



Magezi and the finger of millet

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English

Long ago, there were two animals that were good friends. One was called Magezi Mataala Manene, the other was called Kasiru Kasiira Katono.

They used to live by sharing. Their friendship was so deep that they could share one white ant.





One day, Magezi Matala Manene made a suggestion. "Why don't we dig together as we eat together?" he asked.

Kasiru Kasiira Katono replied, "Good idea. We should also store our food together." They both agreed to this.

Magezi Mataala Manene asked his friend, "Ee! Who will start the digging? Why don't you dig, and I will come to sow?"

"Yes," replied Kasiru Kasiira Katono, and she dug a big garden.

Then she told her friend, "Magezi Mataala Manene, I have finished digging. Come and sow millet."





Magezi Mataala Manene said, “You go on with the sowing, I will come and weed.”

So Kasiru Kasiira Katono went on with the sowing. When she finished she told her friend, “Grass has started to grow. Go and weed.”

But Magezi Mataala Manene replied, “No, you go on with weeding. I will harvest.”

Kasiru Kasiira Katono went on with the weeding until the millet was ripe.

At harvesting time she went to her friend and said, “Magezi Mataala Manene, I cultivated, and sowed, and weeded. Now come and harvest the millet.”





Magezi Mataala Manene replied, “Not at all, I have no time! You go on and harvest. I will put it in the granary.”

Kasiru Kasiira Katono accepted this. She harvested the millet and took it home. She called Magezi Mataala Manene and said, “My friend, I have finished harvesting. Come and take the millet to the granary.”

Magezi Mataala Manene replied, “I cannot lift all that millet. You put it in the granary. I will come during pounding.”

Kasiru Kasiira Katono said to her friend, “It seems you are simply tricking me.”

Magezi Mataala Manene replied, “No it’s not true! Give me just one millet finger and you take the rest. I will pay you back.”





Kasiru Kasiira Katono was not mean. She gave Magezi Mataala Manene one finger of millet, and they parted ways.

Magezi Mataala Manene moved on, moved on, moved on! He found a hen scratching the soil and eating stones. He said, "My in-law hen, instead of eating soil, have some of my millet."

Hen took the millet and ate. Magezi Mataala Manene looked and saw that the hen had eaten all the millet.

He cried out, "Wuwiii! You have eaten all my millet. The millet was not mine, I borrowed it from Kasiru Kasiira Katono."

Hen begged, "Since it is time for laying, I will lay one egg for you to take instead."





Magezi Mataala Manene got an egg from the hen. He moved on, moved on, moved on!

He found some children shooting mangoes in a tree using stones. He told them, "If you want those mangoes to fall, you should use this egg to shoot them down."

He gave them the egg. When they used it to shoot the mangoes, it hit a branch and broke. The egg dripped down and the shell remained in the branches.

Magezi Mataala Manene cried out, “Wuwiii! You have broken my egg! The hen gave me the egg, but it was not mine. The egg was for the millet the hen ate. The millet was not mine. I borrowed the millet from Kasiru Kasiira Katono.”

The children whispered, “Don’t shout like that. The owner of the mangoes will find us here. Instead of the egg take this mango.”





Magezi Mataala Manene moved on, moved on, moved on! He came across a parrot eating an insect. “Have you ever seen such a mango as this?” he asked the parrot.

When the parrot took the mango, its sharp beak pierced the skin and the fruit burst open.

Magezi Mataala Manene cried out, “Wuuwiii! You have burst my mango! The children gave me the mango, but it was not mine. The mango was for the egg the children broke. The hen gave me the egg, but it was not mine. The egg was for the millet the hen ate. The millet was not mine. I borrowed the millet from Kasiru Kasiira Katono.”

The parrot plucked out its most beautiful feather saying, "Here, take my feather instead of the mango."

Magezi Mataala Manene took the feather and moved on, moved on, moved on. He came to a lake. When he was crossing, the feather slipped out of his hand and into the lake. He could not get the feather back.

So he filled his mouth with water and kept it in his cheeks until he reached dry land. There he found the charcoal burners with their fire.





He opened his mouth, the water came out, and splashed on to the fire. The fire went out. The charcoal burners were pleased.

Magezi Mataala Manene cried out, “Woweee! Your fire has taken my water. I got the water from the lake, but it was not mine. The water was for the feather that the lake took. The feather was for the mango that the parrot burst. The mango was for the egg that the children broke. The egg was for the millet that the hen ate. The millet was not mine. I borrowed the millet from Kasiru Kasiira Katono.”

The charcoal burners said, “Here, take this axe instead of the water.”

Magezi Matala Manene took the axe and moved on, moved on, moved on! He came across butchers slaughtering a bull.

He told the butchers, “Here is an axe for you to cut up the meat.”





While the butchers were cutting the meat, the axe broke. Magezi Mataala Manene cried out, “Woweee! You have broken my axe. I got the axe from the charcoal burners, but it was not mine. The axe was for the water that the fire took. The water was for the feather that the lake took. The feather was for the mango that the parrot burst. The mango was for the egg that the children broke. The egg was for the millet that the hen ate. The millet was not mine. I borrowed the millet from Kasiru Kasiira Katono.”

The butchers said, “Here, take the head and tail of the bull instead.”

Magezi Mataala Manene moved on, moved on, moved on! Until he got to a muddy swamp.

He put the head of the bull on the mud. He also placed the tail in the mud. It looked as if the bull was stuck in the mud.





Magezi Mataala Manene began to shout, “Wu-lululu! Wu-lululu, wulululu! The king’s bull has got stuck in the mud!”

All the villagers came running. What concerns the king, concerns everyone. A crowd soon gathered around the head and tail.

They started asking, “Now what do we do?”

Magezi Mataala Manene advised, “Some of you pull the tail, and some of you pull the head. We will pull the bull from the mud.”

The people took his advice. “Ready! One, two, three, pull! Come out nowwww!” they shouted.

The villagers fell down over each other from the effort of pulling. Two were still holding the head. One held up the tail.





Magezi Mataala Manene cried out, “Wo wee! You have pulled apart the king’s bull. Each one of you must give one bull for the king.”

Quickly, the people went back to their homes. Quickly, they returned with a bull each.

And so Magezi Mataala Manene left with a herd of bulls to return to his friend Kasiru Kasiira Katono.

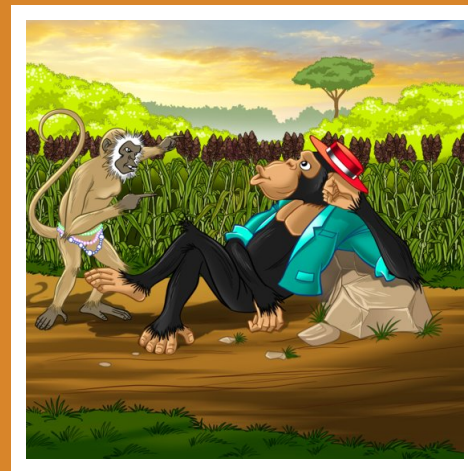
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