

## The thief on the bus



"It is just difficult and dangerous to try to free people who want to remain in slavery as it is to enslave people who want to remain free. Before all else be armed," Niccolò Machiavelli states.

This story is so touching and painful.

A teacher received his salary and boarded a crowded bus back to his home. There was a thief in the bus. The thief stole the teacher's money from his pocket.

After the teacher reached his final destination, the driver asked for his fare. The teacher dipped his hand into his pocket and found nothing.

The teacher's face became blushed and his tongue became heavy, he was so embarrassed. The driver who was now angry said mockingly to the teacher:

"Shame on you. You consider yourself a respected person yet you cannot afford your transport fare!"

The teacher was again very much embarrassed.

As this was going on, pride hit a portion of the thief's ego and he was moved to say to the angry driver:

"My brother, the teacher's fare is on me."

The thief offered to help the teacher who was his victim. He helped not out of pity for the poor teacher but to buy other passengers' trust and confidence and to use some of the stolen money to earn respect before the rest of the passengers in the bus.

The poor teacher, who did not understand what was happening, smiled and said to the thief:

"May God bless you and multiply your likes, sir."

Then some of the passengers in the bus also praised the thief, praised his kindness, and also prayed for him and that God should bless him.

Since then, we have witnessed a significant increase in the number of thieves on our buses. They continue to receive our thanks and appreciation.

We are all on a bus where thieves are stealing from us and using the stolen money to buy our trust and earn our respect in a way that we keep thanking them for their 'kindness'.

A thief on the bus- This is the metaphor of the state of our country Uganda, and most African countries. The thieves in our bus are increasing all the time because we continue praising them for returning small portions of the large amounts they steal from you.

If the teacher was wise enough, he would have used his instincts and experience to identify the thief or tell the people to look for the thief on the bus by scrutinising all the people on board or influence others to do whatever it takes to get rid of the thief or leave the bus.

This story morally tells us that teachers must think outside the box by influencing the politics of the country using the social capital, contesting for political positions, stand your ground, putting the government on check, demanding for what belongs to them, not peanuts.

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