave him. Let's go.

Agent II: *[Points a gun at him]* Say your last prayer and don't forget to pray for your president's tennis-ball-cheeks to deflate. Five, four, three, two... *[He shoots an inch away from Stephen's head and he falls, shell-shocked, and faints]*. Ha- a . aa- aaaa-a-a. Ha- ha-ha-ha ha-a-a.

Agent I: Cowards die so many times before they actually die. Ha-a-a-a ha-ha-ha-ha-a-a. Let's go, wild animals will finish him off. *[Exit Agent 1 and Agent 11]*

*[A sound of a car is heard after the two leave. Stephen scrambles to his feet and sings. Patron 1, Regis and Mapiye join the singing]*

*I' m alone in the wilderness*

*Oh, God, please hear my plea*

*Your children hunger and thirst every day*

*No food, no clothes nor cup of tea*

*For how much longer shall it be?*

*Till when shall we all suffer?*

*Up to where shall we keep running?*

*When time's terrain turns rougher*

*Folds on oppressors' face get tougher*

*I'm all alone in the wilderness*

*O Lord, hear my plea*

*In this jungle I am hungry every day*

*No food, clothes nor cup of tea*

*But blood, pus, mucus and sweat*

*O Lord, hear our plea*

*In the jungle we all hunger daily*

*No food no clothes nor cup of tea*

*Only tears, sweat, blood mucus and pus*

*That, with our sacrifice, will come to pass*

*When will our plea be heard?*

*Or bony kid's belly filled?*

*Look at stitches, patches on the garment*

*Of our lives those unskilled tailors sew*

*Mending torn cloth with new patches*

*Into a new government of national stew!*

*After the singing, Gamera motions everyone to be quiet. He takes out a note book and pen from a brown brief case.*

Gamera: You, Gumtree Theatre Group, is doing very well. Next week we are going to perform *Whirlwind* out there in the rural areas, at Mupandawana Growth Point. What do you think we should work on to improve *Whirlwind*?

Regis: The actors should ask the audience enough questions to allow them to say what they think about our play or the action of the actors. Their ideas are crucial.

Gamera: *[Writing]* Point taken. What else?

Patron 1: *[He unfolds his arms that he had intertwined into a V-knot on his chest, while looking at his hero, Gamera. Gamera uses his hands to stroke the blank space in front of his face to emphasise his point]* We must add one more song and a lively dance routine in the middle of the torture scene.

Gamera: *[Writing]* Excellent. I thank you all. I have to go. The Hawks Theatre-for-Development group is waiting for me. I must join them in 30 minutes. I'll see you next week at the same time.

*Gamera breaks into song and dance. Martyrs Theatre-for-Development group members and the whole crowd burst into song and dance after him.*

*Exit the Martyrs and the crowd*

*Back at the brothel*

Regis: I don't care what the authorities will say when they hear that I have joined The Martyrs. I don't care even if they beat me or kill me for that.

Patron I: Those agents do beat p-people. They b-beat me so much that I fainted. I learnt that too much pain is involuntarily re-regulated with defecation. I filled my pants with f-faeces and they also wanted me to eat my shit but I stood my ground and refused.

Regis: Those bastards!

Patron 1: *[Looking at Regis]* Y-y-you saw Gamera's sss-story in the news papers. It was a mm-miracle that game wardens t-t-tracked poachers to where the CIO had left him to b-b-be eaten by wild animals.

Regis: I know the story, and the game wardens were arrested and are still in jail for rhino horns that were planted in their gardens. They were made to pay for helping him to live. That's what it takes the People's Party to settle a score if you get in their way during an election.

Patron1: T-t-true. D-d-during the re-run of the second e-e-election th-they mo-modified the scars on my face. They cut off my le-left ear and said it was to-to give my head and face a fa-face-lift.

Patron II: It's not Regis who cut off your ear and you're wrong to call him a dog. *[Looking at his crutches]* I'm not walking with the aid of these crutches because of Regis either.

Regis: Who does not know that people call the police all sorts of names? They are right because the system has hurt them. What's wrong is what I do, to work for the system. Drink beer, my friend. I will buy you more beer today. I don't know why I am so happy today. This is the happiest day of my life.

*[Enter Mapiye]*

Mapiye: May I talk to you for a little while, Regis?

Patron II: Are you coming from town, Lizzy?

Mapiye: No. It's only eleven in the morning and I am coming from the shops. Regis, come here, please.

Patron II: Don't take away the one who is buying beer for us here. Oh! Are you a fisher of men this time around?

Mapiye: Shut your beak up. Remember to do just what you came to do here. I never set my foot at the sty where you stay.

Patron II: Is a shebeen shack on Rameck's premises something to boast about? I hope you have not planned to use your big breasts to act as a barricade against graders and bulldozers when Operation Murambasvina comes.

Mapiye: Look for a cotton thread to hang on a tomato plant, fool.

Regis: *[Coming close to Mapiye]*. I am the peace-maker. What do you want to tell me, darling?

Mapiye: Let's go a little farther; this is for the two of us alone.

*[Exit Patron 1 and Patron 11]*

Regis: I know what you want to tell me.

Mapiye: *[She looks at him with a since-when-did-you-prophecy eye]*. What is it then?

Regis: *[A beaming smile spreads on his face.]* You finished your menstrual cycle yesterday, so you want me to come home early and sober tonight.

Mapiye: *[Twists and curls her upper lip before tucking it deeply into her nostrils.]* I have called you to advise you to find another girlfriend, Regis.

Regis: Do you mean to be an apostle of bad news today? What? *[Loud silence]*

Mapiye: I have got committed with someone and will not be able to go out with you or have anything to do with you any more.



- Regis: Stop this joke, or you will have us both!
- Mapiye: It is impossible to double-cross someone on whom my life is hinged now.
- Regis: But I used to provide you with everything, from tooth-paste to anti-retroviral drugs, Elizabeth. *[His face falls visibly]*.
- Mapiye: Thank you very much for your material support, then. Now it's a house I need and that's beyond your means to provide.
- Regis: So you no longer love me?
- Mapiye: There is no such word like *love* to talk about in the language of prostitutes, Regis, but *money*.
- Regis: Are you sure?
- Mapiye: As sure as the knowledge, to anyone, that everything has a beginning and an end. This is the end of it, between you and me.
- Regis: Butō does all the love I have for you not matter now?
- Mapiye: *[Twists and turns her upper lip and tucks it into her nostrils once more]*. Whoever the bitch is who misled you to think that there is love in prostitution made a eunuch of the sperm in your brain.
- Regis: I can't believe this.
- Mapiye: I also couldn't believe it when you brought a prostitute to the police station that night.
- Regis: When? What are you talking about?
- Mapiye: On the night you brought that drunken teacher insulting you and His Excellency, Methuselah. She was wearing a big sunhat at night, holding something like an umbrella.
- Regis: *[Looks down and keeps his brow averted with defeat]*. Butō butō

Mapiye: It's all history now, Regis, why not call it off and carry on with your life? I also have to carry on with mine.

Regis: But- bbu-but [*He looks up, dumbfounded*].

Mapiye: But what, Regis? [*She moves close to him and holds him by the shoulders with both palms, looking straight into his eyes*]. You are a man. What do you want to say?

Regis: [*He perseveres in looking back into her eyes but only for a second and shifts the focus of his eyes onto her bosom*]. Are you sure you no longer need me in your life, Lizzy?

Mapiye: [*She takes her hands from his shoulders and claps once, twice and thrice; emphasising what she is about to say*]. If a man takes me for a fool and brings another woman to me, as you did, I get rid of him using the principle of the organ that throws out unwanted food from our bodies; express exitō *prrr...prrrrrrrru...rrrrrrrrrõ* and strictly no entry.

Regis: I think one day you might change your mind.

Mapiye: [*Curls her upper lip; this time a little short of her nostrils*]. To eat what I have vomited is one of many habits I do not share with dogs.

Regis: [*Closes his eyes*]. Let it be.

Mapiye: Join your friends and tell the girl selling beer to give you two *scuds* and two black label quarts. I'll pay for that when I return from town where I'm going now. [*She moves away abruptly*]

*The scene is the same. Patrons are drunk, dancing to Tongai Moyo's museve<sup>20</sup>? music smash hit song Naye.*

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<sup>20</sup> Type of music

Patron I: *Pakanaka apo* <sup>21</sup>Dhehwa- a-a! Play it again. *Pakanaka* Dhehwa- engo-oo

Mapiye: [To *Theressa*] Shebeen queen, play the music people shout for.

Time: Music, music, more music, please!

Mapiye: You are here today, Time, nice to be with you.

Time: Yes, of course, it's nice to be together again. Where are you coming from?

Mapiye: What time is it right now? Why are these people so drunk so early?

Time: Just a few minutes to one o'clock. It's Saturday today, and people are already high.

Mapiye: [*Looking at Time's shining black bag*]. Have you got some of the money you had sent home but the folks at home failed to spend it and send some of it back to you?

Time: Yes. [*He takes out a bundle of bearer cheques from his bag.*] Help yourself to some of it. You have rubbed shoulders with the sole proprietor of a chain of indigenous businesses. Have two beers.

Mapiye: Cheersō cheersō cheers. Shebeen queen, please bring me one cold clear Castle beer for the time being and another one later.

Time: You can do it. Civil Servants need no visas to cross over to South Africa. I go there every fortnight to buy green soap bars, cooking oil and, at a large scale, fuel which I smuggle into the country with the help of cross-border truck drivers and some of your police guys working at our border. Naboth is one of them.

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<sup>21</sup> It's alright

Mapiye: All right, I see now. No names please, ehe-e-e, sole proprietor, you must be making money. You are *Mukorokoza*<sup>22</sup>, Time.

Time: I want to stop it. I have to look for a job and settle there, rather than rely on illegal means to survive while I have sound educational qualifications.

Mapiye: But is it your fault? Our wretched government forces you into it! If you settle there, please help me. Would you mind if I have your phone numbers?

Time: No, of course not.

Mapiye: *[She takes out her phone and takes the numbers]* +2771 767 5885.

Mapiye: I don't think I'll wait to resign if you phone to tell me that there is a job for me there. I'll simply get into the first bus and cross over there.

Patron II: Time should buy us some clear beer as well. These scuds are full of dregs.

Time: Pigs feed on dregs. All of you people here, put away those scuds, stuff for pigs.

Patron I: *[Scratches the bandaged stump where his left ear was cut.]* Are we pp-p-pigs?

Time: If you are going to drink the clear beer I'm buying, yes, if you are not drinking it, no.

Patron I: I'm a pp-pig b-because I'll also need to d-d-d-drink one clear b-b-beer.

Time: You look miserable. Why do you drink sorghum beer when Zimbabwe is at the peak of prosperity? *[He repeatedly runs his tongue from the right to the left corner of his slightly opened mouth in a slow, arrogant back-and-forth movement]* Zimbabwe is sweeter than honey.

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<sup>22</sup> A person who buys scarce commodities at normal prices to create a shortage and then re-sells the same commodities at an exorbitant price on the black market.

Patron I: So-so-son-of-a-bitch! B-b-b-bullshit!

Time: Are you waiting for a second messiah? Advice that only pigs were created with sieves to separate liquid beer from dregs in their throats and stomachs?

Patron II: You are our financial messiah.

Time: Yes of course. Give everyone here two pints of Castle beer, and be fast!

All: Yee-e-e-eee-eee.

Patron II: Quick! Bring us the beer which Time pays us with for insulting us. *[The Shebeen queen hands him two pints of beer that he holds in one hand; he stands supporting his weight with a crutch in the other.]* Let me dance for Time's sweet, sweet Zimbabwe. *[As he dances in a crouching position, his legs bend to almost a right angle at both of his knees, where the identical lines of wear simultaneously give in with an audible scream of tearing cloth that leaves his two knees in full view.]*

Patron 1: If you w-w-wear second hand clothes that cc-come by shi-shi-ship from China in bales got after a v-voyage of over five years, p-please, don't d-d-drink and jive. J-just as a motorist must not d-d-drink and drive; to avoid d-d-disaster.

Time: Ha-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a. *[He opens his black bag and takes out a bundle of bearer cheques]* Go and buy two pairs of trousers; that's your licence to drink and jive.

Mapiye: Your business must be paying you all right.

Time: *[Licking his lips.]* Yes, of course. I no longer rely on my salary as a teacher.

Mapiye: Who relies on a civil service job any more? Every government worker is now a senior *Mukorokoza*.

- Time: I am no longer a teacher. In class all the pupils know that teachers put in only a little effort that corresponds to a little salary, yes, just a little effort.
- Mapiye: It's not a secret now that members of our police force survive on bribes, fraud, and midday theft.
- Patron II: Who polices the police, then?
- Mapiye: That's a good question I can't answer. Many people ask me that question and it's always easier to pretend the question was never asked than try to answer it; just like a loud fart from someone so highly respected that everyone pretends it has never happened.
- Patron I: *[He sits on an empty plastic crate for scuds].* Loud fart like th-th-thunder from Mapiye's b-big buõ buõ
- Mapiye: *[Smiling]* Bums.
- Patron I: No, no. I like to ca-ca-call them buõ buttocks.
- Mapiye: *[She moves swiftly in front of Patron 1, turns around, bends over and shakes her bottom onto his face and speaks firmly].* Men amaze me how these two big round masses of flesh set at the back of a female torso, separated by a shadowy cleft, always tickle their manhood to death!
- Patron I: *[Giving Mapiye a slight slap on her buttocks.]* I'm too old for you. Oh, I'm afraid you will break both my old wooden bed and weary backbone with your wild horsepower.
- Mapiye: *[She moves a few inches away from Patron 11, who is dancing, balancing on one crutch, with a clear beer bottle in the other hand].* I want to dance with you.
- Patron 11: You're welcome, little woman.
- Mapiye: Remove Macheso Power's song and play Tongai Moyo Dhehwa's Naye song.

*[Everyone shouts for Naye. Naye is played. All take to the dance floor where Mapiye violently shakes her body as if suddenly electrified, legs astride, one hand cupping the back of her head with the palm while the other palm squeezes her bums. She slowly gyrates suggestively towards Patron II, who twists and turns his waist frenziedly. Everyone shouts, overjoyed at the two's antics.]*

*[Enter Regis]*

Regis: Hold, everyone hold, please!

Time: Why hold?

Regis: *[Shouting.]* There is heavy sound. *[The noise of big engines fills the air]*

Client II: God forbid! Oh gosh. That's Operation *Murambasvina* coming on us. *[Two soldiers and two uniformed policemen storm the party.]*

Soldier I: Who is the owner of this shack?

Mapiye: I am. *[The features of her face crumble and she suddenly looks very old with fear and surprise.]*

Soldier I: *[His marijuana-smoked-red eyes roll all over the place and eventually stare into blank space like two toy red robots].* Take out everything of value immediately.

Mapiye: Why not come smash this tomorrow and give me a chance to ã

Soldier I: It's an order; we weren't supposed to give you this chance to rescue your property.

Regis: Everyone here, please help, or everything gets smashed to pieces, even clothes get ã

Soldier 1I: What about clothes? Where has the owner gone?

Mapiye: I am here. *[All rush into the shack and re-appear staggering under the weight of a bed, wardrobe, stove, radio, DVD, kitchen dresser, room divider, video cassette recorder and bags of clothing].*

Soldier I: Are you satisfied everything of value is out?

Mapiye: Sure.

Soldier II: I see a police uniform, bags, and handcuffs. Are you a member of the force?

Mapiye: Yes. *[She suppresses a tear].*

Soldier: It's sad; sadder than when a bitch turns to eat her own puppies to stay alive. *[Noises of heavy engines converge on the shack with a loud bang and crushing sound that produces a thick cloud of dust and flying debris].*

*Mapiye stands at the centre of the lower stage: She is in full Zimbabwe Republic Police uniform with the usual accompanying blue handbag. She firmly holds it up slightly below her screwed face.*

Mapiye: *[She shakes the bag; the handcuffs inside send forth an aggressive clanging].* I wake up at cockcrow to work for nothing everyday; I sell the last bits and pieces of my womanhood for a roof over my head. Let me sing our old forgotten national anthem the wise men who came from the east to fight the Whiteman have recently replaced with their own national anthem. *[Client I and II, Shebeen Queen, Regis, Soldier I and II, Policeman I and II and Time join the singing with full lights on the lower stage.]*

*Ishe komborera Africa*

*God bless our continent Africa*



*Ngaisimudzirwe zita rayo*

*Praise be given to her name*

*Inzwai miteuro yedi, Ishe*

*Hear all our prayers, oh Lord*

*Komborera, Isu mhuri yayo*

*Bless all of us and our family*

*Huya mweya, huya mweya*

*Come down on us, Holy Spirit*

*Komborera*

*Bless us all and our family*

*Huya mweya, huya mweya*

*Come down on us, Holy Spirit*

*Woutsvene*

*Fill our family with righteousness*

*Utikomborere, Isu mhuri yaya*

*So that we prosper, bless us all*

*Huya mweya, huya mweya, woutsvene*

*Come down on us, Holy Ghost*

*Komborera Africa, noutsvene*

*Fill Africa with your righteousness*

ACT THREE Scene 5

*Full lights on the lower stage: Mapiye, dressed in full police uniform, sits on one of the beds. All of their property is strewn in front of house number 48. Grace arrives.*

Mapiye: *[She looks at herself in a mirror, sitting on the bed].* Welcome back, Grace. There isn't anything to call home any more.

Grace: *[Holding her head with both of her hands, dejected.]* Why have they started to destroy shacks in the Sisk area, instead of Mucheke Township, where there are more shacks?

Mapiye: *[She puts the mirror in a handbag].* People there would have felt as bad.

Grace: I hurried back to help pull out property when I heard that they were destroying here. Who helped?

Mapiye: Everyone who was drinking here helped. Everything was out in no time. Then the machines just swallowed the shack, Grace. *[She yawns].*

Grace: *[Sitting on the bed].* They say fuel, foreign currency, oil and everything is scarce, but now, look at how much they spend to bring misery on us!

Theresa: They say that this operation is aimed to make our cities clean; to flush out criminals who stay in these backyard shacks everywhere.

Mapiye: *[Standing up].* The motive for this operation is political. Old Methuselah's ruling party lost all constituencies in cities to the opposition MDC party and now they punish us for belonging to the opposition party.

Grace: One thing they seem not to realise is that people from these towns and cities are going to teach people in the rural areas about MDC.

Mapiye: The People's Party shoots itself in the foot. The people they displace here will go to rural areas and spread MDC's ideas and politics.

Theresa: That cheap talk about cleanliness or fight against crime is just a cover-up story to the world!

*[Sound of an approaching car is heard]*

Grace: Whose car is that parking by us?

Mapiye: Look at him, putting on a ZESA<sup>23</sup> work suit. He seems headed for us. The truck is also painted in ZESA colours.

Grace: Sure, he is coming straight here. *[He stands before the three women and greets them]*

Mapiye: We are fine. What's your name?

Tadios: I am Tadios.

Mapiye: What brings you here?

Tadios: Our boss, Rameck, sent me to transport your furniture to Rujeko quickly before 5p.m. He said your property must be transported to stand number 2, Musuma Street, Rujeko right away.

Mapiye: What are you talking about?

Tadios: Rameck has sent me to transport your property to Rujeko because your back room has been destroyed by Murambasvina bulldozers. His friend who drove past this place told him that the shack behind his house, number 48, has been destroyed and its occupants were stranded with property left out in the open.

Mapiye: Where did he tell him that?

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<sup>23</sup> Abbreviation for Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority

Tadios: I don't know where they met in town but he came to work and sent me.

Mapiye: Has Rameck sent you?

Tadios: Yes. I told him that you were not going to believe me. All this is a waste of time. However, he persuaded me to tell you that you discussed it already. If you doubt me, I should tell you this: firstly, that you added Z\$200 000 to Z\$500 000 to make it Z\$700 000 for two rooms. Secondly; that you are billed to check in at Great Zimbabwe at eight tonight. *[He pulls out a national registration document]* This is my national registration identity document.

Mapiye: Where is Rameck, why didn't he come himself?

Tadios: He is in town.

Mapiye: What time did he leave your work place?

Tadios: Around eleven.

Mapiye: Who does he expect to load the truck?

Tadios: He did not say anything about that.

Mapiye: I am going to wait for him; we didn't make such an arrangement.

Tadios: Then I better go. How could I convince my foreman that an arrangement like this cannot work? Good-bye, Sergeant. *[He takes a few steps to go].*

Mapiye: Come back. Did he give you keys to the rooms? *[She curls her upper lip]*

Tadios: *[Shaking his head].* He said that he gave you the keys this morning.

Mapiye: *[Nodding assent].* Now girls, let us load this truck with our furniture to go to our new home. Everything that he says falls in place with what we discussed in the morning.

Tadios: *[Opening everything that needs to be opened, preparing to load the truck.]*  
The wardrobe goes first and the bed in the second load. The delicate electrical appliances must occupy the passengers seats in front. Two loads will do.

Mapiye: Theresa elsewhere spelled Theressa, you go with him and I will stay behind with Grace. After offloading, you remain there to keep guard at the house. Don't leave the place until we come, or thieves may have a field-day. *[She takes his numbers on a note pad]*

Theresa: I will not leave the place, Sissy Lizzy. *[The truck slowly takes off and disappears]*

Mapiye: Now Rameck shows that he really cares. This man cannot be a thief. Everything he said is all that we talked about this morning.

*Full lights on the lower stage: Mapiye and Grace sit on a bed. A wardrobe, kitchen dresser and kitchen utensils are the other items remaining.*

Grace: Rujeko is a bit far. It will take them close to two hours to off-load.

Mapiye: Look, Theressa comes on foot! *[Standing up and leaving the bed].*

Grace: What? *[Stands up as well]*

Mapiye: Look over there! *[Points in Theressa's direction]* She comes on foot! The truck must have broken down or ò

Grace: What?

Mapiye: Something is terribly wrong ò I smell shit ò my heart bangs out loudly in my ribcage. Why is she in such a hurry?

- Grace: Oh! Why oh! *[Theressa comes close, gasping for breath.]*
- Theressa: He sped away with everything; everything is gone, gone is allõ
- Grace: What?
- Mapiye: Do you mean what you say? Tell me. What has happened? *[Her big figure crumples on the bed].*
- Theresa: He stopped the car, killed the engine, and asked me out to help him to give it a push. He also got out, pushing along a steep incline on the road towards Technical College.
- Mapiye: Shit! He then jumped in and sped off, leaving you helplessly watching on your two feet! *[She hits her fist onto the bed, one loud thud, and lies flat and silent.]* He's a damn thief.
- Theresa: I shouted after him but realized that I was being stupid, silly, to say the least.
- Mapiye: Oh my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
- Theresa: He is a thief, a professional one.
- Mapiye: You haven't reported thisõ ohõ I am confused. He can be intercepted on our highways.
- Theresa: I took a taxi back here with that money I wanted to use to buy salt. I haven't been anywhere.
- Mapiye; How long has this taken?
- Theresa: That's about twenty to twenty-five minutes now.
- Mapiye: *[Takes out a note pad from her handbag]* I'm going to be investigating officer in the case for my own property. His registration number is 22-127368- E04, car registration Q 8684 ZESA I have got his national identity registration number and car registration, all right.

Grace: It is not easy to believe, are all those things gone for sure?

Mapiye: I will get this son-of-a-bitch one day and he will pay for it. Every dog has its day.

Theresa: I wish I could be there when he is caught.

Mapiye: I will not rest until I get him, even if I have to find him beneath the seabed. *[She pauses in her rambling]* Rameck is involved in this.

Grace: Why do you say Rameck is involved in this?

Mapiye: Everything this thief was saying here was what Rameck and I talked to each other about this morning. We were only two. You saw us.

Theresa: How then did he know about it?

Mapiye: I begin to have a hunch that he discussed or talked about it to someone or in that bastard's hearing.

Grace: Rameck is here now.

Mapiye: Where?

Theresa: Sure, he is coming.

*Enter Rameck*

Rameck: *[The three listen attentively]* Hello girls, nice to be with you. They have finally destroyed your quarters, but you are lucky your property is intact.

Mapiye: Don't say that, Rameck. All our electrical appliances, DVD, VCR, sound system, and home theatre have just been stolen.

Rameck: What are you saying? *[Smiling]* Put jokes aside. What do you mean it's stolen?

Mapiye: Someone came here, an impostor, and duped me to believe that you sent him to transport our furniture to stand number 2, Rujeko.

Rameck: How did you believe him?

Mapiye: He told me about everything we talked about this morning, including every detail about the exact figures for rent, our booking at the Great Zimbabwe Hotel and assured me you had told him all that as a security measure! The truck had a ZESA logo painted on it.

Rameck: Big-time thieves from Harare or Bulawayo.

Mapiye: I asked him where you were and what time you left your work place and he told me 11.30, precisely. I had turned him away but the bait of a ZESA logo on the truck got me to swallow both hook and sinker.

Rameck: Oh no, no, no, Lizzy. A fake ZESA truck is burning right now, along the Beit Bridge road.

Mapiye: Burning? What was burning?

Theresa: Is my property burning?

Grace: It can't be burning with all our furniture.

Rameck: Yes, a truck with a ZESA logo is alight along the Beit Bridge road. Police called us there but we found out that no such truck exists in our fleet. After all, we have just five vehicles on the road because of the fuel shortage, the rest are grounded on account of that.

Mapiye: Was it involved in an accident or do you recall its registration number?

Rameck: Yes, I took its registration number. *[He takes out a notebook from his shirt pocket and looks at some notes]*. It is Q 8684 ZESA.



Mapiye: *[Showing him the note pad]* Look here, it is the same number!

Rameck: *[Whistles, flabbergasted]*. He is not alone. These conmen have excellent skills of their trade.

Mapiye: Did you not tell anyone about us, Rameck?

Rameck: *[The skin of his forehead suddenly grows creases]*. Do you blame me for this, Lizzy? I talked about us to no one. Thank God I have not said what I wanted to.

Mapiye: Say it if ò

Rameck: *[He scratches his head in deep thought]*. Yes, yes, yes. Now I have found out who did this.

Mapiye: Who is that?

Rameck: There was no burning furniture in the truck, meaning that your property was transferred into another waiting truck. *[He looks at Theresa and Grace.]*

Mapiye: Two or more other people are involved. Another car was set to finish the relay, so that the ZESA truck gives a dead end to anyone who might be tracking it.

Rameck: Fire-fighters came in time to put out the fire before the truck was completely burnt and the ZESA logo was only a plastic sticker, not genuine painting. You accuse me of this but I never talked to anyone. *[He scratches his head again.]* The only person who heard us was that one who remained behind in the corner for a long time.

Mapiye: Who?

Rameck: That one I showed you going away; you said you could not put a name to the person. He was wearing a denim shirt and pair of trousers. *[He points in the direction he had taken]*. He went that way.

Mapiye: Oh Shit! Shit! Sorry, Rameck, now I know him.

Grace: Do you mean the thief?

Rameck: *[He puts back his notebook in his shirt pocket.]* Do you mean the eavesdropper?

Mapiye: Yes, he is Crispen Mananga. He came wearing the same clothes to work a couple of days ago. *[She crumbles onto the bed again, powerless.]*

Rameck: *[Looks at her inquiringly.]* What had he come to do there, at a police station?

Mapiye: He stole from some people and paid me to be out of prison. I send his passport to the Zimbabwe-Zambia border for immigration stamps.

Rameck: Evil pays with pain.

Grace: *[Holding her hips with both hands.]* If he had gone to jail, our property would be there, not stolen.

Mapiye: *[She spurts a mirthless giggle.]* I protected Crispen for a bribe now and again when he stole some other people's property because I didn't feel the pain. Although none of them has heard that he has stolen from me, the echo of their last laugh is already trapped in my ears for the rest of my life.

END

### **3. Theatre-for-Development in Zimbabwe: Ziya Theatre Company production of *Sunrise*.**

### 3.1

### INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to consider the role of Theatre-for-Development programmes in alleviating social challenges, as seen specifically in the production of *Sunrise*, which was undertaken to improve the living conditions of the people of the Chiredzana resettlement community. Theatre-for-Development will be briefly compared and contrasted with classical African drama to investigate the similarities and differences in the methods and techniques they use. In classical African drama the societies and the individual characters are defined by the different ways in which they react to colonisation. Some conform to the colonial system while others fight against its oppressive structures. Classical African drama, to a great extent, informed the colonised Africans about the need to emancipate themselves from colonisation by addressing the negative ramifications of the colonial system. For that reason, therefore, this study attempts to ascertain the extent to which Theatre-for-Development and classical African drama provide a medium through which people address pertinent political, economic and social problems with the objective of solving them through development programmes.

A close analysis of Ziya Theatre Company's Theatre-for-Development production, *Sunrise* (2000), will be provided. The study will examine the historical conditions and the socio-political dynamics that prevailed during the writing and staging of the classical African drama plays and the *Sunrise* production, respectively, and will argue that they influenced the creation, playmaking and performance processes of the plays in a fundamental way. Classical African drama plays were produced during the colonial period when the colonial masters encouraged the Africans to abandon their pre-colonial traditional way of life to practise Christianity and attend schools to acquire western forms of education the colonial administrative system required. Ziya Theatre Company, on the other hand, produced *Sunrise* during the Zimbabwean neo-colonial era when the government resettled landless peasants in white-owned commercial farms.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 3.2 THEATRE-FOR-DEVELOPMENT

In Theatre-for-Development plays, the agents or catalysts mobilise the members of a community to act out a play about social problems. They do not need to start this process with a written script. They discuss social problems with members of the community first, and improvise the scenes that dramatise the problems in a play-making process that results in a Theatre-for-Development production. The performances do not require a sophisticated stage, modern auditorium space, lighting devices or special costumes for actors. Instead, the agents encourage the members of the community to improvise cheap props for actors and use the open space where the audience and actors interact.

Actors and the audience merge and Theatre-for-development agents encourage them to interact through questions, interjections, exclamations or remarks that may come from either the audience or the actors, as the performance of the play progresses. Theatre-for-Development, therefore, does not strictly adhere to the traditions and conventions of much Western drama or of classical African drama. Theatre agents, catalysts or animators, who are usually university students or government workers, and members of the target community, collectively produce a Theatre-for-Development play to communicate the lessons that effect development and social change. They dramatise concrete historical issues emanating from their living conditions, using methods that differ from classical African drama that depends on the fictitious dramatic text and theatre conventions for its performance.

The dramatic text, as mentioned later in this study, presents dramatic action that is fictitious. Roland (1979:123) makes the following observation about Brecht's awareness of this important aspect of a play, namely that it is fictitious, and explains that:

For this purpose, Brecht employed the use of techniques that remind the spectator that the play is a representation of reality and not reality itself, which he called the *Verfremdungseffekt* (translated as distancing effect, estrangement from reality).

On the stage, the production of a play combines many artistic effects that include those emanating from the author, the director, actors, designer, and others, which, in this study, I also refer to as theatre or dramatic performance.

The terms *drama* and *theatre* relate to the concept of classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development in different ways. People often use the terms *theatre* and *drama* interchangeably but they have different meanings. Drama refers to a literary composition, while theatre refers to the performance of that literary composition. In fact, theatre may take place where there is no literary composition. Mda (1993:45) argues:

Although a literary composition may constitute the basic element of a theatrical performance, theatre is not primarily a literary art but uses elements of other arts, such as song, dance, and mime in addition to dialogue spectacle.

The text forms of plays have the literary elements of drama but cannot be accurately referred to as *theatre* because the written plays do not have the fundamental characteristic that constitutes theatre, that is, live staging of a dramatic production, and performance, that has action planned to create a theatrical effect. In the performance of drama, actors transform the written texts into live representation, which is theatre. Without actors, there is no theatrical performance. The audience is also required to watch the performance. Without the audience, the theatrical presentation lacks an essential component of what constitutes the creative parts of a theatrical production.

The concepts of drama, theatre and performance are intimately related but they are also markedly dissimilar. It is important to highlight the differences between these concepts because the differences between them guide the rationale of the analysis this study offers of classical African drama, in general, and the text of *Sunrise* it focuses on. Classical African drama plays are mainly dramatic texts that the playwrights wrote before the actors performed them while the people of Chiredzana community created *Sunrise*, through theatrical performances, before David Dzatsunga recorded the production in writing. This fits in with Mda's comment:

Theatre-for-Development rarely emanates from works that began their life as literary compositions, and the use of the term 'drama' may give an incorrect impression that Theatre-for-Development relies on scripted plays. (Mda 1993:46)

As I have mentioned earlier, it is important to define what drama is, on the one hand, and what theatre is, on the other, as the terms *drama* and *theatre* relate to the concepts of classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development in different ways. Helen Gilbert and Johanne Tompkins (1996:1), in *Post-Colonial Drama, Theory, and Politics*, write about post-colonial drama and theatre as if the terms mean the same thing. This observation is clearly discernible in the following statement in their book's first chapter:

This book focuses on the methods by which post-colonial drama resists imperialism, and its effects. We isolate possible ways to read and view theatre texts from around the post-colonial world as well as ways to interpret the strategies by which playwrights, actors, directors, musicians and designers rework a historical moment or a character or an imperial text or even African communities that performed rituals according to African tradition.

It is clear, in the excerpt above, that the authors talk about traditional and ritual practices and how the people performed them in real life and also how 'playwrights', 'actors', 'directors', 'musicians' and 'designers,' 'rework' a 'historical moment' to produce drama and 'theatre texts'. It is not explicitly stated that drama and theatre are a representation of real life on stage but the phrase 'rework a historical moment' suggests that. However, the authors do not explain that drama, theatre and performance are terms that have different meanings. Instead, they have used drama and theatre interchangeably; this study, however, maintains that drama and theatre are different terms with meanings that vary with the context in which they are used.

### 3.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO AFRICAN DRAMA

To begin with, it is important to define African drama and theatre, in general, before one can explain the concepts of classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development. Some scholars of African drama and theatre, such as Banham (2004:123), quoted below, have suggested that African drama and theatre should begin by tracing their history, but that is

[a]daunting task to decide what we mean by Africa, by theatre, by history, involving a variety of performance forms in African societies, ranging from ritual to story-telling and masquerades to communal festival.

However, African theatre and drama are different from the European notion of drama in a fundamental way for, in Africa, people tended not pay to watch drama, as they do in the Western tradition. Okot p 'Bitek (1986:92), points this out when he writes, 'The western tradition, which regards culture as something that can be bought or sold, where the artist is some very special fellow who is paid with money for his works, is entirely alien to African thought.' (Okot p 'Bitek 1986:92)

In the pre-colonial era, drama and theatre were embedded in the religious and cultural life of the Africans. During ceremonies depicting rites of passage, '[t]he initiates performed dances to their deities in order to communicate their achievement of a higher status for themselves or their community' (Byam: 2004:3). The rituals that members of the community performed incorporated dance routines they perfected over a long period, considering that they passed the practice from one generation to the next, according to African tradition and custom. Elements of theatre and drama, which include the use of body gestures to denote and confer meaning, and the artistic creation of a spectacle, are present in the performance of birth and burial rituals as well as in harvest and planting festivals. For example, Ngugi explains that '[d]rama in pre-colonial Kenya was not, then, an isolated event....it was part of the rhythm of daily and seasonal life of the community' (In Mda 1993:12).

Story telling, in the Zimbabwean Shona people's performance tradition, has both theatrical and dramatic elements because the storyteller, whose name is *Sarungano* (the owner of the story, who is usually a female; aunt or grandmother in the family), invites her audience to listen to her story. The *Sarungano* usually performed stories during the evening in the village hut where the members of the family did not pay to listen to the story. As the *Sarungano* delivers her story, she receives constant feedback from the audience to create a close dialogic relationship. She opens her story with '*Paivepo...*' that means, 'Once upon a time...' to which her audience then reply with, '*Dzepfunde...*' that means 'Proceed.'

According to Chinyowa (1994:36), 'The call-and-response technique functionalises the African concept of community through its harmonious integration of performer and audience and plays a pivotal role in the education and socialisation of the young'. Theatre-for-Development uses



the same technique of integrating the performers and the audience. It is important to emphasise the attempts that theatre practitioners have made to adapt Shona storytelling to the contemporary Zimbabwean theatre in modified forms such as community-based theatre.

Shona traditional drama and theatre performance techniques were also used by the nationalist armed guerrilla forces to conscientise the peasants and mobilise them to prosecute the war of liberation from 1976 to 1980 when Zimbabwe gained political independence. All-night performances, called *pungwe*, incorporated songs, dance routines, plays and political propaganda that emerged as a new form of theatre that was a form of celebration of imminent victory in the struggle for liberation. According to Chifunyise (1984:47):

The dynamic use of the diverse and popular forms of the indigenous performing arts, for instance, ritual dances, poetic recitations, chants, songs, and story-telling enabled the combatants to mobilise the peasants' solidarity with the liberation struggle.

The guerrilla fighters taught the people to sing war songs and boost their morale at the political meetings, *pungwe*. The war songs were re-invented versions of the same songs that the people sang during the traditional ceremonies performed when they asked ancestral spirits for intercession to *Mwari*, the Shona name for God, during traditional prayers for rain, thanksgiving ceremonies for good fortune in the family and at communal work gatherings. The nationalist leaders took advantage of the Shona people's predisposition to integrate performance arts with their belief systems and used theatre to indoctrinate the people with the values of the struggle for liberation from colonial oppression. In this case, the revolution forces used theatre to address a current problem, the fight against colonisation, and, therefore, transformed existing performance modes of Zimbabwean theatre to prosecute the war of liberation.

Zimbabwean theatre changed with the times and this study emphasises the influence of historical changes on drama and theatre and shows that Theatre-for-Development developed from African classical drama, through distinct historical periods such as the colonial epoch, war of liberation eras and the post independence neo-colonial state of affairs in many independent African states. Theatre and drama scholars describe the changing face of Zimbabwean theatre, from one historical period to another, as a positive trend in transformation; for example, Chinyowa (1994:23) accurately insists that:

Zimbabwean theatre practitioners are transforming indigenous Shona narratives into popular theatre modes that enable them to address the problems currently affecting society; hence, they grapple with the transition from tradition to modernity.

The transition, from tradition to modernity, is discernible when one looks at how Theatre-for-Development departs from the preoccupations of classical African drama. Classical African drama playwrights conform to the western literary tradition, in which they pay particular attention to the 'literary' quality of a play, such as its form and structure, division into acts and scenes, and literary devices that include dramatic irony and the poetic quality of characters' dialogue, all of which we find in *The Lion and the Jewel*. The agents of Theatre-for-Development work with the members of target communities, for example the Ziya Theatre Company's involvement with the Chiredzana Resettlement community, to dramatise current social problems and implement a plan of action to resolve their social problems and improve the living conditions of the members of the community.

The overriding objective in Theatre-for-Development, which is to achieve development and social change, comes before considerations of the 'literary' quality of the play. The catalysts or animators can incorporate some western traditional aspects of drama in the playmaking process of their plays, but Theatre-for-Development clearly heralds a new phase in the development of African drama. One school of thought maintains that there is a difficulty in writing a historical account of African theatre and drama because there are no written sources recorded in any form. Adeji (200:58) points out that the difficulty of writing such a history

[e]manates from the fact that it is an African art phenomenon which originates and proceeds from Oral Tradition and Oral History, which is now generally referred to as Oral Literature.

These elements of pre-colonial theatre and drama have influenced the development of both classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development and are embedded in the mimetic masks, religious rituals, battle chants, song, dance and drama in the lives of Africans before the advent of western forms of theatre and drama. Adeji (2000) adds that:

[f]ar from simply presenting historical records of these cultural and social activities, it may be necessary to recreate the circumstances in which their performance was manifested and developed.

According to Kamlongera (1986:97):

[t]he rituals that were performed by the Africans were intended to reconcile man and his environment and theatre surfaces as part of the actual fulfilment of these intentions and, in this respect, ritual is bigger than theatre though the two are not exclusive of each other.

Drumming, dancing and masquerades were integral elements of the rituals that kept the link between the African community and the spirit world. However, white colonialists discarded the positive elements of ritual ceremonies, such as that they were performed to celebrate human life at the birth of a child or to convey respect for the dead at burial. Instead, some white colonialists dismissed the African way of life as primitive. Byram writes that in 1925, for example, in Kenya:

The British colonial government of Kenya outlawed the *Ituika*, a ritual ceremony, since it was perceived as a form of anti-European nationalism, while missionaries viewed it as hedonistic and primitive. Rituals became less and less of a public event and were replaced with European types of rituals and dramas that worked to maintain the status of the European in Africa. (Byram, 2001:3)

Contrary to the popularly held contention among African drama and theatre scholars, that western and colonially directed forms of drama destroyed African theatre forms, another school of thought affirms that African drama and theatre benefited from the western influence. Dhlomo (1936:57) avers that African drama, '[b]enefits from outside influence and, paradoxically, we are better able to express our selfhood when there is an outside reference.'

Theatre-for-Development agents and members of the target communities use their own methods to produce plays that address their social problems. Theatre-for-Development programmes emphasise that African drama should address contemporary social problems and should not be about yearning for a return to old forms of theatre that are not relevant to current socio-economic conditions. Kerr (1986:121) argues that:

[i]t is a positive development that a great number of elements of African popular folk culture survived colonialism, and that theatre agents use them in developmental popular theatre projects, not an attempt at retrieving and re-constructing pre-colonial modes that have no relevance in present-day Africa.

Classical African drama provides the foundation to understand the historical origin and objectives of Theatre-for-Development, which, as this study will show, develops from the threshold of classical African drama. As indicated earlier, Classical African drama upholds the values and positive elements in African popular folk culture and uses popular folk culture to promote the integrity of the Africans in the fight against the colonialists' efforts to acculturate and assimilate the colonised natives. While classical African drama addresses pertinent issues of national identity, reclamation of national independence and sovereignty during colonisation, Theatre-for-Development sets out to fight underdevelopment, poverty and oppression among the marginalised communities of most of the so-called independent African states that wallow in neo-colonial economic subjugation.

It is necessary to define the concept of classical African drama in order to explain the movement from classical African drama to Theatre-for-Development. The term *classical* refers to a standard or tradition that belongs to a much more distant historical past compared to a contemporary tradition. This study uses the term *classical* in 'classical African drama' to refer to plays that African writers wrote during the early stages of colonisation. During the early period of colonisation, Africans acquired western education and used it to write about the political, social, economic and cultural life of Africans who underwent transformation. Colonisation brought complete transformation after Europeans defeated African states, which they controlled through military means.

However, during the colonial era, there emerged educated African playwrights who used the knowledge of theatre and drama they learned in schools, colleges and universities. The plays they wrote and the theatrical productions they directed and performed took after the western tradition, revealing the considerable influence of Shakespeare, Marlowe and Shaw, to mention a few prominent western playwrights. Between 1940 and the late 1960s, these African playwrights, such as Asiendu Yirenkyi of Ghana, Nuwa Sentogo of Uganda, Segun Achibade of Nigeria and Godfrey Kabwe Kasoma of Zambia dramatised issues that concerned the consequences of colonisation in Africa, introducing themes such as the clash between western socio-cultural values and African traditional, cultural and religious practices. *Black Mamba* by

Kasoma, for example, is about the Zambian people's struggle for liberation from the British colonialists. In this play, the white settlers compared the Black Nationalist leader, Kenneth Kaunda, to a deadly poisonous snake, a black mamba.

*The Lion and the Jewel* falls into the same category of plays that this study defines as classical African drama and is concerned with political, social, economic and cultural problems that bedevil the Africans' welfare because of colonisation. Many scholars argue that the main theme in *The Lion and the Jewel* is to propose African political, economic and cultural values as a reaction to a predominantly white colonial discourse that denigrated African political structures, economic organisation and cultural values as uncivilised and barbaric. Byram (2004:24) corroborates the view that the aim of the colonialists was to indoctrinate the Africans with their own array of values and substitute the African mores with Christian teachings:

This eroded the African's predisposition to popular culture as an aspect of communalism through ritual ceremonies, story telling, and dance dramas and replaced it with European interpretations of theatre (Byram, 2004).

According to this school of thought, *The Lion and the Jewel*, therefore, is an attempt to recreate the African political, social and economic conditions that white colonialists destroyed, discarded and systematically replaced with western systems of government, Christianity and their own socio-cultural values. *The Lion and the Jewel* falls into a category of canonized written African drama texts that form a tradition that imitates the western forms of theatre in relation to division into acts and scenes and the use of the metropolitan language in their writing and conventional stagecraft in their performance. These texts imitate the western tradition because, as mentioned before, colonial education taught the playwrights about European theatre forms in schools, colleges and universities.

However, most of the classical African drama texts take a post-colonial standpoint, whereby the written plays narrate and express the colonised people's need to rid themselves of the injustices of colonization. Classical African drama texts, according to Bretinger (1996:169) '[h]ave the main characteristic to challenge the suppressive effect of colonialist historiography and re-appropriate rewritings of the colonial encounter from the perspective of the colonised.'

*The Lion and the Jewel* is a play that exhibits the same above-mentioned characteristic, namely using western theatre conventions to express the colonised African people's condition. The play also enacts the Yoruba mythology to recreate an African world outlook in theatre, represented on stage, embodied in the portrayal of characters steeped in African tradition. These characters are Baroka, the Lion, and his wife, Sadiku, who plays the traditional role of the eldest wife in a polygamous marriage, and woos a younger wife, Sidi, for her husband. Soyinka wrote and painstakingly prepared the text for his readers, directors and London-based publishers but does not consider the text as sacrosanct and, in answering a question on whether he pays attention to every detail of what he writes in a play when he puts the play on stage, he answers as follows:

Question: Do you edit your plays as the need arises?

Soyinka: Oh yes, I'm good at slashing my own plays. I would change and discard details that do not work at rehearsals. Nothing is finally arrived at until the play is closed. The text is merely a map with many possible routes.  
Gibbs (1993: 59).

This technique, constant editing by the writer of a play, contrasts with the changing of lines of dialogue that takes place in the play-making process of Theatre-for-Development plays as members of the community put forward suggestions during post-performance discussions, to bring out their message as clearly as they can, in their ever-changing performances of the same play.

There are different forms of Theatre-for-Development, namely, agitprop theatre, participatory theatre and conscientisation theatre. According to Mda (1993:50),

Agitprop is theatre that is produced by a professional group to benefit targeted people whereas participatory theatre results in theatre produced by and for the people *with* spectators; and conscientisation theatre is produced by and for the people without spectators.

Theatre-for-Development is, as indicated earlier, performed in the community in order to educate its members as to how they can use theatre to alleviate their social problems. In *A contemporary history of Theatre-for-Development*, Ross Kidd (1990:14) writes:

Theatre-for-Development practitioners first experimented with performances that used drama and other performance forms, combined with discussion, as a vehicle for education.

According to Byram (2000:24), the term, Theatre-for-Development, originated in Africa, particularly in Botswana:

Theatre-for-Development is a term that theatre practitioners coined in Botswana, in 1973, to describe the approach they used to refer to the use of theatre to achieve development among the communities that practised it during the execution of a theatre project known as Laedza Batanani.

This study will identify similarities that exist between the Laedza Batanani theatre movement and the community based theatre workshops that Ziya Theatre Company conducted with the people of the Chiredzana Resettlement community and which sought to improve the local people's living conditions. In both cases, the people's living conditions, riddled with problems of diseases and poverty, improved after they implemented communal co-operatives and self-help projects. In the Zimbabwean situation, the problems arose because the government resettled the people in former white-owned farms where there were no roads, schools, hospitals, shops or any form of basic local government services delivery system, such as sanitation, electricity or fresh water supplies, before the self-help initiatives. That was the reason why Theatre-for-Development was a suitable programme to involve communities in self-help initiatives to tackle those social problems.

In this study, members of the Ziya Theatre Company played the role of catalysts in bringing Theatre-for-Development to the Chiredzana Resettlement area. According to Mda (1993:18), catalysts are:

[t]hose outsiders with specialist skills in theatre and community development, who work as organised groups in communities, having a higher level of consciousness than the villagers, based on their education and general social experience.

This study defines development as the change that the people who practise Theatre-for-Development experience after their living conditions improve because of the programmes they undertake using community-based theatre as a vehicle of social transformation. If people live in a place where there are no clinics, schools, public roads, toilets and any other basic service delivery amenities, the state of their living conditions is one of underdevelopment. Such a community needs to understand the reasons why they live in such a bad state and how they can improve their living conditions. The reasons are always both political and economic; hence, the need for Theatre-for-Development catalysts who educate the communities about the methods community-based theatre uses to tackle social problems. If the people can start to build a clinic, school, toilet or the buildings to set up a police camp on their own and ask the government or donor agencies to intervene at a later stage, their effort is what this study designates development because it aims to achieve social change.

Many rural Zimbabwean communities live in underdeveloped conditions. Theatre-for-Development is a viable option that the government, non-governmental organisations and theatre practitioners can use to transform the people's living conditions. For the economically and socially marginalised communities, development means any programme that can overcome the main challenges that confront them in everyday life experiences, which include poverty, hunger, HIV&Aids and the absence of both private and local government institutions such as hospitals, schools, courts of law, police camps, power stations and shops. In the Zimbabwean situation, the government, through various ministries, designs development programmes for the communities but these programmes frequently do not work because they contain tailor-made solutions to social problems from the policy-makers' perspective.

These programmes usually fail to address the real problems that a particular community experiences, which only the people who experience them are best positioned, not only to express, but also to be involved in, in any viable development programme to overcome them. In Zimbabwe, as is the case with many neo-colonial African states, economically marginalised communities require developmental programmes to combat poverty, hunger and the outbreak



of diseases. Attempts the government ministries make to address social problems from the top have failed. They have failed in part due to a lack of understanding of the nature of the problems and the resultant prescription of inappropriate solutions. Theatre-for-Development programme catalysts, aware of the pitfalls government ministries have fallen prey to, begin by making the target communities the subjects of their own investigation into the community's social problems, after which the people propose viable solutions and finally implement any recommended solutions they can accomplish.

As suggested earlier, Theatre-for-Development tackles problems of neo-colonial economic oppression of workers and peasants in independent post-colonial African states. Ziya Theatre Company brought Theatre-for-Development to the Chiredzana Resettlement area where they played the role of catalysts, theatre agents or animators. Catalysts always involve the target communities' newly formed theatre groups and the spectators in discussion and debate sessions after the performance and, a considerable period after engaging them initially in Theatre-for-Development programmes, pay follow-up visits to monitor the progress the groups make on their own. The aim would be to get feedback on their progress so that the target community ends up not requiring the catalysts to carry on with Theatre-for-Development projects with them. When the whole community participates in Theatre-for-Development programmes on their own, they will have reached a higher stage of consciousness that Mda describes as, '[t]heatre for conscientisation' Mda (1993:18).

This study will show how the techniques classical African drama uses, of addressing pertinent colonial, cultural and social issues to educate members of the community, who watch the plays at theatre houses, schools, college halls and university venues, relate in a more remote way to development. Theatre-for-Development techniques, in contrast to classical theatre techniques, are in a close and intimate relationship with development, as they actively involve the people who need solutions to their social problems and, therefore, directly link with development. Theatre-for-Development, however, has significant links with classical African drama, in respect of the way it shares the revolutionary element: especially the use of theatre to recreate the social and cultural structures of the indigenous African people that both colonisation and neo-

colonisation do not seek to preserve but, on the contrary, sometimes deliberately work against and denigrate.

In classical African drama, the writers strive to create characters that meet conventional literary standards, making the drama texts polished literary products that appeal to the educated reader's aesthetic tastes. Knowledgeable readers and literary critics would appreciate such literary devices as irony, dramatic irony, symbolism, allegories, metaphors and stage directions. All these preoccupations are absent in the objectives that guide the creation of a production by Theatre-for-Development agents and the members of the community where it is practised, for example, in the Chiredzana Theatre-for-Development engagement that resulted in the production of *Sunrise*. In Theatre-for-Development, the exposition of a social problem, and subsequent offering of a remedy, constitute the overriding factors as the target community is taught to consider development as the prime objective in theatre; hence the playmaking process, through discussion and improvising of scenes, leaves very little room, if any, to consider aesthetic fulfilment.

The playwrights conceived the plot, themes and characterisation of classical African drama plays to suit a western theatre performance, with actors clearly separated from a non-participating audience. That set-up separates the actors from the audience, who do not participate in the performance, and the relationship between the actors and the audience contrasts with the way theatre agents and the community execute a Theatre-for-Development performance. In a Theatre-for-Development performance, the actors act out the play in an open space where there is no division between the actors and the audience. The audience also participate in the performance, the division between the actors and the audience often vanishes, and the production becomes a product of the community.

Theatre-for-Development groups gear theatre projects to achieve the main objective, which is to empower community theatre groups in learning how to network and get funds from various sources to enhance development. The Ziya Theatre Company, which launched some development projects in the Chiredzana Resettlement area, exemplifies this objective in a

Theatre-for-Development engagement that yielded development in terms of the school, clinic, gardens and toilets that the community built.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 3.4 Ziya Theatre Company: *Sunrise*

Members of the Ziya Theatre Company, David Dzatsunga Wellington Chindara and David Mubaiwa, played the role of catalysts in producing *Fair Range*, *Cholera*, and *Education is Power* with the villagers of the Matara, Chimarara and Chemhazha branches of the Chiredzana Resettlement community respectively. The three plays make up the Theatre-for-Development production, *Sunrise*. The Ziya Theatre Company, registered with the Zimbabwe Association of Community Theatre, first came to conduct Theatre-for-Development workshops with the community of the Chiredzana Resettlement area for one week, sponsored by the Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, from 15 March 2002 to 22 March 2002. During that engagement, the members of Ziya Theatre Company and the people of the Chiredzana Resettlement area sought donor funding from Christian Care International, which granted them the funding to launch development projects in September 2002.

The economic and social hardships the people of the Chiredzana resettlement area experienced started when the Zimbabwean government resettled them in the commercial farms owned by white farmers. Multinational companies, owned by Anglo-America, retaliated by closing their mines, industries and factories and stopped the production of basic food commodities. They relocated their machinery, used in the farms and industries, to neighbouring countries, namely, Mozambique, Zambia, Botswana, Malawi and South Africa. The destruction of commercial agriculture and mining and the closure of both light and heavy industries crippled the economy and unemployment and food shortages became rife. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe (1987: 86) warns that when African governments decide to chase the Whiteman from their countries, they should be reminded that, '[t]he Whiteman will leave with his tools'.

The war veterans mobilised the peasants of the Chiredzana resettlement area to occupy the Fair Range Farm, leaving their original homes in the Tribal Trust Land Reserves, where the colonial government had relocated them through legislation passed in 1930, in an allocation of land to 'natives'. This mini-dissertation provides a brief historical account of the Zimbabwean land question in order to enable a critical overview of the background knowledge that is

important to understand the origins of the social and economic problems in the Chiredzana Resettlement community that necessitated Theatre-for-Development programmes. The Rhodesian colonial government promulgated the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 that gave 80% of fertile land to 4% of the country's population, the white settlers who developed it into commercial farms, and divided the remainder, (20%) of the land, among the blacks.

The white colonial administration divided the remaining land into two land tenure systems. The first one was a smallholder farming system whereby blacks, who had passed prescribed agricultural courses, and possessed a sizeable herd of cattle, which was a measurement of wealth in Shona and Ndebele societies, got a farm in the Native Purchase Areas in semi-arid regions. The second type of settlement was the Tribal Trust Land Reserves which were for the majority of the rural peasants, who were poor. The people of Chiredzana resided in the Tribal Trust Lands before the war veterans resettled them on Fair Range Farm. They needed the land that the white settlers had robbed them of. Every black peasant was a victim of colonial dispossession of prime land by the British, as Hill (2005:76) indicates:

In 1919, the Privy in London ruled that all land under BSAC control belonged to the Crown, and in 1922, Britain agreed to sell it to the new government of Southern Rhodesia for 2 300 000 pounds, without recognising prior ownership of the land by the San, Shona or Matebele.

Although the people got land on the new farms to which they relocated, they lost public service institutions which they left behind in the process. When they moved from the Tribal Trust Land Reserves, they left schools, clinics, roads, shops, hospitals, police camps, courts of law, electric sub-stations, dams, telephone network systems and local government structures that the colonial government had established, and which the Zimbabwean government had improved after independence. These structures had taken a century to construct, since Zimbabwe was colonised in 1890 and the people of Chiredzana, by leaving the structures in the year 2000 to resettle on prime land on Fair Range, where such structures were absent, had ironically taken themselves back in time of over a century overnight.

The peasants of Chiredzana travelled 70 km away from these facilities and settled on Fair Range Farm, where, as indicated above, there was no infrastructure to sustain human habitation,

mainly because they badly needed fertile land. They had farmed on the same fields for over three generations, rendering the soil unproductive; hence, they needed to tend their livestock on greener pastures. The economic and social problems they face stem from both their colonial and neo-colonial history.

The people of the Chiredzana community grappled with problems that resulted from the government's policy regarding the land they forcibly took away from the white commercial farmers, destroying the economy in the process. The white commercial farmers took away all their agricultural machinery that included tractors, combine harvesters, overhead irrigation equipment, generators, electric water pumps and bulldozers as well as beef and dairy cattle, graders and their capital, and moved to invest everything in neighbouring countries after closing their industries and factories. While in most neo-colonial African or Third World states, a black comprador bourgeoisie class unites with owners of multi-national companies to exploit the workers and the peasants, in the Zimbabwean situation, as the case of the people of the Chiredzana Resettlement community shows, the scenario is different.

The peasants and the rich leaders in ZANU-PF party ranks, who also held key positions in the government, worked together to strip multinational companies of their property, which they declared ill-gotten during colonisation. However, the partnership between the peasants and politicians has another rationale. The rich ZANU-PF party politicians gave the peasants land so that they would vote for them, in the next elections, against their opponent and formidable opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, so that they could perpetuate their stranglehold on power. The peasants viewed the farm invasions and the displacement of white commercial farmers as a momentous opportunity for them to acquire land, a dream that had eluded them for two decades since independence in 1980, but the realisation of which they always sought to accomplish by any means.

The people of Chiredzana viewed these farm invasions as an achievement of the main objective of the war of liberation. They had fought the war so that they could get back their land from the British colonialists. The farm invasions, therefore, for them were ultimate victory. However, the farm invasions, some critics argue, were retrogressive because they destroyed the agricultural

sector, which was the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy. A land tenure commission, set up by President Mugabe in 1994, and chaired by Professor Mandivamba Rukuni, had completed its inquiry into the land tenure system of the country in 1998, and tabled its findings and recommendations two years before the farm invasions.

The land tenure commission's report recommended that the guiding principle in acquiring land to resettle landless peasants was to target unproductive farms and leave flourishing farms to their owners. If the owner had more than one farm, the farmer was supposed to sell the extra farms to lower-level farmers who had the right credentials to guarantee efficient performance in agricultural production at a commercial scale. The government put in place this land audit because the people were showing disenchantment with both the ruling party and the government because the economy was failing. The International Monetary Fund persuaded the Zimbabwean government to implement a five-year Economic Structural Adjustment Programme, from 1990 to 1995, but it failed to rescue the country from its economic woes, which were worsened by the severe drought spells in 1992 and 1995.

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, led by Morgan Tsvangirai, who is now the president of the Movement for Democratic Change and the Prime Minister of the country, in the current government of Global Political Agreement, started to pile pressure on the government to initiate constitutional reform as the first step to address the problems that the nation faced. Tsvangirai argued that the ZANU-PF government had not done anything to address the land question in the country, after twenty years of independence, and charged that the ZANU-PF ministers and only a few ruling party loyalists owned farms while the rest of the population was landless.

In February 2000, Mugabe offered his people a chance to alter the constitution through a referendum that, if ratified by the majority of the Zimbabwean electorate, would enable the government to seize 40 000 white-owned commercial farms and redistribute them among landless blacks. The ZANU-PF-led government drafted the referendum in opposition to the Congress of Trade Unions, lawyers and civil rights groups who averred that the constitutional

reforms which the government wanted to make infringed on the constitutional and property rights of innocent white citizens.

For Mugabe's government to win in the referendum, the majority were supposed to vote YES. The opposition wanted the majority to vote NO. The YES vote was going to sanction the ratification of the amendments to the land act Mugabe's government proposed to make. The amendment empowered the government to take farms from white farmers without compensation, and to extend the presidential term of office for two more years, to 2002, without running any election. The majority of the Zimbabweans were already tired of riots over food shortages and they voted NO and Mugabe and ZANU-PF lost the contest.

The ZANU-PF government, for the first time in its history, tasted electoral defeat and frantically approached Britain to provide them with money to buy farms from white farmers as the British government and the liberation war nationalist leaders had agreed at the Lancaster House peace agreement in 1979. Britain, the Rhodesian government and the Zimbabwean nationalist freedom fighters signed the agreement to pave the way for Zimbabwe's independence from colonisation in 1980 after the protracted guerrilla war of liberation. In the Lancaster House Agreement, the British government, led by the Conservative Party, agreed to give the newly formed Zimbabwean government money to compensate the farmers whose farms the government was going to allocate for the resettlement of landless peasants on a willing buyer/willing seller arrangement.

Although Britain and western donor agencies had provided funding to purchase land, the ZANU-PF government authorities gave the land that they bought to rich cabinet ministers and their families. Conwell (2008:72) puts it thus:

A plan to spread ownership more evenly had been drawn up after independence and was funded from London, until it emerged that farms bought from whites were being given to black government ministers and their families. Britain and other donors withdrew from the scheme, but now the Zimbabwean government would take the land without compensation.

The British government, led by Tony Blair's Labour Party, refused to honour its predecessor's financial obligations to the Zimbabwean nationalist leaders because the top Zimbabwean



government officials had used the fund to enrich themselves. To make matters worse for ZANU-PF, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions formed the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change. The new party was ready to contest the polls in the 2000 parliamentary elections and the 2002 presidential elections and received overwhelming support from Britain and the United States. The Zanu-PF-led Zimbabwean government alleged that Britain and America bankrolled the MDC to overthrow them and take political power from them. The Zimbabwean government retaliated by declaring war on white commercial farmers and, in so doing, ignored the recommendations of the land tenure commission to redistribute farms that were not productive.

The government secretly armed and mobilised former liberation war combatants to invade all white commercial farms in the country. ZANU-PF's 'war veterans' code-named the operation to invade farms *Jambanja*<sup>24</sup>, a word that does not exist in Shona diction, and has no known origin, except that it meant extreme violence vented on the opponents of the farm invasions whom the 'war veterans' hacked with machetes, shot in cold blood or burned alive with homemade petrol bombs. Hill (2005:85) writes that:

Bands of 'war veterans' took charge of the rural areas, and the police were ordered not to intervene when the fighters beat up anyone who could not produce a ZANU-PF membership card. The guerrillas started occupying white-owned farms, despite losing the referendum; Mugabe rushed through legislation to allow the government to take over any property without payment.

The ZANU-PF party's war veterans also referred to *Jambanja* as the Third *Chumurenga*<sup>25</sup>, which translates as the Third War of the liberation of Zimbabwe. The war veterans thus propagated the idea that the farm invasions were the Third War of Liberation of the country. The First War of Liberation was the one both the Shona and Ndebele speaking people of Zimbabwe fought to resist colonisation of the country by the early British South Africa Company's colonial troops, who were armed with guns, superior weapons that ensured them an easy victory over the

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<sup>24</sup> A shona sounding word, that is non-existent in Shona diction, the 'war veterans' coined it to describe the horrific violence they dealt white commercial farmers who resisted the farm invasions they executed in the year 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Shona name for 'War of liberation'

spear and bow-and-arrow wielding Shona-Ndebele regiments of the 1896 uprising. The Second Chimurenga was the successful second war of liberation that the nationalist ZANU-PF and ZAPU party political leaders, who are currently in power, waged from the 1960s up to independence in 1980.

The first white commercial farm invasions took place in the Karoi district of the Mashonaland West province where the war veterans shot a number of white farmers and hacked some to death with machetes. Ensell (2008:31), a social worker for the International Crisis Group, Blood and Soil, a non-governmental organization, in a paper on farm invasions in Zimbabwe titled *Land, Politics and Conflict Prevention in Zimbabwe and South Africa*, reports that:

On April 15, 2000, in Karoi, Zimbabwe, David Stevens, a white farmer, was abducted and killed by squatters near Macheke. 4 neighbours who went to help him were missing. On April 18, 2000, in Zimbabwe, Martin Olds, a white cattle rancher, was fatally shot by squatters.

The farm invasions spread to all the provinces of the country, including the Chiredzana resettlement community in the Zaka district of Masvingo province, which is the focus of this research.

There are conflicting views among many people, in Zimbabwe, outside Zimbabwe and in different parts of the world, on whether the land invasions benefited the country or not. Most of the people in the Islamic world, for example, being foresworn enemies of the United States, Britain and other western countries, applaud Mugabe and his regime for driving the white farmers out of the country and giving the land back to its original owners, the peasants. Zimbabwean opposition politicians and some scholars maintain that, while to give land to the hitherto landless peasants is a noble cause, the way the ZANU-PF led government carried out farm invasions did not benefit the country but ruined its economy.

The members of the opposition party contend that the ZANU-PF led government staged the farm invasions to win the support of ignorant and gullible peasants who were unaware of the adverse economic repercussions of a haphazard and violent agrarian reform. To substantiate this point of view, Hill (2005:85) argues that:

During the chaos, Zimbabwe has lost its traditional markets. Tobacco buyers, unable to fill their needs, have gone elsewhere and signed new contracts and Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and even Nigeria have poached the white farmers and given them land on which to grow export crops that have then been sold to clients who used to buy from Zimbabwe.

*Sunrise* reflects on both the positive and the adverse effects of the impact of the farm invasions on the lives of the people of Chiredzana. The people of Chiredzana were landless peasants, prior to the farm invasion, and the fact that the government allocated each family between 10 to 50 hectares of land for them to build their homes, thus providing land for farming and for grazing their livestock, was a positive development in their lives. Subsistence agriculture has become viable for many families in the Chiredzana Resettlement community, owing to the good quality of the soil. Rukuni's (2009:42) comments on his book, *Zimbabwe's Land Tenure Systems*, in a paper prepared for the Zimbabwe Economic Society Conference on Land Reform in Zimbabwe, titled *Security of land tenure, and strengthening rural institutions that manage land*, reveal that some peasants, whom the government resettled in the farms, became successful small, medium and commercial scale farmers:

This book represents arguably the most comprehensive empirical evidence challenging the popular myths that Zimbabwe's land reform has been a total failure, attributed to political cronyism and lack of investment. It captures the diverse range of real life responses of newly resettled family farms and the new small to medium scale commercial farmers to changing commodity and financial markets within the new agrarian landscape, during a period of economic distress.

The Zimbabwean commercial farm invasions, propelled by the government, contributed a revolutionary impetus in the sense that the hitherto economically marginalised peasant class forcibly took possession of the land from white commercial farmers and Anglo-American land-owning agents and other multinational companies. The peasants, to whom the government allocated the land, benefited from these farm invasions in a revolutionary sense. However, the way the government executed these land invasions also had a negative impact on the lives of the people the programme intended to benefit. The government could have solicited the

assistance of the African Union to convince the British government to honour its obligation to fund the resettlement programme in Zimbabwe. Amy, E. Ensell (2008:33) writes that:

In South Africa, President Mbeki brokered a deal with President Mugabe of Zimbabwe for an end to the campaign against white farmers in exchange for US and British funding for land reform and a restoration of relations with the IMF.

The war the government declared on the white commercial farmers, Anglo-American mining companies, industrialists and factory owners triggered a series of events that shattered the economy of the country, as this study shall indicate briefly later in this chapter. The ZANU-PF party and their government rightfully redressed the age-old plight of the landlessness of the majority of the Zimbabwean peasants. However, in the process, they also manipulated the political and legal system of the country by unconstitutional means in order to stay in power and subsequently plunged the country into arguably one of the worst economic crises in African history, with Zimbabwe recording unimagined high-level rates of inflation.

The members of the Ziya Theatre Company explained the functions of the Zimbabwean government's state structures and their responsibilities, and demonstrated that the political and economic decisions that the government makes always determine the living conditions of the people. The Zimbabwean government created economic, social, and legal structures that they use to rule and control the country. The ruling class benefits most from the country's natural resources and, as an elite class, are the chief culprits and architects of the people's social and economic problems as manifested in outbreaks of diseases, hunger and poverty. Since the beginning of the land invasions in the year 2000, there was a concerted effort, by both the government and the party, to undermine the judiciary, and the government replaced many independent judges with ZANU-PF loyalists as Hill (2005:59) explains:

When the land invasions began in 2000, and the courts declared them illegal, senior judges-including chief justice Anthony Gubbay, who had been appointed by Mugabe in 1990-were intimidated until they resigned and were replaced by people more closely aligned to the party.

The community of the Chiredzana resettlement area used theatre to reverse the negative impact of the land invasions on the social lives of the peasant settler farmers on the former

white commercial farms as reflected in the plays they created and performed in *Sunrise*. After the government resettled the peasants, the problems they faced stemmed from the lack of prior planning, on the part of the government, regarding the provision of service delivery structures. Problems of hunger and poverty manifested themselves among the people because the white industrialists closed the factories that manufactured food commodities such as sugar, flour, bread and cooking oil before fleeing from the country. The closing of factories and industries meant that all retail shop owners had to import foodstuff items from South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and other neighbouring countries and sell them to the people at exorbitant prices. Inflation eroded the value of the Zimbabwean dollar and food shortages resulted in malnutrition, the outbreak of diseases such as dysentery and cholera and the escalation of the numbers of people infected or killed by the HIV&Aids scourge.

Although the people of Chiredzana celebrated that they had had their problem of landlessness solved when the war veterans allocated 10 hectares to each family for resettlement on Fair Range Farm, they also realised that the resettlement process brought a new set of problems. The Zimbabwean government also realised that newly resettled communities badly needed development projects to mitigate the challenges that resulted from lack of infrastructure, to facilitate basic services delivery, such as road and railway-line transport networks, hospitals, clinics, shops, telephone services, electric power stations, police camps, courts of law and schools. The government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, encouraged community-based theatre groups, registered with the Zimbabwe Association of Community Based Theatre, to engage local communities in Theatre-for-Development workshops they funded.

The Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture sponsored the Ziya Theatre Company to undertake Theatre-for-Development projects under the management of the Zimbabwe Association of Community Based Theatre (ZACT). All theatre groups affiliated to ZACT, which was responsible for funding them, would go out in the rural areas to initiate Theatre-for-Development projects in communities where they would train the local people in the necessary theatre skills to kick-start development projects. Community-based theatre

groups initiated the formation of co-operatives to mould bricks to build schools, clinics and police stations in the Tribal Trust land areas, before the farm invasions, and the government now wanted such initiatives to be taken to the resettlement areas where the need had arisen in the invaded commercial farms, where there was no infrastructural development at all.

The reports which every member of the Ziya Theatre Company compiled contain detailed accounts of the Theatre-for-Development programme they undertook and the activities that took place during the weeklong workshops in the three branches where they were involved with the members of the community. The Masvingo Provincial Arts and Culture Officer, Better Masunda, also filed the reports with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in order to obtain funding for a second workshop to ensure that follow-up took place so that the Ziya Theatre Company could obtain feedback on the developments that arose since the inception of the Chiredzana Theatre-for-Development groups.

On arrival at the Chiredzana Resettlement area, the Ziya Theatre Company members showed the 'war veterans' official letters from the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture ZACT, authorising them to conduct workshops, hold meetings and mobilise the people to participate in a Theatre-for-Development programme for one week. According to a report by Dzatsunga, the people did not have any experience in Theatre-for-Development at first. To begin with, the members of the Ziya Theatre Company called the first meeting and agreed with the three branches of the Chiredzana Resettlement area that they were going to hold two-day workshops to introduce theatre-for-Development techniques to all the people. Over 600 people attended the first meeting, which was a record turnout, compared to the attendance numbers at other meetings the 'war veterans' regularly called to discuss the administrative matters of the branches. The credit for the success of the meeting, according to Ziya Theatre Company reports, went to the 'war veterans' who mobilised members of the community, in their respective branches, to attend the meeting as the people were informed two weeks before the Ziya Theatre Company came to the Chiredzana Resettlement area.

The Ziya Theatre Company introduced theatre to the people by performing a short play, *Nhamo (Poverty)*, which is about a ten-year old boy whose parents die from HIV&Aids, forcing him to

leave school and go to herd cattle for an alcoholic 'war veteran' in order to earn some money to buy food and clothing for himself and his two little sisters. The Ziya Theatre Company production of *Nhamo* incorporates song, dance, choreography, mime, and pantomime, specifically to display a variety of theatre performance techniques in order to arouse the target community's interest in theatre as well as using different facets of performance skills to teach the members of the community to do the same.

When the members of the Ziya Theatre Company performed *Nhamo*, the community did not participate in that performance. In this case the catalysts, the members of Ziya Theatre Company, did not facilitate either participation or conscientisation of the members of the Chiredzana Resettlement community. On the one hand, community participation happens during the dramatisation of the play, when the catalysts ask the audience questions or invite them to make comments in order to enlist their contribution; and on the other hand conscientisation happens, as this study has shown, as a result of the community's involvement in naming their problems, reflecting on them, exploring the reasons for their existence, and in making the decision to solve them. Community participation can also take place when the members of the target community become the audience and their participation just becomes audience participation. Therefore, it is possible to have audience participation and only very little or no conscientisation. This form of Theatre-for-Development is agitprop theatre.

In agitprop theatre, the community is not involved in the dramatisation process and therefore the catalysts only equip the community with theatre skills and, despite community participation taking place, as mentioned earlier, little or no conscientisation takes place. The members of the Ziya Theatre Company were cognisant of the requirement of the intervention technique to facilitate concretisation; hence their undertaking of the subsequent programme to facilitate participation and conscientisation in the individual branches that were going to produce their own community-theatre based plays.

After the performance of *Nhamo*, the catalysts, Dzatsunga, Chindara and Mubaiwa, urged the people to sing songs that all the people knew from singing them at social gatherings and community work functions, including songs sung during the war of liberation and at church

services. After that, each of the three branch villagers went to their own branch venues to make their own plays, guided by an appointed member of the Ziya Theatre Company. The two-day workshops, held from 15 March to 17 March 2002, were successful and each branch was busy with their own Theatre-for-Development production that marked the birth of the Chiredzana Community Based Theatre groups at the Matara, Chimarara and Chemhazha branch centres. The names of the branches became the names of the three Community Based Theatre groups when they registered with ZACT about two months later.

When the members of the community in the three branches started the play-making process, the members of the Ziya Theatre Company were there to direct the proceedings during the dramatisation process. The role they played also included contributing their views and guiding the participants in a systematic way that constitutes the concept of intervention, yet another Theatre-for-Development technique. Intervention serves to maintain a dialogic relationship between the members of the community, who are the audience, as well as assisting in analysis and offering procedural techniques on the playmaking process, thus ensuring the progress of the play.

The community members of the Matara branch, led by David Dzatsunga, produced the play *Fair Range*, getting the name of its title from the name of the farm before the war veterans mobilised the people from the Chiredzana Tribal Trust Land Reserves and invaded it. It belonged to a white missionary farmer, John Pemberton, who bred cattle. In this play, the people of the Chiredzana Resettlement area express their gratitude to the government for giving them land, but also identify the government's lack of accountability as the main cause of their problems. The ruling class has shared the wealth of the country among them and left the peasants worse off. The villagers discovered that ZANU-PF resettled them on the farms so that they would vote for their party in the next elections.

David Dzatsunga managed to set up the Matara Branch Community Theatre group between 17 March 2000 and 22 March 2000 and left the branch to carry on with their Theatre-for-Development programme under the supervision of a chairperson and a committee elected by the people. The members of the community used scotch-carts and wheelbarrows to fetch



stones and clay soil from anthills to build a wall across the Chiredzana River and called the dam Chiredzana, after the name of the river. Dzatsunga led the villagers through the play-making process in the broad scheme of the strategy and specialist skills that members of the Ziya Theatre Company used to engage the three branches of the Chiredzana resettlement community in Theatre-for-Development programmes.

The members of the Ziya Theatre Company came to live with the people of Chiredzana during the time they facilitated the workshops that led to the production, *Sunrise*. Theatre-for-Development agents use a crucial technique in that they introduce a narrator who assumes the role of a central character and who directs the course of a performance to stimulate community participation with the aim of making the project a genuine people's project. In the creation of the play *Fair Range*, Dzatsunga played the role of a catalyst and his function in the performance was to direct the course of the performance by involving the audience from time to time. After Dzatsunga had left, the Matara Theatre group was able to create a narrator character in their play *Fair Range*, War Veteran Kwaye, who stimulates effective audience participation when, at one point, he asks the audience a question to persuade the people to allow Moyo, a wayward member of the community who had refused to work with the other members, to join the cooperative:

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

I think we must forgive Moyo. Should we forgive Moyo?

ALL

YeEEEEEEs

(Appendix p 225)

It is clear from *Fair Range* that Dzatsunga had successfully imparted theatre skills during the engagement he undertook with the members of the community because of the way War Veteran Kwaye repeatedly assumed the role of narrator, thus inducing audience participation

and soliciting the opinions of the members of the audience in order to prompt the necessary Theatre-for-Development technique of intervention which engenders conscientisation.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

What must we do with him?

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

He must pay us with something. He has cattle and goats.

ALL

Yes

(Appendix p 222)

The members of the Matara branch community worked well with Dzatsunga, as all the three members of the Ziya Theatre Company lived at the homesteads of the members of the community of their respective branches in observance of a fundamental Theatre-for-Development technique called 'The Homestead Technique'. Theatre-for-Development agents use this technique because it is crucial for information-gathering and, according to Hansel Eyoh, it involves, '[I]iving with a family and trying to gather as much information as possible through discussion and observation' Eyoh, (91987:8).

In the case of the Chiredzana Theatre-for-Development project, the animators had to go beyond discussion and observation. As catalysts, they had to experience and appreciate the lives of the people so that they would be able to improvise the lines of dialogue correctly and echo the experience of the people. They had to be part of the community in order to gain a deeper understanding of the issues involved so that their contribution became relevant and appropriate during improvisation. Appropriate and correct improvisation constitutes another Theatre-for-Development animators' technique called 'Performance Method', which according to Hansel Eyoh, involves, '[i]mprovisation through which both participants and villagers obtain a deeper understanding of issues with the improvisation changing as such understanding grows' Eyoh, (1987:8).

In *Fair Range*, the main problems addressed are scarcity of drinking water for livestock, wanton cutting of trees by the settlers, the burning of grass, stock theft, unavailability of machinery to start farming, and the absence of the police and courts of law. The people identified that the major problem in their resettled community was the scarcity of water, as the farm is in a drought-prone region of the country that is suitable for animal farming; hence, John Pemberton had bred cattle on the farm. The second pertinent problem was that 'war veterans' took over the role of the police and set up kangaroo courts where, on presiding over criminal cases, they solicited bribes of goats, sheep or cattle and let offenders go unpunished at the expense of aggrieved members of the resettled community.

David Dzatsunga worked with the members of the Matara branch, through the process of playmaking, which included naming the problems, discussing possible solutions, improvising scenes, formulating lines of dialogue and making character sketches for performance. The Theatre-for-Development workshop process raised the people's awareness of the nature and origin of the problem of theft of livestock and the corruption of war veterans as evidenced in the kangaroo courts. *Fair Range*, which is reproduced in full in an appendix to this mini-dissertation, together with the other two plays, namely *Education is Wealth* and *Cholera*, which constitute *Sunrise*, dramatises the problem and offers the solution, which is to bring police officers from the nearby town to arrest the 'war veteran' offenders.

*Fair Range* consists of two scenes that were improvised to articulate the problems the community wanted to dramatise. The first scene, a short one, has a storyline with four main characters: War Veteran, Todzvo, Mavis, Raviro and Moyo. War Veteran and Todzvo sell an ox, one of the cattle stolen from Raviro, to Moyo. War Veteran presides over the stock theft case of Raviro's ox that she brings to the kangaroo court for redress. Apparently unknown to War Veteran and Todzvo, is the fact that Raviro has secretly informed her sister, Mavis, who is a police woman stationed at the nearest town, to come and arrest them on the day when the case is heard. When, at the kangaroo court, Raviro alleges that Todzvo has stolen her cattle and sold an ox to Moyo, War Veteran, despite being an accomplice in the theft case, charges

Raviro with 'falsely' accusing Todzvo of theft and Moyo of lying against Todzvo. He sentences Moyo to be flogged with a log, fifty strokes on his buttocks for bearing 'false' witness against Todzvo.

WAR VETERAN

You are lying. Todzvo and I did not sell an ox to Moyo on Sunday. Todzvo did not steal your cattle. Stop listening to rumours, my sister, Raviro. Let my ancestors strike me dead if I sold an ox this whole year!

RAVIRO

Then you must die. Moyo has come with the hide of the ox you and Todzvo sold to him on Sunday. He is here.

MOYO

*From the audience, holding an ox hide high above his shoulders*

You came with Todzvo and sold the ox to me for one trillion dollars. I can give Raviro her money back if you refuse to repay her. I don't want to go to jail. Jail? No!

WAR VETERAN

*He looks from left to right at the audience and points at Moyo*

Have you come to tell all lies that I sold an ox to you? Bring him on the arena. I sentence him to fifty lashes with the log on his buttocks. A sell-out sent by white farmers to fight us in this Third *Chimurenga*. The Youth brigade, come over! Arrest the sell-outs. Raviro must get ten strokes.

*Four strong young men grab Moyo by the scruff of his collar and the belt of his pair of trousers and two others pull Raviro by her hands and force them to lie on the arena. Two others hold big sticks ready to beat them.*

MAVIS

*Pulls a pistol and points it at WAR VETERAN*

You fought in the war of liberation. I also carried my own AK 47 and fought Ian Smith, and you know me. I have come from town to stand for my sister, Raviro. Todzvo stole her five cattle and gave you one. I'm a member of the police force and have come to arrest you and Todzvo.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Arrest them. They have grown fat eating our chicken, goats and cattle. Arrest them! (Appendix pp.216-18)

Theft cases occurred rampantly because, as mentioned earlier, the government did not establish police camps and courts of law in the resettlement community. The people discussed the problems and concluded that it was the reason why the war veterans unlawfully presided over kangaroo courts where they took bribes from offenders instead of administering justice. In the extract above, the 'war veterans', in the resettlement community, are portrayed as having wielded authority and power as War Veteran commands the youth cadres to start beating Moyo and Raviro. If Mavis had not come to their rescue, they would have been beaten and War Veteran and Todzvo would also not have been arrested for stealing Raviro's cattle. Besides dramatising corruption and violence perpetrated by the 'war veterans', the above extract also mirrors the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe, that is reflected by the level of inflation as seen in the price of the ox, which costs one trillion dollars.

In the second scene of *Fair Range*, War Veteran Kwaye is a prominent character who plays a leading role in organising the members of the Fair Range community to work on the garden cooperative and the communal dam. War Veteran Kwaye exhibits good leadership qualities and also works for the benefit of the community, unlike War Veteran who, in the first scene, is violent and corrupt. 'Kwaye', in local Shona language, means 'good' and, therefore, the name 'War Veteran Kwaye' suggests that there were both bad and good 'war veterans'; hence the creation of a progressive war veteran character in the second scene.

One of the challenges that the members of the community on Fair Range farm faced was that other members of the community refused to work in the self-help projects for different reasons. In *Fair Range*, the members of the community dramatise the problem by making one of the characters, Moyo, an example of the people who refuse to join the rest of the members of the community to work on the projects:

MOYO

I can't go to build a dam, I must sell my cigarettes. We need money to send to the Headmaster before he chases the children away from school. My shop...

MAI MOYO

Do you still have anything to call a shop? Since I saw that there is nothing, I joined the co-operative. Women do gardening and men build the dam over the Chiredzi River. You go to fish and dream about your shop and butchery that are full of rats and bats. Is there anything there to call a business?

MOYO

Yes, the buildings are there, my shop and butchery.

Appendix: p. 220.

War Veteran Kwaye suggests that the members of the community should forgive Moyo. This is clear from the intercession he makes to the community on Moyo's behalf, quoted in the first dialogue from *Fair Range* above, when Moyo comes to join them in the gardening project and the construction of the communal dam.

The question that War Veteran Kwaye asks the audience is, 'Should we forgive Moyo?' Appendix p.90. The first impression this question gives about War Veteran Kwaye's character is that he is not dictating his suggestion to forgive Moyo but, on the contrary, seeks the approval of all the members of the community. Many Zimbabweans, during the time this play was performed, disapproved of all dictatorial tendencies because the ZANU PF government was alleged to be a dictatorship that had caused untold suffering for the people and, it can be argued that a democratic procedure, when dealing with the public, as suggested in this question, was viewed as an invaluable and cherished practice. In the context of Theatre-for-Development methods, however, the same question is important because, as already mentioned; it allows the audience and actors to interact, thus enabling intervention and community participation to take place. When the members of the community make a play and perform it in the manner that is reflected in *Fair Range*, it is clear that the members of the target community have been equipped with the Theatre-for-Development skills by the agents, who in this case were the Ziya Theatre Company members.

Although the members of the Matara community have been equipped with the skills to improvise a Theatre-for-Development play, as revealed in the production of *Fair Range*, it is, however, also clear that this play does not show that conscientisation has been achieved at the highest possible level. This play does not portray the members of the Matara Theatre Group questioning, through *Fair Range*, the oppressive social, political and economic structures as the cause of their problems in a post-colonial African dictatorship that battles to dismantle a neo-colonial economic state of affairs. Instead, they have been able to name the problems and also to identify their source, as some rogue ‘war veterans’ and, also, as the harsh weather conditions that cause drought in a dry land but none of the actors has attributed the economic hardships to the government that expelled the white farmers and the white industrialists during the land invasions, which is one of the major causes of the problems the people of this community are experiencing. However, the people of the Chiredzana resettlement community acquired a considerable increase in the level of their consciousness as a result of their engagement in Theatre-for-Development with the Ziya Theatre Company.

Theatre-for-Development agents, animators or catalysts impart theatre performance skills to the communities that they initiate into the processes of identifying the problems they experience, and then transform them into a dramatic expression through improvising scenes, which is a playmaking skill. After establishing community theatre groups, they must engage in follow-up programmes in the communities where they initiate Theatre-for-Development projects to get feedback so that the target community ends up not requiring the catalysts to carry on with Theatre-for-Development projects with them because they are able to carry out the theatre projects on their own. At that stage, when the community does not require catalysts any more, such a community would have acquired a high level of consciousness, which is a positive indication that Theatre-for-Development has been able to bring about development and social change spontaneously.

Wellington Chindara worked with the members of the Chimarara branch and produced the play *Cholera*. Chindara started the process by arranging a workshop where the people began by agreeing to undertake a community-based theatre programme that was going to end with the

staging of a play that all the members of the community would not only play a part in devising, but also take part in acting out. They agreed to attend a workshop every day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the same day, from 17 March 2002 to 22 March 2002. The people of Chimarara identified the problems they faced and went through the naming process. According to entries submitted by Chindara in the Ziya Theatre Company workshop report, dated 17 March 2002, titled *Challenges in Chimarara Branch*, a list of the challenges faced by the people reveals that there were no schools, clinics, shops, roads, water sources or electricity supply services and telephone communication networks. The newly resettled farmers also needed support from the government in the form of loans to buy ploughs, fertilisers, seeds, fencing equipment and construct decent houses.

The process of identifying and naming problems is crucial in raising the consciousness of the people to enable them to understand the origin of their problems. Chindara, in this case, initiated a discussion on how to solve the problems followed by the members of the community's agreement about the solutions they could manage to implement within the stretch of their limited resources and the time at their disposal. The people agreed that they could divide themselves into four groups that would take turns on four days per week to mould bricks needed to build a school and a clinic. Each group would mould bricks once a week so that they could also have time to work in their fields and perform their everyday chores. They agreed that the first lot of bricks was going to be used to build a clinic as they decided that they needed to attend immediately to the problem of the outbreak of diseases.

As a result, the people also decided to produce a play about health matters and targeted cholera and HIV&Aids as the two diseases they based their play on. The play would offer lessons about how people contract them, and provide advice on how members of the community could avoid infection. They named their play *Cholera*. *Cholera* focuses on different, but related, problems that the community of the Chiredzana Resettlement area faced.

The people of the Chimarara branch sang songs during rehearsals and danced in order to unify their effort, as well as developing friendly and respectful relationships among themselves, which was conducive to sustain the rigours of the play-making process. These included



discussion, disagreement, resolution of differences and staging a worthwhile Theatre-for-Development performance. The people identified ignorance and poverty as being among the major problems that hindered development in their ward. The story line of the production, *Cholera*, shows these problems. The scenes and action of the play provide solutions to the Chiredzana community's social problems. Some of the solutions include the formation of co-operatives (that was also undertaken by the Matara branch villagers, who included a gardening co-operative and building a dam in *Fair Range*), and the practice of proper hygiene. This includes teaching people to wash their hands after using the toilet, cleaning fruits before eating them and boiling water from unprotected sources, such as rivers and sand-wells, before drinking it. The following is an excerpt from *Cholera*:

*NHAMO*

*Turns to the audience*

Tell my father what the nurses teach people at clinics and hospitals.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*Loudly*

Cholera kills in a very short time, Mujubheki. We must clean our utensils, boil water that we drink and clean fruits and vegetables before we eat them.

MUJUBHEKI

Are you a nurse, Emily? Can you tell me where you got that knowledge? You always came last in our class, ran away from school forever at break time, to get married to that tailor, your husband.

Appendix. p. 208

In this extract from *Cholera*, Nhamo addresses the audience to stimulate their participation. Emily is a member of the community but she gives advice to Mujubheki, who is an actor in the play. What is most important in this extract is that the audience and the actors interact, a technique, as indicated earlier, that is absent in classical African drama. Besides interaction during performances, actors and audience also exchange ideas after the performance and even agree on what course of action to take to solve the problems they present in the play. The

decision to petition Christian Care International came about because of post-performance discussions. Mujubheki is infected with cholera because he refused to wash the guavas before eating them.

MUJUBHEKI

*Suddenly lets go of the mattress and holds his stomach in pain*

I am dying. Help me, my wife, please!

*Suddenly the floor of the stage is wet.*

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Help your husband. Give him water and sugar solution. Count the right number of tea-spoons of sugar and salt and put them in boiled water.

MUJUBHEKI

*He rolls all over the floor.*

The pain is as if knives are cutting my intestines, please MAI NHAMO. Find me leaves of *muswati* tree. Leaves of *muswati* tree please.

MAI NHAMO

*She turns to the audience and asks.*

Should I go to look for leaves of this tree?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

No, MAI NHAMO, take your husband to hospital after giving him that water. He will live. If you go into the forest to look for roots or leaves, you will find him dead. Cholera kills very quickly.

Appendix p 213.

In the excerpt above, Mai Nhamo, in the same way as War Veteran Kwaye asks for the audience's approval to admit Moyo to the cooperative in *Fair Range*, asks the audience, 'Should I go to look for leaves of the tree?', when her husband, Mujubheki, sends her for the *muswati* tree leaves to treat his cholera infection. This question invites the audience to give their approval or disapproval of what she has been asked to do. The audience's suggestions would determine the decision that she is going to take, informed by the advice of the audience. This

Theatre-for-Development technique ensures that all the solutions to the problems that are raised in the process of dramatisation are provided by the members of the community. The advice that Member of the Community gives is that Mai Nhamo must give her husband salt and sugar solution mixed with water before taking him to hospital. The members of the community, therefore, can reflect on a particular solution that is suggested during the course of the performance so that they can do the same in real life if such a problem arises.

*Cholera* teaches the people about what they need to do to help patients who are infected before they bring them to hospitals or to clinics for treatment. In the extract above, this play shows the difference between people who use traditional knowledge of medicinal herbs such as the *mswati* tree leaves, which Mujubheki asks for, and the modern pre-medication remedy for diarrhoea, which is the salt and sugar solution, which a Member of the Community advises Mai Nhamo to give to her husband. The message is clear that Mujubheki must be taken to the clinic soon after being given the salt and sugar solution. The members of the Chimarara community managed to improvise a storyline based on the outbreak of cholera that took place in Zimbabwe in the year 2000. The outbreak of cholera had started in Zambia and spread to Harare because many Zimbabweans travelled to Zambia every day to do cross-border trading because the sudden collapse of the country's economy during that time caused many hardships. These facts are confirmed in Nhamo's argument, when he refuses to eat some guavas which Parwazenga's daughter had brought from Harare, in which he says:

#### NHAMO

Baba, I don't eat guavas from Harare. There is cholera in Harare. It was brought there by women who go to Zambia to buy and sell clothes and food-stuff. You should clean anything that you eat, Baba.

Appendix (p. 208)

*Cholera*, apart from highlighting the difference between traditional means of medication, that the members of the community are discouraged from using, and modern medicines that the play encourages people to use, also blames westernisation for the high levels of HIV&Aids

infection in modernised societies. While Nhamo and Mujubheki, son and father, provide a representation of the generation gap between the young and the old, Mujubheki and his brother, Aunt Ruth's husband, represent yet another contrast between a poor traditional African family and a rich westernised family. Aunt Ruth's family is well-to-do and one of her sons, Gerald, lives in the United Kingdom while they live a luxurious life in a suburb where they are served by a maid-servant and a gardener. The play reveals the peasants' ignorance about the HIV&Aids pandemic, through Mujubheki, who thinks that, as he puts it, 'HIV&Aids is a disease for rich people in the city, not here' Appendix (p. 210).

The characters that make up Aunt Ruth's family are closely knit in an incestuous sex-chain that has the potential, not only to have the whole family and servants infected with the HIV&Aids virus, but also the whole suburb. The dramatisation of the HIV&Aids pandemic is comic and can also be described as a farce, as the passage below shows in a telephone conversation, in which Aunt Ruth advises her home-bound son, Gerald, not to come back home if he has been infected with HIV&Aids:

GERALD

It's fine here, but I've got this news...sad news for you.

AUNT RUTH

What's that?

GERALD

Mom, I have got HIV&Aids.

AUNT RUTH

Don't come back home, my son.

GERALD

Why, mom?

AUNT RUTH

If you come back home, your wife will be infected. Your wife will give it to your brother, from your brother to our maid, from our maid to your dad, from your dad to my sister, from my sister to her husband, from him to me and from me to our gardener, from the gardener to your sister. And if your sister gets HIV&Aids, the whole suburb will be infected! So, in the name of God, please, save our suburb. Don't come back home.

Appendix (p. 214)

The story in *Cholera* teaches the people about the methods they must use to prevent infection by the HIV virus and the cholera bacteria providing a contrast between two brothers' families, whereby one is rich and the other one is poor, in order to dramatise a misconception by Shona rural societies where many people believe that it is only the poor people who suffer from cholera and also that only the rich people suffer from HIV&AIDS related sickness.

David Mubaiwa used the same Theatre-for-Development techniques, used by Dzatsunga and Chindara, to facilitate the production of *Education is Wealth* with villagers of the Chemhazha branch. The members of the community in Chemhazha branch listed the problems they faced, which included unavailability of shops and a clinic. On top of the list, they noted the absence of a school in their area. As a result, they decided to include education as a main theme in their play. A possible remedy to alleviate poverty, suggested in *Education is Wealth*, lies in sending children to school so that they can get jobs and earn money to enable them to live comfortable lives, together with their parents and all members of the family. In *Education is Wealth*, the play communicates the message thus:

MAI SARU

*Smiling for the first time, kneeling.*

What she needs is education to be like Baloyi's daughters, who bring fame to their family. Didn't you see them build those two shops for their father and mother? Didn't you see that, my husband, my chief, head of our family?

BABA SARU

*Scratching his chin, smiling.*

I saw it. Now they live easy lives. They just take food from the shelves in their shops.

Appendix: p. 199.

David Mubaiwa assumed the responsibility of directing the course of the performance. The play-making process, according to Mubaiwa's report, involved replaying scenes according to suggestions the actors and members of the community made during discussion sessions that were an integral part of improvisation. In the excerpt above, Mai Saru argues with her husband about sending their girl child to school because he does not want the child to go to school because she is a girl. During the post-performance discussion, the actors and the audience agree that Mai Saru should seek advice from the audience on how she can convince her husband to let Saru go to school. In so doing, the play involves the audience and stimulates them to participate in the performance as shown in the passage below.

MAI SARU

*To the audience*

My husband belongs to the past, what must I do to make him change his mind and agree to send Saru to school?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

*She takes off a shawl from around her shoulders and beats the ground with it.*

Explain to him that our lives have changed. Both boys and girls depend on education to get jobs in the government, industries and factories. Our children cannot depend on farming any more. Appendix p.198.

*Education is Wealth* presents two families, Baloy's and Baba Saru's, that differ in that Baloyi sends girl children to school while Baba Saru refuses to send his daughter, Saru, to school because she is a girl. These two families offer the audience examples of, on the one hand, the progressive outcome of educating children, that is demonstrated by dramatising a scene depicting parents who send a girl child to school and later enjoy the benefits from the child's employment that enables her to establish businesses that support the family and, on the other

hand, the opposite example of Baba Saru, who represents the retrogressive influence of traditional and paternalistic attitudes, still prevailing in some Shona societies, that disadvantage girl children by denying them education. This scene, therefore, teaches the people about the importance of education. Although the play does not show us Baloyi or his daughters on the stage, Mai Saru always refers to them in order to convince not only her husband to allow Saru to go to school, but also the members of the community who watch the play. Mai SARU says:

#### MAI SARU

Girls also need to work there and earn salaries to build or buy houses, cars, cattle, groceries and everything they need.

*She kneels down and claps her hands repeatedly, begging him to believe her*

Saru will buy more cattle, build us a better house, buy us a car and change this miserable life that we live now.

#### *Addressing the audience*

Look at Baloyi's children; those two girls built shops and now drive cars that they buy with the money they earn from good jobs because their parents sent them to school.

Appendix: p.199.

In *Education is Wealth*, as in *Fair Range* and *Cholera*, members of the audience are actors and contribute to lines of dialogue that constitute the storyline in the performance. The distinction between the audience and the actors diminishes as they interact through interjections, cross-questioning and, sometimes, during the singing and dancing. Song and dance, apart from heightening the morale of the actors and the audience, are important elements that constitute several integral components of the performance process, presentation styles and techniques. A song can be used to introduce a new scene, as in *Fair Range* where the actors and audience sing and dance to mark the beginning of Scene Two as shown in the extract below:

#### SCENE TWO

*The audience sings and dances the same song going round and round in a circle until a cloud of dust rises. Moyo waves his hands asking them to be quiet so that he can talk to his wife.*

Appendix: p. 220.

Actors can use a song to introduce themselves to the audience, as they do at the opening of *Cholera*, or to create a particular feeling the actors want to share with the audience to persuade them to agree or disagree with a particular point of view in the process of dramatisation. A song can also be sung to express a collective decision that must be executed with everyone's consent, confirmed by taking part in singing to exhibit unconditional agreement with the voice of the communal body of which the individual is only a part. The excerpt below shows how the members of the community in *Fair Range* express their agreement with the decision to get rid of the War Veteran through a song.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Arrest them. They have grown fat from eating our chicken, goats and cattle.  
Arrest them!

*Raviro starts singing. All the people join her.*

Appendix: p. 218.

A song can also be sung to celebrate success. That is demonstrated in *Education is Wealth* when Saru sings the poem to celebrate the permission her father grants her to go to school. The poem she sings expresses the mood of happiness she shares with the audience who represent all the members of the community. Songs can also be used to entertain the audience and to enrich the performance in terms of their theatrical effect, such as enhancing dance routines. Songs may also be used to convey messages and uphold social values, for example, by reinforcing the spirit of oneness among the people when they sing to share their joy during



moments of celebration, as already noted above, or to ease their pain in enduring tough communal tasks, which is shown in the excerpt from *Fair Range* below:

*All the people start singing a song, making movements with their bodies and hands as if they are at work.*

Let us all work in the morning, before sunrise

Let us all work in the morning, before sunrise

When the sun is hot, we sweat and sweat

And cannot work as hard as we can do it

When the sun is hot we sweat and sweat

And cannot work as hard as we can do it

So let us work before sunrise and finish

So let us work before sunrise and finish

Appendix: p. 222.

Songs can also be used to diffuse grief at funerals. In *Fair Range* Pastor Peckson does that when he leads the singing at Rueben's burial. Rueben, a young boy, is gored by an elephant at the Chiredzi River where he is herding cattle. However, in *Sunrise*, song and dance feature prominently in order to ensure some interaction between the actors and the audience; hence the performance becomes participatory theatre. The participatory nature of Theatre-for-Development, as Mubaiwa imparted it to his target community members of the Chemhazha branch, allowed the villagers to give their opinions about the issues they discussed, presenting their own points of view and becoming actors, and in the process raising their consciousness and critical awareness of their reality.

There is a need to provide a term that defines the type of theatre that is performed by the Chiredzana resettlement community as it is reflected in the production, *Sunrise*. The need arises since the terms agitprop, participatory theatre, theatre for conscientisation and community-based-theatre have different meanings although they are all forms of Theatre-for-Development. *Sunrise*, as has been mentioned in the definition of agitprop earlier on, is not agitprop because '[I]n agitprop the play is produced by a professional group and is then taken

to the audience as a finished product.’ Mda (1993: 156). The example of an agitprop play in this study, as also noted earlier, is *Nhamo*, which the Ziya Theatre Company performed for the community at the beginning of the Theatre-for-Development project in the Chiredzana resettlement community.

Because *Sunrise* was created by the members of the community and was presented to the audience, who were also members of the same community, it qualifies to be classified as participatory theatre, which according to Lambert’s classification is ‘[t]heater produced by the people for the people with spectators’ Lambert, (1982: 240). However, *Sunrise* also has elements of what is known as theatre-for-conscientisation, which Lambert describes as, theatre, ‘[p]roduced by the people for the people without spectators’ Lambert, (1982: 240). When the members of the Ziya Theatre Company left the members of the Chiredzana resettlement community to create *Sunrise* on their own, theatre-for-conscientisation was taking place.

If the terms agitprop, participatory theatre and theatre-for-conscientisation do not provide a single theatre-for-development methodology term that accurately describes the performance processes that were used in *Sunrise*; there is therefore a need for a new term. The term that should be considered to describe the activities that take place in *Sunrise* is community-based-theatre because the plays emanate from the Chiredzana resettlement community itself and are performed by members of the community for a community audience. Although community-based-theatre describes the Theatre-for-Development methodology used in *Sunrise*, it is important to consider the other connotations of the same term that Mda (1993:157) raises when he describes it as:

[a] generic term describing a range of different methodologies, ranging from theatre created by the community with the assistance and active participation of outside agents, or a theatre created by the community from their own effort and resources, to a theatre created by outside agents using their own resources but addressing issues of a particular community and performed for that particular community.

According to the way the term ‘community-based-theatre’ is defined above, it is clear that it would not be possible to make a distinction between a participatory theatre methodology and

a theatre-for-conscientisation methodology because both of the terms can be referred to as community-based-theatre methodologies; hence *Sunrise* was produced using both theatre-for-Development methodologies. However this study recommends the use of the term 'participatory theatre' for all the theatre methodologies that were used in *Sunrise* insofar as the methodologies involved the active participation of the audience in all of the different stages of creating the three Theatre-for-Development plays during the process of dramatisation. Although agitprop would involve a professional group that performs a finished play to a target community audience, the actors can ask the audience some questions during the performance and engage them in a post-performance discussion about the play and, as a result, agitprop becomes participatory theatre. There is evidence of the application of all of these theatre methodologies in the production of *Sunrise*.

The members of the Ziya Theatre-for-Development succeeded in their objectives in setting up theatre groups in their respective branches and established theatre committee members to run the groups and continue working on the plays to improve them. More importantly, as I indicated earlier, the Ziya Theatre Company compiled a report on the activities the people were involved in, included the names of the members of the committees that were set up to run the community theatre groups, and wrote a petition to Christian Care International to assist the community with donations to fund their proposed projects.

In September 2002, Christian Care International launched development projects in the Chiredzana Resettlement area. The donor agency also funded a two-week Theatre-for-Development workshop during which the Ziya Theatre Company undertook to educate the local people about the importance of the projects and the role they were supposed to play in order to make them successful. They submitted the reports through the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture and the Zimbabwe Association of Community Based Theatre (ZACT), because the Zimbabwean government had become wary of the activities of western donor agencies: they suspected them of bankrolling their opposition party foe, the Movement for Democratic Change.

The reports they submitted contained detailed accounts of how the community of the Chiredzana Resettlement area had set up theatre groups in three branches, run by committees headed by a chairperson in each group. The projects they proposed were building a clinic, a school, a police camp, pit latrines, a dam and cooperative gardens. The branches agreed on the site of the clinic, school and police camp, which was at the central point where the war veterans instructed the villagers to gather for political meetings and for the distribution of seed handouts that the government provided to people free, usually near elections to solicit their vote. The people had moulded more than 15 000 bricks by 20 June 2002 when they submitted their petition and proposal to Christian Care international.

Meanwhile, the theatre groups in the three branches kept meeting at agreed times to engage in Theatre-for-Development sessions in preparation for a grand performance before officials from the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture, ZACT and Christian Care International on the date of the official launching of the projects. The committees arranged the scheduling of rehearsals, performance and post-performance discussions without the members of the Ziya Theatre Company; hence, the birth of the three Chiredzana Community Theatre Groups that registered with ZACT on 1 May 2002, a month before they submitted their petition to Christian Care international on 20 June 2002.

The Chiredzana Community Based Theatre groups produced the three plays, *Cholera*, *Education is Wealth* and *Fair Range*, using agitprop theatre, participatory theatre and theatre for conscientisation methodologies. The Ziya Theatre Company, therefore, succeeded in transforming the people of Chiredzana from spectators into actors. At first, they were spectators, when they watched the Ziya Theatre Company actors performing *Nhamo*, as a way of introducing them to theatre, and they became actors when they participated in the initiatives that the members of the Ziya Theatre Company took them through to implement Theatre-for-Development programmes that brought social change in their branches. The community of Chiredzana, aided by Christian Care International, built a clinic, a school, pit latrines and ran gardening projects after implementing Theatre-for-Development programmes initiated by the Ziya Theatre Company members, who played the role of Theatre-for-

Development catalysts, which suggests their success in changing the people of Chiredzana from spectators into actors.

It is clear also that, as catalysts, the three members of Ziya Theatre Company did not impose their own way of seeing things on the people as the 'correct' perspective or ideology, but guided the members of the community to identify the economic and social problems they experienced. After that, they dramatised them, together with proposed solutions, and allowed the members of the community to express their experiences in drama, thus enabling them to take charge of their own destiny so that they could determine the course of their own development as subjects who undertake responsibility to change their living conditions. Brainwashing of target communities by catalysts and Theatre-for-Development agents is detrimental to the positive development of the people the agents engage in Theatre-for-Development projects. Crow and Etherton (1982:585), corroborate this observation when they write that, '[t]he catalyst's unconscious or uncritical commitment to an ideology militates against the development of open-ended, collaborative forms of community drama'. However, this study argues that the Ziya Theatre Company was mindful of that pitfall as they were successful, together with the community of Chiredzana, in bringing development projects to the area with the aid of Christian Care International's donor funding.

At this point I should mention that this study is accompanied by a play, *Last Laugh*, which I have written in partial fulfilment of the M.A. in Creative Writing. *Last Laugh* is set in the Zimbabwean post-farm invasion era. It takes the form and structure of traditional drama in terms of its division into acts and scenes; and is also conceived for a stage performance. *Last Laugh* falls in the category of plays that are written before they are performed. In *Last laugh*, however, I have created scenes in which one of the main characters, Gamera, forms a community-based-theatre group called *The Martyrs* and is involved in Theatre-for-Development projects in the neighbourhood.

All of the above should be deleted. Instead describe briefly the significance of the Theatre-for-Development sequence within the wider intentions and message of *Last Laugh*.

#### 4. Conclusion

The purpose of this mini dissertation is to explore the development of African drama in terms of the relationship between classical African drama and Theatre-for-development. This study has selected a Theatre-for-Development production, *Sunrise*, to illustrate the manner in which intellectuals, liberation theorists, university students, government ministries and various theatre and drama practitioners introduced the idea of using drama for the social development of marginalised communities. The training of local communities to acquire drama and theatre skills brings social change by improving the local community's living conditions. The three cases of the Chiredzana Resettlement community's Theatre-for-Development projects, in chapter 4, exemplify the use of theatre to bring social change.

In this conclusion, the study makes a comparative analysis of the contribution that classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development have achieved, in terms of their impact on the social lives of the people of their different historical epochs as well in contemporary societies. Nationalists used the space that classical African drama provided to promulgate revolutionary manifestos against colonial regimes, as seen in plays such as *Black Mamba* and *The Lion and the Jewel*. The Theatre-for-Development engagement the Ziya Theatre Company initiated, and the development projects they implemented in the Chiredzana Resettlement area, upheld the revolutionary element which is present in classical African drama, by addressing the concrete historical living conditions of the impoverished people of the Chiredzana Resettlement community. Ziya Theatre Company used Theatre-for-Development skills to conscientise and enlightened the people about their oppression by the Zimbabwean government and introduced theatre as a vehicle to uplift their living standards as reflected in *Sunrise*.

The similarities and differences between classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development, as previously discussed, are pertinent. The first important similarity is that they are both performing arts which educate, entertain and carry the potential to change both the actors and the audience. When classical African drama playwrights write and perform plays, and Theatre-for-Development practitioners make plays and stage productions, both processes develop the consciousness of both the actors and the audience, who watch the performances, through a

learning experience that, more often than not, inevitably changes the way they perceive reality. This mini-dissertation highlights the similarity in the shared didactic dimension that exists in the value and purpose of both classical African drama and Theatre-for-Development.

Theatre-for-Development practitioners, agents, scholars and authors should intensify their effort throughout other marginalised societies in Zimbabwe, Africa and the rest of the developing countries, as an effective tool to fight poverty and underdevelopment. Above all, matters arising from this study require possible further research on this subject in other parts of Africa, and elsewhere in the world, where intellectuals, government ministries and theatre practitioners have used Theatre-for-Development as a tool to bring positive social development in marginalised communities.

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6.

## APPENDIX

### **SUNRISE**

#### **The Plays**

1. *Education is Wealth*
2. *Cholera*
3. *Fair Range*

#### *EDUCATION IS WEALTH*

Characters:

MAI SARU

BABA SARU

SARU

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*Chemhazha branch villagers sing a song and do a dance routine. A cloud of dust rises and all the people gathered at the meeting join in the singing and dancing. David Mubaiwa, a Ziya Theatre Company member working with Chiredzana Ward villagers, sings from the crowd and takes the stage. He dances and all villagers from Chiredzana Ward join in the singing and dancing.*

## MAI SARU

All the villagers from other *Wards* join us. Everyone here knows this song, *Kuenda Nokudzoka*. We sing it when we work together; free of charge, from one household to another, when we plant, weed or harvest our crops.

*Kuenda nokudzoka zvinoda wakashinga*

*Vana Amai ridzai mhururu, zvinoda wakashinga*

*Mhururu dhenderere, mhururu, mhururu ndenderere*

*Mhururu dhenderere, mhururu, mhururu ndenderere*

*Kuenda nokudzoka zvinoda wakashinga*

*Vana Amai ridzai mhururu, zvinoda wakashinga*

*Mhururu dhenderere, mhururu, mhururu ndenderere*

*Mhururu dhenderere, mhururu, mhururu ndenderere*

*They stop singing.*

Enter Baba Saru, Mai Saru and Saru

## BABA SARU

*Smoking a homemade cigar.*

Saru must look after the cattle.

## MAI SARU

*Grinding sorghum with a mortar and pestle*

Edmore, your brother, came here yesterday. He said that he will take care of our cattle so that Saru can go to school.

BABA SARU

*He pulls at his tobacco and spits.*

Edmore plans to take my cattle and use them to plough in his field. He will kill them with hard work.

MAI SARU

Saru should go to school. She always cries that Eunice, her friend, is now in grade six while she is a herd girl. The girl child also needs education to get good jobs, just like boys do.

*She turns around and addresses the question to the audience*

Should parents not educate our girls?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*Loudly*

Parents must send girls to school.

MAI SARU

Do you hear and understand why you must send Saru to school, my husband?

BABA SARU

Girls get married. I don't want to waste my money to educate a girl who will get married and add wealth to the family where she goes to marry.

*He coughs*

This is my home. You must listen to me. I'm the head of this family.

MAI SARU

*To the audience*

My husband belongs to the past, what must I do to make him change his mind and agree to send Saru to school?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*She takes off a shawl from around her shoulders and beats the ground with it.*

Explain to him that our lives have changed. Both boys and girls depend on education to get jobs in the government, industries and factories. Our children cannot depend on farming any more.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*Steps on the stage and stands at the edge, looking back to the audience*

She must tell him that girls also need to work in the industries and earn salaries to buy houses, groceries and everything they need to live. Tell him that girls can also buy cattle for their fathers.

MAI SARU

*To Baba Saru*

Our lives have changed so much that all children now depend on Education to get jobs in the government, industries and factories.

BABA SARU

*He shakes his head to show that he disagrees*

Only men go to towns and big cities to look for jobs, not women. Women work in the fields and at home. What has got in your head, Mai Saru?

MAI SARU

Girls also need to work there and earn salaries to build or buy houses, cars, cattle, groceries and everything they need.

*She kneels down and claps her hands repeatedly, begging him to believe her*

Saru will buy more cattle, build us a better house, buy us a car and change this miserable life that we live now.

*Addressing the audience*

Look at Baloyi's children; those two girls built shops and now drive cars that they buy with the money they earn from good jobs because their parents sent them to school.

BABA SARU

*Squats and holds her by the shoulders, looking at her face*

Will our own Saru do the same?

MAI SARU

*Smiling for the first time, still in her kneeling position*

What she needs is education to be like Baloyi's daughters who bring fame to their family. Didn't you see them build those two shops for their father? Didn't you see that, my husband, my chief, the head of our family?

BABA SARU

*He scratches his chin, smiling.*

I saw it. Now they live easy lives. They just take food from shelves in their shops.

*[He stands and faces the audience]*

We work like donkeys in the fields but what we get when we sell the crops after harvest is not enough to add a pig to our livestock. Now, I think you are right. Saru must not live like we do now. She must live like Baloyi's daughters.

*He turns and looks at MAI SARU*

Now, I agree with you. You are right, my wife.

MAI SARU

*She stands up and looks at BABA SARU*

Do you allow Saru to go to school?

BABA SARU

*Looks up to show that he is deep in thought*

Yes, she will go to school but I'll change the rules at home about what each one of us does every day. Saru will go to school. Yes, she will go to school, starting tomorrow.

MAI SARU

*[She claps her hands, clasps both palms on her mouth and makes a shrieking sound from her mouth to celebrate that Saru will go to school at last.]*

Say what changes you want to make, head of our family. Saru and I will obey your rules.

BABA SARU

*He scratches his chin*



Firstly, that lizard, Edmore, will not take my cattle to his home.

MAI SARU

Yes he must not take our cattle. What else?

BABA SARU

Secondly, you will open the cattle kraal at ten o'clock every day after helping me in the fields.

*He points at an imagined space for the fields*

MAI SARU

*Pointing at an imagined spot where the kraal is.*

For sure, I will open that cattle kraal at ten o'clock after helping you in the fields every day.

BABA SARU

*Rubs his palms together and points in the air*

Then Saru will come from school at one o'clock and herd the cattle for the rest of the day while you cook and do all your household chores. Give her some money to buy uniforms.

*Looking away from MAI SARU to the audience*

Call Saru.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*[At the top of her voice]*

Saru! Sarudzai!

SARU

*[Coming from the audience]*

Shewee-e-e.<sup>26</sup>

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Go up to your father and mother. They're calling you, go quickly.

*SARU scrambles onto the stage and looks at MAI SARU*

BABA SARU

*Pointing at BABA SARU*

Don't look at me. If you come to your father and mother, always expect that it is your father who has something important to speak to you about.

SARU

*Looking up to BABA SARU*

I have come, Baba<sup>27</sup>, say what you have to say to me.

BABA SARU

*Pointing at MAI SARU*

Thank your mother for the words that I am about to tell you.

*Pointing towards the audience*

Ask everyone who is here and they will tell you that my wife taught me a good lesson, today, that girls must also go to school.

---

<sup>26</sup> Shona for hello

<sup>27</sup> Father in Shona.

*He takes out another cigar and lights it*

From school they get education to work in government jobs or factories and industries where they get paid and use the money to build houses, shops and buy cars and even these cattle I love so much.

*He puffs a thick cloud of smoke*

She gave me the example of Baloyi's daughters who built their parents two shops and bought cars for their parents. Baloyi's daughters studied big books. They went to school up to the *Universe* of Zimbabwe. Can you do the same, Saru? To learn everything there is to know. Can you do the same my daughter, and go to the *universe*?

SARU

*Smiling*

Yes, I will go to university if you let me go to school. Will you allow me to go to school next year, Baba?

BABA SARU

No. Not next year.

SARU

Oh! My father...

BABA SARU

No. Not next year. You are going tomorrow, SARU.

SARU

*Rubbing her palms together*

Do you mean it Baba?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

*Loudly*

Thank your mother. She fought for you to go to school.

*Turning to another MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY*

Do I lie that MAI SARU opened her husband's eyes to know that he must send SARU to school?

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

You are not lying, my daughter. It's true. He was blind, now he can see.

SARU

Am I going to school, Baba?

BABA SARU

Yes. I mean it my daughter. That's why I called you here. I asked your mother to take some money from our bank under the mattress and go to buy you some uniform.

SARU

Oh, my God. You have answered all my prayers. Tomorrow I'll go to school and learn to read and write. I'll sing the poem that Eunice taught me. Let me sing it for you.

*SARU starts to sing and all the people listen quietly*

Let's go to school every morning

Let's go to school every morning

If you refuse, you'll die ignorant

If you refuse you'll die ignorant

With a stomach as wide as a sledge

And a throat as broad as a road

And a skull as empty as the sky

Let's go to school every morning

Let's go to school every morning

If you refuse, you'll be blind like a bat

If you refuse, you'll be poor like a rat

With unkempt hair as thick as the forest

And dirt washed from your clothes in the river

Will surely poison all the fish in there forever

*When SARU finishes singing the poem by heart, all the people clap hands, men whistle and women make cups with their palms on their mouths and make shrieking sounds to applaud her.*

## CHOLERA

Characters

MUJUBHEKI

NHAMO

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

MAI NHAMO

AUNT RUTH

GERALD

Chimarara Branch: Wellington Chindara worked with the Chimarara branch villagers and came up with a play on health: The villagers participated in the play-making process. The diseases they identified were HIV&Aids, cholera, malaria, bilharzia, measles, scabies, polio and smallpox. Sanitation was a major theme.

*People sing in low voices. Their song becomes louder and louder. They start to dance  
They lower their voices and Mujubheki steps forward.*

MUJUBHEKI

HIV&Aids is a disease for rich people in the city, not here...

*He winks his left eye and stands at the far end of the stage.*

NHAMO

Tell my father what the nurses teach people at clinics and hospitals...

*He shakes his head and goes to stand by his father, Mujubheki.*

## MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Agricultural Extension officers should teach the people about HIV&Aids and cholera at agricultural shows.

*Member of the community goes to stand next to Nhamo.*

## ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

The department of health must send auxiliary nurses to teach people home-based care lessons on how to take care of HIV&Aids patients in the villages.

*Another member of the community goes to stand near Member of the community.*

## MAI NHAMO

Why do you lie in bed like a pig this time, Mujubheki, my husband?

*Mai Nhamo goes to stand near another member of the community.*

## AUNT RUTH

And if your sister gets HIV&Aids, the whole suburb will be infected! So, in the name of God, please, save our suburb. Don't come back home.

*Ruth goes to stand near Mai Nhamo, making a line. They raise their voices and start to sing loudly again, dancing. The singing stops.*

## MUJUBHEKI

*Still lying in bed but wide awake*

Nhamo! Nhamo!

## NHAMO

Baba!

MUJUBHEKI

*He takes a plastic paper full of guavas, selects one and eats.*

Come in, my son. I want to tell you something.

NHAMO

I am listening, Baba. What are you eating?

MUJUBHEKI

*Takes out two and eats.*

These guavas Parwazenga's daughter gave me when she got off the bus from Harare yesterday.

*He offers NHAMO some of the guavas.*

NHAMO

*He shakes his head.*

Baba, I don't eat guavas from Harare. There is cholera in Harare. It was brought there by women who go to Zambia to buy and sell clothes and food-stuff. You should clean anything that you eat, Baba.

*NHAMO turns to the audience.*

Tell my father what the nurses teach people at clinics and hospitals.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Cholera kills in a very short time. We must clean our utensils, boil water that we drink and clean fruits and vegetables before we eat them.

MUJUBHEKI



Are you a nurse, Emily? Tell me where you got that knowledge? You always came last in our class and ran away from school for ever and got married by that tailor.

NHAMO

*To the audience*

How can my father get help if he doesn't take other people's advice?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Don't worry, time will tell.

MUJUBHEKI

*He eats another guava without cleaning.*

Do you think cholera germs can come stuck on food from Harare to Chiredzana still alive in this heat? If I die, that will be the work of a witch.

NHAMO

Listen, Baba, people die from HIV&Aids and those who remain accuse one another of witchcraft. That's nonsense.

MUJUBHEKI

Do you say that there are no witches?

NHAMO

People must wake up and use condoms to avoid catching HIV&Aids and practise good hygienic manners to keep themselves safe from cholera.

*NHAMO*

*Asks the audience*

What must we do to educate the people?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Agricultural Extension officers should teach the people about HIV&Aids and cholera at agricultural shows.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

The department of health must send auxiliary nurses to teach people home-based care lessons on how to take care of HIV&Aids patients in the villages.

NHAMO

Drama is used to teach people. Don't forget that drama plays at clinics and agricultural shows can teach people like my father about these diseases.

MUJUBHEKI

*He laughs, holding his paper bag of guavas.*

Remember that you are still at my home. You have not yet built your own home. HIV&Aids is a disease for rich people in the city, not here. My brother, John, is rich but his wife told me that she sleeps with their gardener because John sleeps with their maid who also sleeps with one of their sons, Eric. Their other son, Gerald, who is in England, has a wife who stays with them and she also sleeps with this other son who is at home. If HIV&Aids were real, all these people would be dead. Forget about HIV&Aids and listen to my plans about what I want to do at home.

NHAMO

*He shows interest.*

What are your plans about your home?

MUJUBHEKI

*He puts his paper bag of guavas down.*

Do you see this one roomed brick hut that I sleep in now?

NHAMO

Yes, Baba.

MUJUBHEKI

I want to *understand* this one room and make it four rooms. Do you hear?

NHAMO

I hear you, Baba. It's to extend, not *understand*. But, how can you extend a round brick hut?

*To the audience*

Can my father extend a round brick hut?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

No, he can't. It is a circle; he cannot make it a bigger hut. He must break it and build a bigger one.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

He can't extend it outwards but upwards. He can make it a two, three, or four storey building.

MUBHEKI

Yes, and I will put a *durex* wall right round our yard so that Kataza's dogs that eat my chickens will not come in here again. Yes, a *durex* wall, just like the one put around white men's houses in the city to keep thieves out.

MAI NHAMO

*Coming like a whirlwind into the room*

Why do you lie in bed like a pig this time, Mujubheki, my husband?

MUJUBHEKI

Leave me to talk to my son. Have you no manners?

MAI NHAMO

All men, real men, are up to work for their families while you are still snoring in bed.

*She takes off blankets from his body. NHAMO goes outside*

NHAMO

Let me leave them to settle matters between themselves. The rat has finally got soot into its eyes after taking the heavily smoked grass-thatched kitchen roof for its palace for quite long.

*Asking the audience*

Should a child take sides between quarrelling parents?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Never! In our custom a child cannot take a side when parents fight.

MUJUBEKI

*Pushes MAI NHAMO towards the edge of the stage*

Get out of my room. Get out!

MAI NHAMO

*Takes hold of the mattress of an imaginary bed*

I'm going to burn this mattress and see where you will sleep

MUJUBHEKI

*Holds the other side of the mattress*

You can't burn my mattress that I was given when we shared my dead brother's property. Please, stop this.

*MUJUBHEKI suddenly lets go of the mattress and holds his stomach in pain*

I am dying. Help me, my wife, please!

*Suddenly the floor of the stage is wet.*

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Help your husband. Give him water and sugar solution. Count the right number of tea-spoons of sugar and salt and put them in boiled water.

MUJUBHEKI

*He rolls all over the floor.*

The pain is as if knives are cutting my intestines, please MAI NHAMO. Find me leaves of *muswati* tree. Leaves of *muswati* tree please.

MAI NHAMO

*She turns to the audience and asks.*

Should I go to look for leaves of this tree?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

No, MAI NHAMO, take your husband to hospital after giving him that water. He will live. If you go into the forest to look for roots or leaves, you will find him dead. Cholera kills very quickly.

NHAMO

Mai, as you give him sugar and water solution, I will cycle to uncle Lameck's house and tell him to help with his car to come and take Baba to hospital.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Don't waste time, just go now.

*NHAMO arrives at Uncle Lameck's house, clothes wet with sweat.  
There is his wife, Aunt Ruth, all alone.*

AUNT RUTH

*She is looking surprised.*

I guess it's not well where you are coming from, you are looking damn terrible!

NHAMO

My father has got infected with cholera. Please, help us with your car to take him to hospital.

There is sound of a ringing phone. Aunt Ruth answers it on speaker.

AUNT RUTH

Good day to you my son, Gerald, and how is England?

GERALD

It's fine here, but I've got this news...sad news for you.

AUNT RUTH

What's that?

GERALD

Mom, I have got HIV&Aids.

AUNT RUTH

Don't come back home, my son.

GERALD

Why, mom?

AUNT RUTH

If you come back home, your wife will be infected. Your wife will give it to your brother, from your brother to our maid, from our maid to your dad, from your dad to my sister, from my sister to her husband, from him to me and from me to our gardener, from the gardener to your sister. And if your sister gets HIV&Aids, the whole suburb will be infected! So, in the name of God, please, save our suburb. Don't come back home.

## FAIR RANGE

Characters

WAR VETERAN

RAVIRO

MOYO

MAVIS

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

MAI MOYO

TODZVO

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

CHILD

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

PASTOR PECKSON

### SCENE ONE

WAR VETERAN

You are lying. Todzvo and I did not sell an ox to Moyo on Sunday. Todzvo did not steal your cattle. Stop listening to rumours, my sister, Raviro. Let my ancestors strike me dead if I sold an ox this whole year!

RAVIRO



Then you must die. Moyo has come with the hide of the ox you and Todzvo sold to him on Sunday. He is here.

MOYO

*From the audience, holding an ox hide high over his shoulders*

You came with Todzvo and sold the ox to me for one trillion dollars. I can give Raviro her money back if you refuse to repay her. I don't want to go to jail. Jail? No!

WAR VETERAN

*He looks from left to right at the audience and points at Moyo*

Have you come to tell all lies that I sold an ox to you? Bring him to the arena. I sentence him to fifty lashes with the log on his buttocks. A sell-out sent by white farmers to fight us in this Third *Chimurenga*<sup>28</sup>! The Youth brigade, come over! Arrest the sell-outs. Raviro must get ten strokes.

*Four strong young men grab Moyo by the scruff of his collar and the belt of his pair of trousers and two others pull Raviro by her hands and force them to lie on the arena. Two others hold big sticks ready to beat them.*

MAVIS

Stop beating people! You fought in the war of liberation. I also carried my own AK 47 and fought Ian Smith, and you know me.

WAR VETERAN

I know you very well, yes.

MAVIS

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<sup>28</sup> Shona name for 'war of liberation'

I have come from town to stand for my sister, Raviro.

WAR VETERAN

What do you want to stand for her as, my dear comrade?

MAVIS

Todzvo stole her five cattle and gave you one. I'm a member of the police force and have come to arrest you and Todzvo.

*She takes out a police identity card and shows it to everyone. She takes out a pistol from her hand bag and points it at WAR VETERAN who freezes. Two men handcuff WAR VETERAN and TODZVO and lead them away.*

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Arrest them. They have grown fat from eating our chicken, goats and cattle. Arrest them!

*Raviro starts singing. All the people join her.*

We wake up when the cocks crow

And work every day in the fields

Where we work as hard as donkeys

And wipe our sweat in the hot sun

And breathe hot air all day

In the fields full of dust when it is dry

And full of mud when it is wet in rain

Why do you want to come now and reap

Where you did not sow in broad daylight?

Why do you want to eat my cows and sheep?

You did that during the war, fighting the Whiteman

And not for the farms that belong to us all

We wake up when the cocks crow

And work every day in the fields

Where we work as hard as donkeys

And wipe our sweat in the hot sun

And breathe hot air all day

In the fields full of dust when it is dry

And full of mud when it is wet in rain

Our cattle are eaten by these vultures

Our chicken are snatched by these eagles

Our goats are chewed by these jackals

The lazy war veterans who lick our sweat

They lick with their barbed wire tongues

We wake up when the cocks crow

And work every day in the fields

Where we work as hard as donkeys

And wipe our sweat in the hot sun

And breathe hot air all day

In the fields full of dust when it is dry

And full of mud in the wet rain

## SCENE TWO

*The audience sings and dances the same song going round and round in a circle until a cloud of dust rises. Moyo waves his hands asking them to be quiet so that he can talk to his wife.*

MOYO

I can't go to build a dam, I must sell my cigarettes. We need money to send to the Headmaster before he chases the children away from school. My shop...

MAI MOYO

Do you still have anything to call a shop? Since I saw that there is nothing, I joined the co-operative. Women do gardening and men build the dam over the

Chiredzi River. You go to fish and dream about your shop and butchery that are full of rats and bats. Is there anything there to call a business?

MOYO

Yes, the buildings are there, my shop and butchery.

MAI MOYO

For stolen cattle? Todzvo almost got you to jail. Today everyone in the village gets cabbages and tomatoes from the co-operative garden while we eat caterpillars and locusts!

MOYO

Do you forget the fish I bring you from Chiredzi River every time?

MAI MOYO

We did not join the co-operative garden. Now the people of this branch are building a dam. Do you refuse to join again? Where will our cattle drink water?

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

*Addressing the audience*

MOYO is lazy. Where will his cattle drink water?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Anywhere, except from our dam

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

Ask him to give you the oxen and use them to pull the scotch-carts. When the rains come, we must have water in our dam or our cattle will die because this land is dry. Will you drive his cattle away?

## ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Cattle are innocent animals and cannot die because their owner does not want to work with us, we must force him to come and work. Those cattle belong to his children and to us as a community. If he does not want, let us chase him out of Fair Range. He must go back to *Ruzevha*<sup>29</sup>.

ALL

Yah. Moyo out!

MOYO

Please, please do not chase me away. I'll go with you to build the dam.

I will also join the garden co-operative tomorrow. I was just lazy, as a businessman, I am not used to hard work but now I have to do it. Give me the pickaxe and the shovel to do the work.

*All the people start singing a song making movements with their bodies and hands as if they are at work.*

Let us all work in the morning, before sunrise

Let us all work in the morning, before sunrise

When the sun is hot, we sweat and sweat

And cannot work as hard as we can do it

When the sun is hot we sweat and sweat

And cannot work as hard as we can do it

So let us work before sunrise and finish

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<sup>29</sup> Tribal Trust Land Reserved Areas

So let us work before sunrise and finish

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

We have done a lot of work on the dam and the garden already. How will Moyo pay us for what we have done when he was going to catch fish to eat alone or with his wife?

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

What must we do with him?

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

He must pay us with something. He has cattle and goats.

ALL

Yes

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

He must pay us with an ox that we will all eat.

MOYO

Ox? An ox is a heavy punishment. That's as good as killing me while I'm still able to walk on my two feet. What about two goats? I will give them to you now, and some beer. I can brew you the sorghum beer this week. That was a punishment our forefathers gave to those who offended the community.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

That is all right. But remember that we all do not have tractors here, we use cattle to plough. We do not have maize seeds; we sell the same cattle to buy seeds to plant in the fields.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Then you must brew some beer to accompany the goats and then we will have a feast.

MAI MOYO

I come to work with the women in the garden every day.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

That's true; you come to work with the women every day.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

So what?

MAI MOYO

Why can't you pardon my husband? Please forgive him and let him into the cooperative.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

Must we pardon him because you were coming to work? Is that what you mean?

MAI MOYO

No, I come to work because I am a member of this community.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

So why do you think we should allow him to join us now?

MAI MOYO

I'm one of you and he is the head of my family. My husband has learnt a lesson I give to him every day at home that we must take the lesson from ants, bees or



termites that work as one. We have children who go to school and need school fees, uniforms and food to eat.

#### MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Let us forgive him. If we eat his two goats and drink the beer he is going to brew, will we not be doing the same thing we are fighting against that the war veterans are doing? Eating people's livestock that they did not work for? Listen to this chorus once again, my friends and relatives.

*MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY sings loudly and repeats a dance routine that everyone joins in step as they sing.*

We wake up when the cocks crow

And work every day in the fields

Where we work as hard as donkeys

And wipe our sweat in the hot sun

And breathe hot air all day over there

In the fields full of dust when it is dry

And full of mud when it is wet in rain

#### WAR VETERAN KWAYE

I think we must forgive Moyo. Should we forgive Moyo?

ALL

Yeaaaaa

*A loud cry*

CHILD

Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi...

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

*Putting his arm around the child's shoulders*

Let the child tell us why he comes running and crying from the pastures.

CHILD

The elephants have killed my brother, Rueben. They killed him, oh they killed him.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

What are you saying? If you were you together, how did you escape?

CHILD

I went over the Chiredzi River, following the cattle that had crossed there, and he remained on the other side. The elephants came to drink water. They saw him and, and, and....hi, hi hi, oh *mukoma* (elder brother) Rueben, hi, hi *mukoma* Rueben.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Where is Rueben?

CHILD

He is dead.

*Some members of the audience leave the stage running to the river.*

RAVIRO

What do you say, child?

CHILD

The elephants buried him with many, many tree branches.

RAVIRO

Did you see it happening? Look, all those people have gone there to see how it happened and to carry his body.

CHILD

I heard him crying and trying to run away.

RAVIRO

So you heard, and did not see....

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

So, he did not see the elephant kill Rueben.

CHILD

I saw it get him with its trunk, flung him to the ground and madly stamping all over his body with its front legs. I saw it all from the other side of the river. The elephants then cried and went into the forest towards the Chomuvuyu hills.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Lions eat our livestock in the veldt every day and now elephants kill our children today. Look over there is a great fire.

RAVIRO

Someone has burnt the grass.

## MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Let us go and take Rueben before his body is burnt in that blaze. Let us rush, please. People must stop burning the grass. What will our cattle and goats eat in winter if we burn the grass now?

## RAVIRO

Many men and women have run there already. Child, let us go home together and tell your mother. She does not know anything yet.

## MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Sometimes ancestors sit in their graves and forget to do their work to protect widows from misery. Let's go together. It is going to be difficult to tell her, I know.

*The people are standing at a graveside to bury Rueben. They start to sing a funeral song quietly, swaying their bodies from left to right, to the rhythm of the song, with outstretched open palms to symbolise that something they were holding, their child, has been taken away. When they stop singing, WAR VETERAN KWAYE addresses the people.*

## WAR VETERAN KWAYE

I thank all of you who have gathered here to bury Rueben, our child, who was killed by an elephant yesterday. The big question is, 'Who will stop the elephants from killing our children who herd cattle in the pastures every day?' The government gave us this land but will not do anything to protect us because all the game rangers left their jobs because the government had no money to pay them. Some went to Botswana, some to South Africa, others to England and some others to America. I know we are all waiting to bury our son but before we do that, I ask you to suggest what we will do with the elephants so that we will bury this child after agreeing on one thing. One thing we must do about the

elephants. Raise your hand if you have a plan to share with everybody. I will tell you about what I think we should do after hearing what you think.

RAVIRO

We cannot do anything about elephants. They are very dangerous.

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Elephants do not want the smell of gun powder at all. They will disappear from this part of the country if we hunt them and shoot them. We need a good hunter who can shoot one or two of them and we will never see them here again.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

*Coughing and smiling happily*

That is what I was thinking about. The problem with that are the police. They will arrest me if I shoot them. I have a 303 rifle and a licence for it but it is a crime to shoot them.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

We will hunt them as a community and kill them as one. We will eat the meat and no one will be arrested.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

What about the tusks? Where will we put them?

MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

We will sell the ivory and buy pesticides to use in our gardens.

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

We will eat the meat and sell the ivory. We have agreed on two things. We will shoot the elephants and sell the ivory. That's ivory, and it is valuable. I think we must give the money to Rueben's mother, and not buy pesticides with that money. What do you say to that?

ALL

Yes...sssss, yes...ssss

*Everybody starts singing again, this time loudly, while men imitate motions of filling the grave with soil by shovelling.*

WAR VETERAN KWAYE

Now let's give Pastor Peckson Kunodziya this time to prepare the way for our child.

PASTOR

Let's sing the song, *Ndofamba Munzira*, beloved friends and relatives.

*They sing, full of sorrow.*

PASTOR

Let's close our eyes and pray.

Our father, we thank you this afternoon for giving us the energy to lay our child to rest. We thank you for the life you gave him until the time you took him from us. You have told us that we must let the children come to you because the kingdom of your glory belongs to them. We all pray in your name that you give our child eternal rest, forever and ever, amen.