

TITLE: FROM THE WORST TO THE BEST

AUTHOR'S NAME: ANTHONY MAIYWA.

ADDRESS : P.O BOX 623, SOTIK.

E-MAIL ADDRESS: anthonymaiywa@gmail.com.

MOBILE NUMBER: 0725 793 204 / 0725 910 335.

COUNTY : BOMET.

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SYNOPSIS

FROM THE WORST TO THE BEST is a story centered on a young boy, Kiprugut who lost both parents through a mysterious illness at an early age. Disillusioned and with nobody to fend for him, Kiprugut took refuge at Koros' farm as a herds boy. Later on his Uncle Mosonik took him to school. He nurtured him and moulded him despite challenges he faced in school. Kiprugut later re-discover the need to embark on hard work. The Uncle provided the necessary assistance to Him. Kipruguts' academic performance ascended. He worked seriously in his academics. He later on became the torch-bearer of Mukuru village. He changed his negative way of living and adopted hard work.

CHAPTER ONE

The hills and ridges lay behind. This was a plain called Mukuru. That was the only flat stretch of land. It bordered Mukuru swamp. The sun sinks splendidly in the part of that country. If you strain your eyes and peered into the valley there is the thick forest of Mau.

There lived a boy called Kiprugut in that village. The name given to him at birth was Kibor. He was later on called Kiprugut. He was a thin with a lean face. He travelled round the village with no specific person to feed him. He walked barefoot, sometimes in rain and sun. His clothes were old and worn out but he did not care about his looks. He cared about what he did with his life. The life he chose was to look after the cows.

Kiprugut was the son of a black alien worker Chebochok. He arrived in Mukuru to look for employment in coffee farm. He later married Tabutany, the sister to Mosonik. The two parents of Kiprugut were wiped out by mysterious illness. They left the only child Kiprugut solitary. He was left alone at tender age. He was a gentle boy. He hardly knew how to go about with direction of events. Life could not bear him an easy victory. His family was poorest of the poor. The parents had barely enough to feed the family. This fact conditioned his early life. He was helpless but he still clung on dear life. As time went by, Mosonik, his uncle, discovered the need of Kiprugut to be shaped and helped towards positive life. He became considerate. He promptly made up his mind to lend a hand to Kiprugut and educate him.

Mosonik 47 years was a heavy hitter. He was a person who gets things done and gives direction. He takes positively through the policies of education. Kiprugut was among the herd boys. He had been employed by a rich farmer Koros to look after his cattle in the grassy plain. Koros, the neighbour had overgrown boys who had no interest in going to school. He seemed to have neglected his children. He had negative attitude in nurturing them to go to school. Kiprugut was an agile boy and of good conduct. He was interested in being with his playmates. He could play hide and seek with his friends. He walked with his friends through a land filled with different kind of edible fruits. Looking after the cattle was the best leisure activity for Kiprugut. The uncle had proposed him to join Mukuru primary school.

Mosonik was able to read and write. He had learnt the skills when he was a labourer of a white settler at Chemomul Tea Estate. Kiprugut herded the cattle and later on milk them. He use to take the milk to a cooling plant on a donkey. Mosonik began to feel the need of Kiprugut to embrace the policy of free primary education and begin schooling. He was forced to abandon menial job in the village. Mosonik began to discuss with his wife Tapsabei on Kiprugut's upbringing and how to brainstorm him.

Many times, Mosonik had nurtured his children to go to school. He had taught them the value of education. He kept giving them various educational achievements and its benefits. This motivation made his two children Kipngerechi and Cheruto to be both government lawyers in the High Court. Mosonik liked education. He wanted his children and Kiprugut to be educated and tap the fruits of education. Kiprugut respected his uncle. He had tried to be adamant on the issue of schooling. The soothing voice of the uncle brought a change on him.

Kiprugut could abandon the cattle to graze. He sometimes went across the village of Mukuru to allow him play with his friends. They used to stroll and hunt towards Mau forest to get edible fruits like guavas and berries. He spoke about his love for the fruits. He appreciated the beauty scenery around. Kiprugut was totally immersed into village stray boys. They could play and look after cows, sheep and goats. His memories were etched on the vast savannah plains of Mukuru.

Kiprugut used to take packed lunch. He could also take an umbrella to shade from the scorching sun and rain. He had become dedicated in looking after the cattle. Kiprugut would stand aside watching cattle graze. He was too engrossed in looking after the cattle. He at times interacted and idle away his time with the playmates in the grassy plain.

The clouds seemed to draw nearer to the ground and darken in colour, an indication of rain to fall. By then the sun was high in the sky. The wind began to blow. Kiprugut and his friends began to drive the animals back home. They passed through a hill which ran a maze of paths. He drove his herd of cattle peacefully whistling a tune of his favourite music. The cattle were moving at snail pace. They had fully grazed. They went through a straight path leading to the home of Mr. Koros. He was contented with the way Kiprugut was handling his cattle.

One afternoon, Mosonik visited Koros to request for the boy. Koros was such a person who could not understand issues very fast. He hadn't attended any school since he was born. He copied ways of doing things. Mosonik on his part was a literate person. He knew the fruits of education. The two parents chatted at length in the sitting room. After Koros greeted Mosonik he asked him passionately the news of his homeland. In the course of their conversation, Mosonik introduced the issue of taking Kiprugut to his home. He felt obliged to mould, shape and take him to school, "This boy is my garden of pleasure" Koros reacted. He is my indispensable pillar of support and comfort to me. My love for him will remain undiminished. He has made me happy the way he is looking after my cattle. "People begin to be jealous when they see you progress", Koros contorted. The air was as tense as a taut guitar string.

Mosonik listened intently and attentively. He leaned his checks on the u-shape of his walking stick. "Listen, Koros let common sense prevail, I feel this boy should get education", he said. The atmosphere was tense, still and lulling. It gave an impression of something hidden going

on between Koros and Mosonik. Tabutany, Koros' wife came in gasped for breath and greeted. She took out a thermos flask from the cupboard and serves them with tea. Mosonik slurped his tea and wiped his mouth neatly afterwards.

A familiarity of suspicion lit up the face of Tabutany. She changed her mood when she began to imagine that Mosonik had come for his nephew. She knew very well that the boy was helpful, dependable and responsible in domestic chores. Mosonik talked to Koros about the boy with touchingly concerned face. He heightened the awareness and possibilities of taking him to school. Koros wanted to withhold the boy but reality prevailed over him.

Within a short time, Kiprugut came in from herding animals. He had put the animals in the enclosure. He could not believe his eyes when he saw his uncle. His mind raced with series of thoughts. Strong feelings charged in his blood in reaction to the shock of seeing the uncle. He grinned with warmth and greeted him. Mosonik let out mirthful laughter full of bliss and jubilation. Mosonik shook hands happily with Kiprugut the way those lions shook when they saw Daniel entering their den. "Kiprugut, "I have come for you", he said. "Please pack your luggage and let's go together". Kiprugut grinned and hesitated impatiently at the mention of going with his uncle. He was at the crossroads between acceptance and refusal. The desire to stay in the family was still there. He at long last accepted the suggestion. He got prepared to accompany his uncle.

Mosonik began to fidget impatiently because time was up. The two parents agreed on how Kiprugut would get his wages later. He escorted them outside the gate and bid bye to them.

After twenty minutes, they arrived home. "Welcome to my house" Tapsabei spoke to him softly and with dignity. He put down the luggage and sucked in a heavy breath. Kiprugut would feel like a bird in the air or a fish in the water when he saw himself back to his uncle's home.

Chelel was the last born of Koros. She was brown, slender and a smiling girl. This made Kiprugut to get engrossed in her composure. She was to start class one at Mukuru primary school at the time Kiprugut left their home. She had by passed the right school going age. Her father was obstinate in nurturing girls towards education. She had begun to attain the age of puberty by the time Kiprugut left her home. She admired Kiprugut's composure and the way he was looking after their cattle. The cattle provided many litres of milk. Chelel had developed intimacy with in Kiprugut .They could share happy moments together. She was down casted when Kiprugut left for his uncle's house.

CHAPTER TWO

Kiprugut yielded to the suggestion given by Mosonik to join Mukuru primary school at the age of ten years. Mosonik took him to School the following day. He requested Mr. Kiminda, the head teacher to allow him in the school. The headteacher welcomed him. He handed over to the class teacher Mrs. Cherumben. He peered at him through thick classes. She seemed pre-occupied, uninterested in any talk. She enrolled him into class one. She penned his name in the register. The classmates weren't sure what to make of the shoddy newcomer. Whispers of approval began drifting from row to row. Voices echoed softly. He was cool and his mind was racing as he considered all the possibilities.

The class teacher who wore spectacles welcomed him amicably into class one. She smiled as she showed him the seat. She studied his face, opened her mouth to say something. She seemed to search with difficulty the right word to use. On the first day, everything appeared new to him. Intense loneliness crept in. He began to adapt to the environment with immense difficulty. The new environment was making its presence felt. It was common but the struggle was very personal. He felt nervous and out of place. Finally he managed to adapt to school environment despite his age in school.

For the first few days Kiprugut and his friends clung to each other for support. He tried to nurture interest in the new environment. With time, he started to reach out to the other children. He was made to feel welcomed and friendships formed forth with. Because of Kiprugut's severe stammer, however, he was not confident in sharing jokes in his speech moments with his classmates. This time the words sank in. The other pupils could not comprehend easily what he was trying to put across. Later on his classmates finally got used to him. He was found to be friendly and resourceful.

Kiprugut had admired menial job of looking after cattle at Koros' homestead. Things turned to a new beginning. Things improved in Kiprugut when he suited school environment. He survived many ups and down to take the easy route to school. That year, he felt motivated to work hard. By mid- year, Kiprugut's grades went up. His reading, listening, speaking and writing skills improved tremendously. He made learning such a joy for himself. The entire class felt free around him. He shared jokes and light moments with his classmates.

No matter how many questions the young curious minds generated, he never got tired of answering them. Kiprugut picked up learning skills in class at an early age.

Kiprugut wouldn't tolerate any misbehavior. He could raise his voice and give the offender a good scolding. Mrs. Cherumben appeared impressed by his progress. His work in class

improved. His effort was bearing fruit. Kiprugut had maintained a remarkably low profile. He was a consistent contributor in class affairs. His class work was marked, looked at and commented upon positively by the class teacher.

As days stretched into weeks and months blurred into years, Kiprugut climbed up the ladder. He was always at the top in every exam he went through. His entire struggle was aimed at doing something better. A feeling of hard work seemed to seize him strongly. Kiprugut and his friends began to be ambitious in the first position.

Mosonik flared with excitement and happiness. He learned the progress made by Kiprugut in school. "It is an opportunity for Kiprugut to pour out his energy on school work," Mosonik told his wife Tapsabei. Mosonik was so encouraged. He smiled with satisfaction at the performance of his nephew. He was delighted the way Kiprugut was working hard in his academics. He maintained the spirit of hard work with good amount of seriousness.

The highlight came at the end of the year. Kiprugut walked on stage to receive the fabulous prize for his good grades. Mrs. Cherumben felt fulfilled. She had reached to the heart of a timid boy and the best come out of him. Years later, after lower classes, Kiprugut wished he could thank Mrs. Cherumben for giving him one of the best years of his life. She inspired him to look beyond his handicap in reading and writing. When he was in the next class; his communication with Mrs. Cherumben was reduced to greetings in the school corridors.

The image of Mukuru village was brightened constantly by the dazzling performance of Kiprugut. He featured fortnightly at the top most position in school. He harnessed his work day in day out. He constantly showed amazingly strong determination in class work. As time went by, Kiprugut attracted a surprising amount of motivation from Mosonik. The residents of Mukuru developed positive strength towards education in their minds. They were happy the way Kiprugut and the school was going up the ladder of academics. He battled his interest in education and started doubling his effort. Curiosity got the best of him.

Kiprugut reaffirmed his decision never to retreat in working hard. He continued to rely on the support of Mosonik during those trying moments in his life. He was brought up and developed in wealth of responsible relative. Mosonik's advisory words of encouragement pierced ears of Kiprugut like the smell of cooking oil attack the nose. Class work was shaping on well for him. The more he thought of his academic work, the keener he grew. Mosonik seemed to have an ample supply of money to buy revision books for him to use in school.

Mosonik was an upright and strict parent. He frequently encouraged pupils so much in education. Kiprugut benefited by being one of them to use pieces of advice in school. He

brimmed with happiness. Mosonik believed that education is the only way to produce a future a dependable leaders.

The days passed pleasantly. Kiprugut looked into the future with hope. He always sat down on his desk in class crossed his legs and started reading. His determination and self- driven ambition had a strong interest on his academic work.

As months passed like summer in the dark, he expanded and flourished academically like a flower in the sun. He was so accustomed to being his own master in the management of his own timetable. The larger part of his time was taken up by studies. He engaged in frequent practice and revision in class work. When Kiprugut was in class five, He doubled his effort in class work. He had acquainted himself with daily routine with school activities.

“I want to have a class prefect,” the class teacher Miss. Cheptui said. Kiprugut raised his eyebrows. The mention of that had somewhat sobering effect on Kiprugut. He sensed potentiality of being elected. The class embraced the idea of prefect’s election as a brand new idea. A boy proposed him. Kiprugut did not intend to contest. He was known in class to be a boy with a sense of humour, reliable, dependable and love of work. He was elected unanimously by his classmates. The class teacher inaugurated him in front of his classmates. He was offered a chance to talk before his classmates. His tongue went dry all of a sudden. The teacher exclaimed with enthusiastic response. Mrs. Cheptui applauded the class for transparent election done. She brimmed with happiness. The class jumped up and down in transport of joy. They rejoiced after the election of Kiprugut. The newly elected prefect began to give direction his class. He was fully in control of the class. He spoke in proper English accent.

Kiprugut’s heart jerked vigorously. He fitted the new position in class. As the week climbed up, he gradually built his confidence. He began to control his class confidently. He felt the pleasure of maximizing his aspiration as the class prefect. The students admired his eloquence. His talk in class to other pupils was full of prowess.

He began to keep a sharp look in his class. He talked in a professional soothing voice. He promised to do much for his class. The Classteacher Miss. Cheptui began to have confidence in him .The teacher twisted her tongue in admiration. She returned her smile with enthusiasm. Nothing seemed out of place. Kiprugut appreciated and glistened as a river in the sun. He was contented with anything. Miss. Cheptui left the classroom with smile in her face.

Kiprugut was given celebrity treatment by everybody in the class. He began to foster busy life in class. Idle life bored him a great deal. It gave him pleasure to exercise his responsibility. Curious classmates and students watched him carry out his assigned task. Kiprugut tilted the balance in

his favour. He tried to weigh for stability between friendship and authority. His mind started to operate like a dancer performing a faultless routine.

He became methodical in his approach towards class issues. Any issue would end with a definite solution. He proved to be a boy with leadership credentials. He too sees through educational policies. He continued carrying out his duty smartly. He could share talks with his class teacher. Miss Cheptui had the feminine asset. She knew how to express contentment by silence rather than words. He had a great positive impact on the class and the school as a whole.

Kiprugut and the class showed admirable qualities. They studied and struggled towards class work. The pupils watched Kiprugut with satisfaction. He laid emphasis towards the class work. Kiprugut felt obliged to maintain position one. He was at the same time the class prefect. Kiprugut began to believe good things in himself. The constant encouragement from teachers kept him motivated in school. He declared that he knew no other investment in development than education.

He was among the committed pupils in school. He shrugged his shoulders and maintained hard work in studies. He folded his hands across the chest. He embarked on the books in self-driven motivation. He believed that his bookish knowledge in school was the answer to everything. He struggled, and hoped that things would happen in his favour.

It appeared to Kiprugut things might work the way he had anticipated. He gradually built his confidence. He scrutinized his revision past papers with his cat like eyes unhurriedly. A wave of curiosity ran through his mind. Kiprugut was among the group of pupils who struggled like hooked fish in class work. He was totally engrossed in his studies and daily chores at school. He appeared not ready to interact with other pupils. He was too determined to pass well in his class work. He changed his way of living in class work. He became an ideal specimen of a hardworking boy. He kept changing his way of study. This made the class to progress well. Positive thoughts began to flash through his mind. He climbed up positively the steps of academics.

CHAPTER THREE

Kiprugut never believed one month had passed since he was elected to be the class prefect. He remained composed towards the class. Kiprugut and his friends began to be ambitious in the first position.

The term progressed with positive trend. The strength and hard work was clearly noticed in his work. The goodness of Kiprugut's work was like pure gold. He narrowed his work at the school in determined concentration and scrutiny. His work was rated the best in the school. His

class became so busy that it hardly noticed time fading. The subsequent year, Kiprugut entered class six. He began to establish friendship with his deskmate Kibos. The discussion of class work with Kibos pleased him. The two boys took off their sweaters and rolled up their shirtsleeves for class work. Kiprugut embarked on serious work. He dropped his shoulders and bends his head to one side like heavy weight. He kept revising his books with firm concentration day in day out.

“Let’s make the best out of this competitive class” Kiprugut told Kibos. He looked out for his revision books. Kiprugut walked stealthily into the class. The class looked a beehive of activities. The class became pre-occupied with varied activities. It never noticed change in time. The rest of the days passed with fair success. They set up silence and concentration in reading. “We are lucky accident of birth,” they said, as they progressed in doing class assignment.

Kiprugut continued with hard work. He progressed well in his academic struggles. Mosonik took a bold move. He began to develop Kiprugut’s family farm. It was a small piece of land. It was constantly affected by the drought and low yield was achieved.

The following year, Kiprugut went to class seven. He continued to be at the top in class seven performances. Mosonik was proud of him. Everybody expected him to go to Starehe Boys Centre. His friend Kibos was also optimistic to go to a National School. Apart from his academic performance, Kiprugut was one of the best footballers in Mukuru. He seemed to get well with everyone.

Towards the end of class seven, Kiprugut’s way of living and behavior began to change drastically. Sometimes he was very jovial. He would blow his trumpet in his performance. Sometimes he appeared absent minded. He began to lack confidence in himself. He often lost his temper in class for no appropriate reason. He ceased working extra hard in class. He began to lose attention in class. Kiprugut began to nurture a relationship with Chelel the daughter of Koros. She was in class six. He would forfeit her in daily duties of cleanliness in school. Kiprugut was among the prefects. One afternoon they were found by Miss Cheptui in a corridor. They were conversing in one of the classroom. They tried to establish romantic relationship. They were got red handed by the teacher. They were taken for counseling on dangers of early marriages, dreaded diseases like venereal diseases, HIV /AIDs and failure in exam. Kiprugut turned a deaf ear and still clung to Chelel.

No one in class could comprehend what had happened to Kiprugut so suddenly. He could react to any statement anyhow. Mosonik, the uncle, asked him what was troubling him. He kept quiet and appeared withdrawn. He stopped attending classes like before. He could go to the grassy football pitch and sunbathed until late hours of the day. Kiprugut began to develop absenteeism records in class.

His teachers became worried. They tried to counsel him but in vain. He would just hang his head and looked infuriated and annoyed. One boy who knew Kiprugut's sudden change of behavior was Kibos. He did not want to let the cat out of the bag on his sudden change of behaviour to the teachers. Kibos, his friend kept nagging himself about Kiprugut's sudden wayward behaviour. He deliberately dresses in his civilian outfits. He could sneak out of school without adhering to school rules.

Kiprugut stopped working hard in class. He began to forfeit class assignment. He lacked chance to study. Mosonik learnt the story of Kiprugut's laxity with fury and rage.

"Kiprugut", "why have you involved yourself in wayward activities?" I want you to read all the books that I did not read, "my parents were too poor to pay my fees," Mosonik told him one morning "I shall be proud of you if you become somebody better in future". "I will provide you with necessary materials in school," Mosonik continued. Kiprugut seemed to listen and went to school. It was 11 o'clock break time when pupils of Mukuru were sunbathing and future planning. Kiprugut rose up from a green patch. He marched majestically towards fence behind the class. The master on duty saw him greeted an outsider and exchanged something that was wrapped in an old newspaper. The M.O.D, Mr. Cheres noticed the boy in civilian to be Koros' son. He was a naughty and notorious drug trafficker. He dropped out in class seven at Mukuru primary .He was fond of using drugs and selling them to school boys. He had established friendship with Kiprugut when he was at Koros' farm.

The teacher on duty Mr. Cheres got Kiprugut red-handed with homemade cigarettes containing bhang. Cheberkes was the son of Koros. The Koros who had employed Kiprugut initially to look after his herd of cattle. Kiprugut was immediately frog-marched to the head teacher's office to answer the case. The standard eight pupils became anxious. They started hovering around the door of the administration block. Some pupils were crouching under the head teacher's window to eavesdrop the outburst of the head teacher. The head teacher gave him strokes of cane. He shouted at Kiprugut with a tight feeling in his throat. Words came tumbling from his mouth like water from a burst dam. Rage choked his voice. Kiminda, the head teacher blamed Kiprugut for many minutes. In his office he looked bewildered. He wanted to nurture the pupils according to the most progressive thinking. Kiprugut would not withstand. He felt the pain and heard himself screamed. He shouted with his mouth wide open amidst sobs and murmurs of repentance. He screamed like he was dying. The pain of cane made a searing effect on his body. He renounced that he was enticed into drugs and waywardness by Cheberkes.

Suddenly, the door burst open. Kiprugut rushed out and showed a pair of clean heels. He pushed two teachers Mr. Cheres and Miss Cheptui. He ran towards the school gate groaning. The head teacher came out with his cane in the hand behind him and stood watching, "come back,

Kiprugut luckily, he could not penetrate past gate because he did not have permission. The gate keeper arrested him. He brought him back to the office. The head teacher scolded him. He jabbed a finger in his chest for emphasis. He allowed him to rest in the deputy's office to wait for the guardian. He began to sob. Throbbing and arching in unbelievable pain. Mosonik arrived after the head teacher rang him. He entered the office with his walking stick tongue tied. He lifted his eyebrows in surprise. Kiprugut had loose coins in his pocket. He was suspected to be a gambler at the river side after school. He had changed his lifestyle. Mosonik was worried with the way Kiprugut was moving backwards in his performance.

Mosonik sat dejectedly in the office. His eyes widened first in surprise then in anger. He contained his impatience and controlled his temper. Mr. Kiminda, the head teacher explained the picture encompassing Kiprugut's sudden change of behavior. He fumbled with his huge ring of keys. Mosonik got shocked. He did not know what to say. Mosonik got real picture of Kiprugut physique and behavior in school. The head teacher, Mosonik and Kiprugut talked for one hour. At long last, Kiprugut and Mosonik left for home. He was suspended for one week because of moving round the school compound with homemade cigarettes. Mr. Kiminda became infuriated about Cheberkes, the drug trafficker. He began to follow him up. He reported the matter to the area chief of Mukuru Mr. Togom. The twist of events began to take a new beginning. The chief facilitated the arrest of notorious drug trafficker. The administration police based in Mosiro Chief's office arrested the boy. He was captured the following day at the crack of dawn. He was arraigned in court that day. Things took a new direction. The magistrate judge the case. Finally, he ruled out the verdict of life imprisonment. Koros learnt the outcome with painful thoughts. He tried to appeal the case. He looked for his lawyer but luck was not on his side. He regretted why he never moulded Cheberkes and his children at an early age. He felt he ought to have made the hay while the sun shines. Koros tried to make up for the last struggle towards Cheberkes but he hit a snag. From that time, Koros began to embrace and nurture his children towards education.

Mosonik was affected by sudden twist of events in Kiprugut's academic direction. When Kiprugut was given suspension letter, he became silent and stared at the floor. The floor whirled in front of Kiprugut's eyes. The letter left him in a blur of thoughts. Mosonik tried to drum up some excuses to Kiminda but in vain. Mosonik kept the letter. They came out and unfolded the letter out with grief. Without expecting to find something explosive, his palms became clammy with sweat. The face wrinkled and creased with morose. Mosonik was desperate. He had overpowering urge to cry.

Immediately they arrived home, Mosonik decided to call his cousin through the phone. He was the deputy headteacher of Motonyi high school. The deputy headteacher Mr. Chelogoi was known to be advisory and counselor in matters pertaining to school life. He turned up

immediately the following day at ten o'clock in a brand new car. When he alighted he produced his handkerchief. He mopped his forehead as he locked the car. No sooner had Kiprugut noticed the arrival of the saloon car than he felt a pang of some sort of guilt. Mr. Chelogoi was a middle aged man in a neat black suit with clean shaven face. He was a soft and understandable man.

Mr. Mosonik welcomed him with open arms. He nodded with a placating smile. They went inside the house and sat at the sitting room, Mr. Chelogoi had come with a pamphlet labeled drugs. It was given out during county heads meeting in Eldoret. Mr. Chelogoi had photo copied the letter. Kiprugut was called to come to the sitting room. He looked round and smiled. He nodded in acknowledgement of the reception. Tapsabei formed the part of the audience. She brought tea for the visitor with real buttered toast. As they sipped numerous cups of tea, Mr. Chelogoi handed over the letter to Kiprugut. It concerned drugs and bad friends. Kiprugut smiled with understanding and nodded. He began to talk to Kiprugut soothingly. He explained to him that drugs can cause permanent damage to the brain and the body.

Drugs affect performance in school. Students and pupils who start abusing drug can cheat or steal at home or school to get money for more drugs. It is a criminal behaviour and one can be sent to a juvenile home. Many scholars have defied the advice but many of them have a lot of troubles. Some have dropped out of school. Students or pupils who smoke bhang are extremely frustrated. Some have stripped themselves naked in public. "A friend who is taking drugs is no longer a good friend, he said. "A life of drug and alcohol abuse is wasted life" he continued. "If you want to lead a happy and fruitful life, you must assert yourself and say no to drugs" Chelogoi said. "You must encourage your friends to do the same" Mr. Chelogoi continued. Mr. Chelogoi appealed to Kiprugut to heed to his pieces of advice and directives. This will make him remain in the top position in class.

The eyes were red with sobbing. He was psychologically affected. He was wretched on his wayward behaviour. He sensed that his newly acquired behaviour had happened to destroy the happiness of his life. He had felt guilt conscience.

"Life is good and full of promises when one has reliable friends" Chelogoi continued to tell him. Mosonik and Tapsabei were too overcome to say anything. Kiprugut seemed to have a feeling that the school was becoming more difficult to handle. After Mr. Chelogoi's pieces of advice and comments he became quiet. He promised for immediate positive behaviour change. The strength of the promise grew stronger. "Kiprugut, I am terribly worried about this behaviour, please change" Tapsabei told him.

Mr. Chelogoi concluded the conversation with strong touchy words of behaviour change. He tried to contain his expression and surprise on sudden behaviour change on Kiprugut. Mr. Chelogoi hoped that his words would keep the boy from bad company.

Mr. Chelogoi prepared himself to go back home. He became hopeful towards Kiprugut's positive change. "Work hard in school Kiprugut and avoid use of drugs" Mr. Chelogoi said as he peered at Kiprugut through thick glasses that were set crookedly over his face. "Don't establish romantic relationship with girls in schools it will hinder your academic process", he said."There is time for everything, one thing at a time "Take care, there are diseases, Chelogoi emphasized."

"Do you know the dangers and side effects of drugs"? Mr. Mosonik asked. Kiprugut was embarrassed. He shuffled awkwardly, feeling cowed and frightened.

"Drugs like cigarettes and bhang enable one to enjoy a momentary illusion .It deceive the user with temporary happiness, health and long life" Mosonik said.

Avoid and keep off from drugs and illegitimate relationships, you will have a good and a streamlined life. "Your performance in school will remain steady". Chelogoi commented. If there is one thing in life to work for, it is education. It will portray the best shape of your life. It will change the mind in order to change the body and attitude. "Your attitude and approach towards drugs will have great impact on overall success. Mosonik added. It is much easier to find bearing if you understand and observe fundamental principles of good behaviour. "All great achievers, all successful people are those who have been able to gain control over their time," Chelogoi concluded. After a session of advice, Mr. Chelogoi settled down to mouthwatering and delicious meal fit for a king.

CHAPTER FOUR

Kiprugut remained cool after the departure of Mr. Chelogoi. He spent the whole day brooding and cogitating about what lay before him .He walked slowly and dragged his feet silently on the verandah. "This is the height of new discovery" Mosonik said.

Kiprugut's eyes popped open to figure the truth in the matter. Words reached his ears. He internalized the pieces of advices from Mr. Chelogoi.

The talk of the drug counselor Mr. Chelogoi cleared the mental cobwebs which had been fogged in his mind.

The following day Kiprugut walked his way to school. They went with Mosonik after suspension. He was cleared by the headteacher in his office with his guardian. Kiprugut felt remorseful .Kiminda looked at him. He noticed immediate changes in his behaviour. He was allowed back to school. He walked into the classroom in an absolute frenzy. The classmates welcomed him and murmured instantly. He sat on his desk and caught a breath. He was received

with ululation in class like a politician on stage selling his policies. It was because of repentance he seemed to show.

Within a short time, the class teacher Miss Cheptui came in. She saw Kiprugut seated. She welcomed him to class once again. How did you get involved in such a thing?" she asked. During the December holiday, Kiprugut met naughty pupils from Motonyi Primary School the neighboring school. They taught him smoking and drinking alcohol. It was their order of the day. They also took drugs and enticed Kiprugut to join them.

Kiprugut, "why did you agree to join the naughty boys?" asked Miss Cheptui.

"I think it's what is called peer pressure", "I felt that I should be part of the group because I had admired their lifestyle". "The lifestyle of such group is an awful one", she said

The group is likely to be composed of thieves and liars. "How could you get involve in such a wayward behaviour?" Miss Cheptui asked Kiprugut. He fidgeted and seemed reformed. The news of Mr. Chelogoi took all the weight care from Kiprugut. "Through good common sense and commitment to hard work one can become enormously successful," said Kiprugut. "If you read tirelessly, you shall become bright and knowledgeable student" Said Cheptui. The appetite of learning has always been as great as the appetite of a chicken, "Based on my own determination, I think I can, since I shall begin to believe in myself to read and achieve good grades," I shall also begin to gain the confidence. "I have seen that with hard work and educational improvement I can go virtually anywhere and I can be anything I want to be" Kiprugut said.

"I have seen education as the most viable road to success" he told his friend after amending his behaviour. "Education is the laboratory where you refine your choices and priorities" he continued to tell Kibos. "It is the test track for learning to turn obstacles into opportunities," he continued.

Kibos his friend was moved by Kiprugut's repentance. His change triggered some interesting sensation on behaviour change. Miss Cheptui pointed on the effects of education. Kiprugut's level of self – esteem was so high that when the class teacher left the class, he was with every different feeling from his first encounter with her. Kiprugut began to take positive educational shape in his mind. "Reading is the best foundation you get by ensuring a successful lifetime of learning" Kiprugut continued.

"We need education because it helps us understand the past, cope with our present, and determine our future" Kibos replied. "I had started smoking home – made cigarettes, gambling, fornication, truancy, loitering in the village and watching videos at night for the last three

months. “ ”my peer group coached me wrongly” he unfolded. Mr. Chelogoi gave me pieces of advice. It popped in my mind. They sank into the bottom of my heart. There are negative effects of drugs on human health. He showed how drugs are disastrous to human mind and health. This made me to avoid drugs and repent completely. Kiprugut disapproved the idea that smoking stimulates the mind, helps creative powers and produced a haze that help the time pass.

Kiprugut began to struggle against behaviour of smoking. He found himself filled with a new respect for his ordered existence. He adapted his new way of living. According to Mosonik, Kiprugut had been a good boy since he was young. Being the only one in his family, Mosonik was disappointed when the boy changed his lifestyle. Mosonik had enough for Kiprugut to see him through life. Kiprugut began to get his educational chance. He changed his behavior gradually. The strength of his positive change was getting stronger to him every day. Kiprugut began to have soft feelings towards education in subsequent months. He launched a total crackdown against idleness. He cast his masculine toils on education. It took the secret joys and loneliness of poverty to open his eyes to books in School.

“Failure to achieve one’s goal happens because we change the goal while working towards it” Kiprugut said. “Yes! Kiprugut, highly successful people do not give up”. Kibos responded. Kiprugut started to embark on books. He revived his initial seriousness in class work. The colleagues noticed his tremendous paradigm shift. He continued with fair amount of determination on his work. The emotion and tension drained out of him like air out of the balloon. Kiprugut followed the pieces of advice from Chelogoi, Mosonik and Mr. Kiminda the headteacher. He began to pass the weekly test to everyone’s satisfaction.

“I need to utilize the brain God has given me to recognize and explore new horizon. “I am also able to make appropriate adjustments. I should come up with something more palatable to myself,” Kiprugut said. He wrestled with his own personal hardwork in books. He made adjustment to his school life. Sampling all the advice he was given. He created his own routine. Kiprugut made up his mind to adopt positive life. He learned to wake up at five thirty in the morning. He really worked at it. He threw himself in books. He set his objectives high. He longed to be an excellent example of a good rural boy of Mukuru. He longed to make the village to be undisputedly area of academics. He widened his scope by taking an interest in studies. He felt disgusted with his formerly acquired lifestyle. He regretted the rush decision he had made on peer groups. Kiprugut and his friend Kibos stopped engaging in nasty activities of the world.

He rested his chin on his right palm. He embarked seriously on reading. He withdrew his intention on smoking, gambling, fornication, loitering and all vices. He narrowed his mind to one mad desire of passing exams.

The sleeping academic beauty of Mukuru Primary was revived abruptly. Kiprugut changed lifestyle of reading. He proved to be one of the most promising boys in his class. His class seven turned to be foci of serious activities. No pupil could move from one class to another. Kiprugut passed very well in the monthly continuous assessment tests. Mosonik, the uncle was contended with the way Kiprugut was shaping on well. He told Kiprugut that “learning is a new introduction like a chair to sit on, but wisdom is a staff to walk on, and a staff brings with it respect.” Kiprugut nodded.

Kiprugut attained a magnetic pull in reading. His U-turn was noticed forth with. His interest in books blossom and flourished. He made more progress in his new faith in reading. He could remain alone in class after the bell for lunch was rang. He revised intensively. He kept studying and revising tirelessly after games in every week. He dragged up his chair and sat down firmly on it and began to read. He rubbed his eyes after straining on books.

Kiprugut fulfilled himself in his adventures towards books. He justified his existence in Mukuru primary school. He believed that there was none with more intelligence and creativity than the other.

The weight of smoking lifted off. He tended to feel an intense withdrawal syndrome engulfed. He remained firm with help of friends and teachers. He widen his horizon of reading. Kiprugut spent meaningful time on meditating upon his life. Tiny bundles of loneliness engulfed in him.

CHAPTER FIVE

Kiprugut was at the top in his class work. His last term in class seven seemed to gain momentum plus velocity.

Mr. Kiminda, the headteacher kept pouring sweet scented words on Kiprugut’s upward academic trend.

“Do whatever you must to encourage reading” Kiminda said, “avail yourself to the opportunities you have,” he continued.

The pupils stood, clapped and cheered with ululation to his remarks. Kiminda was advisory in his speeches. He said, “Through determination and commitment to hardwork, you will become enormously successful. If you read tirelessly, you become bright and knowledgeable. Pupils who put more effort in reading are prone to get success in all spheres of life,” he said. Kiprugut

continued to gain confidence that he had seen through hardwork. He sensed that his educational improvement can go clearly anywhere he wants to go and attain his dreams.

Mr. Kiminda created a learner-friendly and alcohol free environment in Mukuru primary school. He also created conducive environment of excellence and co-curricular activities in school. Besides his great faith in God and in all endeavours, he was a performer in his administration and teaching career with his subjects. He was patient and tolerant.

“I have seen education as the most viable road to success,” he told the pupils. “Education is a spectacle that enables us to see where we would not see. Kiminda continued. “It is an avenue for turning obstacles into opportunities,” he said. Kiprugut was totally touched and moved by the headteacher’s presentation. It triggers interest towards learning. Kiminda pointed out the effects of education.

Kiprugut’s level of self –esteem was high. When the headteacher left the classroom, he was with a very different feeling from his earlier encounter. The idea of education continued to evolve in his mind. It fundamentally remained essential. He began to think about education and prayed about it. The idea of compassionate action began to take shape in his mind. He began to learn that education is vital because it helps them understand the past, takes them through the present and anticipates the future.

His academic records improved a great deal than he could notice. His friend Kibos on the other hand began to adopt work hard too. Teachers were delighted with the way Kiprugut and Kibos were reforming. The answer to their problem came in one glorious flash of luck.

“Let’s centre our attention to books” the class teacher told them.

“What a rotten pair of trickster were we really” Kibos smiled dryingly. Kiprugut re-discovered himself on his past deeds and whistled. He lifted his eyebrows and shrugged slightly. He tossed his hands in a gesture of guilty conscience and repentance.

Kibos progressed towards positive academic trends that resembled Kiprugut’s triumph. The entire class seven watched his performance unbelievably.

“Listen, Kibos,” Kiprugut said, “it is good to show respect to teachers, be discipline, follow school rules, avoid drug trafficking and your life in school shall be smooth”. Kibos nodded. He tried valiantly to sit up as Kiprugut told him. They prudently refrained from barbaric and way ward behaviour.

The love of reading runs in their veins. The words of Mosonik and Chelogoi pierced to his ears aggressively. He followed their advices. He was glad to dismiss the idea of cowardice from his mind. Kiprugut narrowed to one mad desire of passing the exams. He perpetually revised. He felt as if he was in the middle of a tight situation seeking for survival. His instinct warned him that, to relax was asking to be included in the losing side.

Mosonik incessantly took care of Kiprugut the way a good farmer takes care of his best cow. Only the cow never realized that the keeper does not feed her so well because he loves her as a cow but for the milk she produces. Mosonik credits much of his positive life philosophy to influence Kiprugut's success "purpose in life detect priority" Mosonik said.

Kiprugut ascended up to class eight. He was rated high in the competition ladder. He was among those who were successful in life. He improved the academic standards of Mukuru Primary. Kiprugut had become a good reader. He had developed such a tremendous memory. When he was at home, he would recite the details of every single book in every subject. He did the test for indexing and luck was on his side. He became index one. His friend Kibos became index three. Kiprugut looked formidable. He was capable of handling any exam situation.

At long last, Kiprugut entered the examination term of class eight. Reading became a major factor in his studies. He acquired past papers and books from his friends in the neighbourhood. He interacted through books in a wide range of knowledge and exposure. Kiprugut harnessed a reading culture. He placed revision worthy books on his desk.

Kiprugut internalized hardwork and educational improvement. He concentrated in nurturing reading culture. He also saw education as the most viable road to get him to his destination. He concluded that success through education makes all the difference. "Education is where students have the opportunity to practice and apply even everything I have talked about," he said.

"Education provide a limelight for one to refine one's choices and priorities" Kibos replied. It is the test track for learning to turn obstacles into opportunities" Kiprugut said.

He was obsessed with reading that he used to read on his bed before retiring to sleep.

It was the following week when Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination was to begin. The two boys had prepared satisfactorily. They had prudently refrained from barbaric and bad behaviour. The two boys were ready to sit for the K.C.P.E. They were beaming with courage and confidence. The exam started well and went on without irregularities. The headteacher and teachers were feeling more confident of them than usual. The two boys remained very quiet and very serious during the examination period. Kiprugut scrutinized through the questions

knowingly and with confidence. The candidates faltered and subsided into a dead silence. The exams went on for a full week.

After the exam, students began to anticipate for good results. He was mad with eagerness. Sometimes he focused the whole day upon the possibility of receiving admission letter. Kiprugut was too fond of reading articles, poems book and story books. After the exam he shuffled the pages in old articles in search of entertaining stories. He relaxed and let his thoughts flow.

Kiminda's relief beamed all over his face. A rare moment of tranquility settled over him. The conflicts in Kiminda's mind towards Kiprugut were finally resolved "Be aware of what you want and you will get it." Kiminda told Kiprugut. "I have long been fascinated by your behavior in the course of the term" Kiminda told Kiprugut. "With co-operation established the cohesiveness is built," "everything is achievable," he said fetching keenly to Kiprugut's chatting. The boys got to appreciate the complex bond between the boy's teachers and school administration. "The objective of learning is to be useful in the context of life" Kiminda said. Kiminda was contended with upward trend of Kiprugut's academic achievements.

Kiprugut's hope on life sky - rocketed with enthusiasm. Everybody among teachers had their ego and self – esteem totally elevated. The boy became humble in the classroom and took interest in learning. After the exams, Kiprugut assisted Mosonik in domestic chores at home. He borrowed numerous books from the nearest Mukuru community library. He began to read to supplement his idleness. He began to grow to be a pillar, in that bumpy, yet adventurous journey away from his ancestral harbour. He laid down impermeable foundation for his life on which it stands to date. The rosier side is that the scarcity of food which had ravaged in Mosonik family eventually came to an end. The beckon of education made the family of Mosonik to glitter.

Mosonik was proud of him. He pictured Kiprugut impressing among the hordes of boys of Mukuru with his fancy reading. He carried on the habit of reading. This habit of reading stories was so well received by his ego after the exam. He continued reading. Kiprugut read from a story in the library and realized that problems can be overcome however difficult they may be. "Chances and opportunities favour a prepared mind," Mosonik said.

One afternoon, the K.C.P.E results were announced by the minister for education. Kiprugut and his colleagues were eager to know the results. Mosonik wrote and sent a short message service for Kiprugut. Good marks greeted his eyes. He smiled in satisfaction and became contented. Kiprugut topped in the exam while Kibos became the second. The Mukuru fraternity was overwhelmed to the point of madness. He was taken shoulder high round the school by some villagers and the school children. Shouts of congratulations came from the villagers in quick succession. The news had a lot to be cheerful about.

The school and the village of Mukuru began to be a joy point. The villagers were totally engrossed in happiness. Kiprugut became a celebrity in the school after the results were announced. He became the torch bearer of the school. He was offered a congratulatory message by Mukuru fraternity. Mosonik had positive life and strong belief. He nurtured Kiprugut's success until he gained a noticeable dimension. His academic excellence in Mukuru became the talk of the village for a long time. He remained a shining star of Mukuru. He rested his solid achievement beyond several villages. His dreams of going to a National School became real. "When the ignorance prevails, rights are deprived" Kiprugut commented. Kiprugut concur with the saying that at every desert of calamity, God has an oasis of fortune. Mosonik then proved a visibly go-getter parent and a disciplinarian mentor of positive behaviour change. His leadership style was simple yet successful.

From that point the social class of Kiprugut began to emulate his way of studying in school. The pupils in Mukuru primary school began to workhard in their studies. The villagers too became supportive to the school matters and progress. The village was recognized to be the centre of academics. Kiprugut was admitted to a prestigious Starehe Boys Centre School. When the boys saw how Kiprugut was appreciated, they began to change their ways of living towards academics. Boys who had started gambling, illegitimate relationship sneaking out of school before time and breaking school rules began to reform. They began to know that success is nurtured, achieved and developed. Malakwen, the village elder later organized for a send off party for Kiprugut to Starehe Boys Centre while Kibos also accompanied his friend to Alliance High School.

Mukuru primary school started claiming the first position in the tests that were done in the entire district. The pupils began to emulate reading tactics of Kiprugut eventually. The beckon of education took them through learning that had no end. The objective of learning was to be useful in the context of life. "When laxity prevails, rights are deprived." Kiprugut kept saying. "Purposes in life detect priority." "Chances and opportunities favour a prepared mind." "Beware of what you want and you will get it." Kiprugut proclaimed.

The teacher encouraged the pupils that being able to read effectively is extremely important both in and out of school. When a learner move from one grade to another, reading skills are necessary for academic success in all subjects. In life outside school reading skills are important to develop a deeper understanding of the world around. Good readers live in a wider, richer world. There are more opportunities in education beyond primary, secondary and university for personal growth. There are avenues available to good readers throughout their lives. The teachers are obliged to encourage the pupils to harness a reading culture by placing worthy books into worthy hands, he concluded.

GLOSSARY

CHAPTER ONE

Heavy hitter – A person with a lot of influence

Neglect – Ignore

Leisure – Free time, when somebody is not busy

Hide and seek – Children's game

Considerate – Thinking about the feeling of other peoples

Embrace – Show love, accept and include something

Obliged – Force someone to do something because it is a must

Abandon – Leave

Menial – Work considered of low status

Nurture – To provide can care necessary for a young child.

Adamant – Determined not to change the belief

Stroll – To walk without hurrying

Edible – Food that is safe or good to eat

Guavas and berries – Wild fruits

Immersed – To put something or someone in something

Stray – Lost, or without a home

Etched – That is easily remembered in the mind

Clad – To wear a particular cloth

Dedicated – Spending all the time and effort on something

Engrossed – So interested in something

Interact – To socialize

Snail pace – Slowly

Gorged – To have eat or drink so much

Serpentine path – Full of bends and twist

Decipher – Understand

Apprenticed – A person employed by that person to learn the type of work

Literate person – Able to read and write

Chatted – To talk in a friendly way

Leaned – Move the body closer to something

Domestic chores – Daily duties

Adrenalin – Chemical produced by glands that makes the heart beat faster

Bliss – Happiness

Jubilation – Behaviour that shows someone is extremely happy

Grinned – A big smile that shows teeth

Hesitated – To pause before doing something

Groped – To search for something inside

Succumbed – To yield

Fidget – To make small quick movement with parts of the body

Downcast – Sad and upset, dejected

CHAPTER TWO

Enroll – To put the name on the official list of student

Amicably – Friendly

Cling (dung) – To stick to or fight very tightly

Comprehend – Understand

Survive – Manage to deal with something difficult or unpleasant

Scold – To criticize someone

Low profile – Deliberately not attracting public attention

Consistent – Not changing, continuing or developing steadily

Fabulous – Extremely good

Inspire – Motivate, give somebody enthusiasm

Handicap – Lamé, having disability

Battled – To try hard to deal with a difficult situation

Pierced – Penetrate

Homogenous – Consisting thing that are similar

Flourished – Thrive, to grow well and be healthy

Accustomed – Gradually feel that something is normal

Unanimously – Everybody agrees and support

Inaugurated – Introduce something new and important

Click – Make short sound

Glistened – Shine

Self – imposed – Rules chosen by oneself

Engrossed – Interested in something

Triumphant – Very pleased or excited about a victory or success

CHAPTER THREE

Legendary – Very famous or well known for a long time

Composed – Calm and relaxed

Stealthily – Quietly and secretly

Optimistic – Hoping for good to happen in future

Drastically – Change that has a big effect

Ceased – Stop

Absent – minded – Confused

Truant – A child who stays away from school without permission

Nagging – Affecting the mind in unpleasant way for a long time

Wayward behaviour – Not controlled and organized in the right way

Adhering – Sticking to something

Forfeit – To lose something valuable by making a mistake

Laxity – Not paying enough attention to ruler

Naught – A child who behaves badly

Notorious – Known because of bad things

Fond of – Getting enjoyed and satisfied from something

Eavesdrop	– To listen to other people secretly
Handcuffed	– Arrested
Gambling	– An activity in which you risk money in hope of winning
Sip	– To drink in small amount
Numerous	– Many, multiple
Assert	– To state firmly that something is true
Sobbing	– Crying
Amorous relationship	– Involving sexual love
Embarrassed	- Ashamed of something and worried
Shuffled	– To walk slowly and noisily without lifting the feed
Illusion	– A false or wrong belief or idea
Deceives	– Trick or cheat
Illegitimate	– Not allowed by rules or laws
Fundamental	– The most basic and important aspects something

CHAPTER FOUR

Brooding	– Feeling something or dangerous is about to happen
Dragged	– Slows in progress, boring
Verandah	– Covered area along the outside of a house
Popped	– When eyes, open wide
Fogged	– Make something confusing or difficult to understand

Remorseful – Feeling sad or guilty

Frenzy – State of uncontrolled activity or emotion

Enticed – Persuade, sooth

Disastrous – Causing a lot of damage or harm

Haze – Dust in the air that makes it difficult to see clearly

Launch – To start a major activity

Gradually – Slowly by slowly

Embark – To start a new project or activity

Revived – To make conscious again

Tremendous – Expressing something is extremely great and important

Paradigm – Typical example or model of something

Palatable – Acceptable, tasting good to eat or drink

Transform – Change

Disgusted – Feeling very angry and upset about something

Obsessively – Affecting by a strong feeling towards something

Blossom – To develop and become more successful

Scope – Opportunity or freedom that is needed to develop something

Engulfed – To cover or surround something that harms or destroy

Meditating – To think about something carefully

CHAPTER FIVE

Scented words – having pleasant smell

Trend – A gradual change or development

Ululation – make along high sound with the voice

Viable – able to be done, worth doing

Self esteem – feeling important as other people

Compassionate – feeling sympathy for someone in bad situation

Shrugged – move shoulders up and down

Resemble – to be similar to someone or something

Triumph – to win a great victory

Grin – smile showing a set of teeth

Inanely – completely stupid, idiotic

Barbaric – extremely violent and cruel

Valiantly – very brave and determined in difficult situation

Instincts – a natural tendency to behave in a particular way harness to get control of something

Obsessed – considering something or someone is important

Beckon - to signal someone to come towards you.

Nurture – to provide the care and attention necessary

QUESTIONS

1. What are disadvantages of truancy?
2. What are the results of taking drugs?
3. How can peer groups mislead learner?

4. What are the fruits of hard work?

5. What made Kiprugut to re-discover himself?