

SHADOWS OF THE REPUBLIC



Title: Shadows of
Rukanga Republic

Genre: Social
Commentary

Setting: A fictional
Rukanga town,
present day

Characters:

Kamau: A jobless university graduate, idealistic and outspoken.

Mama Njeri: A food vendor, wise and motherly.

Inspector Muli: A police officer torn between duty and conscience.

Hon. Imba : A high-ranking government official involved in shady deals.

Zaina: A young activist, fiery and determined.

Ghost: A symbolic character representing the souls of the disappeared.

President Njatha: The head of state, detached and manipulated.

Wendo: A rogue journalist.

Dr. Mutiso: An overwhelmed public hospital physician.

Babu Karanja: A veteran political strategist.

Wema: A digital activist in the diaspora.

Prologue: The Ghost

(Lights rise on a dark stage. A single figure, cloaked in grey, stands center. A faint heartbeat in the background.)

GHOST (softly): We are the echoes. The disappeared, the discarded. Not in death, but in silence. We watched the Republic rot from within.

But the youth—they remember. They resist. They chant. They build. And through them... we return.

(Lights fade.)

ACT I: The Silent Streets

Scene 1: Mama Njeri's Kiosk (A dusty roadside. Charcoal smoke rises from a small githeri pot. Flies buzz. Kamau, 26, is seated on a wooden bench. Brown envelope on his lap.)

Kamau: (looking tired, clutching a brown envelope) Another application today. Fourth one this month. HR says I should "wait for shortlisting." You know what that means, Mama?

Mama Njeri: (stirring githeri) It means your name didn't come with an envelope or a handshake from a cousin at State House.

Kamau: (chuckles bitterly) I have a degree, Mama. First class. But it feels like a receipt for a dream that expired.

Mama Njeri: (gently) They told you education is the key. They didn't tell you the padlock belongs to the rich.

(Zaina enters, breathless.)

ZAINA: Otieno's body. Kwacha Forest. They covered it with leaves like garbage.

KAMAU: Otieno? He was at the forum last week... talking about data leaks.

MAMA NJERI: (quietly) He spoke too loudly. In a country allergic to truth.

(The heartbeat returns. Spotlight on Ghost.)

GHOST: He thought his words would save the nation. Instead, they wrote his obituary. But still—he lives in your rage.

Scene 2: Kamau's Bedsitter (A cramped, dimly lit room. Kamau lies on a tattered mattress. The sounds of street preachers and boda boda revving engines seep through the cracked window.)

KAMAU: (Voice-over, recording himself) This is episode 5 of "Jobless Truth." Today's theme: How to survive with a degree and a dozen regrets.

He types rapidly on his second-hand laptop, posting a blog entry titled: "My Degree Feeds Me Nothing."

Scene 3: Public Hospital - Emergency Wing (Dr. Mutiso argues with a procurement officer.)

DR. MUTISO: We have twenty patients on the floor. No oxygen. No gloves. And what do you bring? A new biometric system?

PROCUREMENT OFFICER: The tender was approved by State House. Ask questions, lose your job.

DR. MUTISO: People are dying. Tell that to your spreadsheet.

Scene 4: Police Barracks - Inspector Muli's Room (Muli is reviewing files late into the night.

News plays in the background about another protest.)

NEWSCASTER: ...the youth protest turned violent after tear gas canisters were fired into the crowd. At least three are feared dead...

MULI: (Whispers to himself) I didn't sign up to be a butcher.

He opens a locked drawer, revealing classified files labeled: "Neutralization Targets." Otieno's name is on top.

Scene 5: Parliament Chambers (Members of Parliament are laughing, drinking bottled water labeled from Italy. Hon. Imba gives a rousing, hypocritical speech.)

IMBA: Fellow Kenyans, we hear your pain. We will create jobs, we will fix healthcare, we will...

(A member whispers to another)

MP1: Another PR stunt. He's just secured the fertilizer tender.

MP2: And the eCitizen mobile pay—

(The sound of a gavel.)

SPEAKER: Order! Order! Lunch is served in the executive dining.

Scene 6: Mama Njeri's Kiosk - That Evening (The candlelight vigil begins. Zaina, Kamau, and other youth light candles for Otieno.)

ZAINA: He was one of us. Not just in death—but in dreams.

KAMAU: We post tweets, they send threats. We march, they send bullets. But if we stop...

ZAINA: Then we die quietly. They think fear is our destiny. But they forget—we are the future. We must document, speak, create, resist!

Kamau: What if we're next?

Zaina: Then let them know: even if we fall, others will rise. Let our art, our voices, our truth be louder than their guns.

(Lights dim. Ghost walks through the crowd. Kamau's voice carries over.)

KAMAU (Voice-over): This nation buries the living before they die. But what they don't know is—we haunt them.

(Lights fade. Curtain closes on Act I.)

ACT II: Deals of Darkness

Scene 1: State House – Hon. Imba's Office (A large mahogany desk. National flag draped near the window. Hon. Imba sits smugly with a drink. A giant oil painting of the president hangs behind him.)

IMBA: (into phone) The tender is yours, just ensure a 12% pass-through into the "wellness" fund. And remember, that activist girl? The one trending on TokTok? Handle her.

(He hangs up. His secretary walks in nervously.)

SECRETARY: Sir, the Auditor-General's office is requesting...

IMBA: (sternly) Forward it to Legal. Delay. Deny. Distract.

Scene 2: Basement Meeting Room – Ministry of Interior (A smoke-filled room. Ministers, senior officers, and business elites sit around a map of city.)

MINISTER: We've identified hot zones—Twitter spaces, Tiktok live trends, Telegram protests. Digital youth are unpredictable.

BUSINESS ELITE: We invest in this country. If they rise, our profits fall. We need control.

INTERIOR PS: We'll regulate digital speech under the National Harmony Bill. First draft is with the AG.

Scene 3: Police Operations Room – Inspector Muli (A digital screen shows faces. Each tagged: “WATCH,” “NEUTRALIZE,” “BLACKLIST.” Muli sits across from a younger, fresh graduate recruit.)

RECRUIT: Sir, this isn’t what I imagined when I joined.

MULI: Neither did I. But here we are. Serving a flag that forgot us.

RECRUIT: And what happens if we say no?

MULI: Then we become names on that board.

Scene 4: Hotel – Lobby Bar (Hon. IMBA, President Njatha, and two foreign consultants toast to a newly signed peace mission abroad.)

CONSULTANT: We’ll train your forces for Kanga. It’s good PR. Rukanga becomes a global peace broker.

PRESIDENT NJATHA: (smiling weakly) We can’t even secure our hospitals, but we export stability. That’s irony for you.

IMBA: Don’t worry. The media will spin it. We’ll bury the truth in a press release.

Scene 5: County Health Warehouse (Dr. Mutiso confronts a regional director who is receiving overpriced expired drugs.)

DR. MUTISO: We ordered syringes. You sent a bribe disguised as panadol.

DIRECTOR: Don't raise your voice. You want to be transferred to Pengoni?

DR. MUTISO: My conscience is already there. Dying of thirst.

Scene 6: Parliament Corridor (Journalist Wendo secretly records two MPs arguing about splitting a "public engagement" budget.)

MP1: You got 15 million for the president's rally?

MP2: Yes. Half goes to mobilizers. The rest? Allowances and medicine fund "reallocation."

MP1: Let's include a condolence budget for optics. Those kids dying in protests help the PR cycle.

(Wendo clicks off the mic. Heart racing.)

Scene 7: Cyber Café – Downtown The City (Kamau and Zaina host a livestream titled: "#NotMyPresident – Voices from the Underside.")

KAMAU: They want to tax every breath, then say we're lazy. Yet, they steal and call it strategy.

ZAINA: They bury our heroes in hashtags. But we will not mourn in silence.

(Wema, the diaspora activist, dials in.)

WEMA: We've archived all financial leaks. If we disappear—release it. The world must know.

(Lights dim. Ghost appears on a high balcony, watching over the city.)

GHOST: When kings dine in lies, truth becomes the last supper.

(Curtain closes on ACT II.)

ACT III: The Fire Within

Scene 1: Mama Njeri's Kiosk – Night (The kiosk is lit by a kerosene lamp. Zaina addresses a small group of youth: teachers, bodaboda riders, students. Kamau stands nearby, holding a placard that reads "We Deserve Better.")

ZAINA: We've marched in silence. We've prayed in whispers. Tonight, we roar.

YOUTH 1: They've started freezing our accounts.

YOUTH 2: My cousin disappeared yesterday. Last seen tweeting about budget corruption.

KAMAU: Then we know we're close. Power panics when truth echoes.

MAMA NJERI: (feeding them tea and mandazi) Remember, change doesn't come from comfort. It grows from the stomach of struggle.

Scene 2: Social Media Control Room – Interior Ministry (Agents monitor trending hashtags. A board reads: "THREATS: #MustResign, #HustlersOnFire, #JusticeForOtieno.")

AGENT 1: Twitter's burning.

AGENT 2: The President's digital militia wants to start bots. Flood the timeline with food giveaways.

SUPERVISOR: Forget giveaways. Cut the net. We're shutting down TikTok at midnight.

Scene 3: Apartment – Wema's Livestream (Diaspora) (Wema is flanked by two screens showing protest footage and leaked documents.)

WEMA: To my fellow Rukangans: if I vanish, I left you evidence. To our leaders: you've buried the youth in debt, in prisons, and now you fear their hashtags?

(She plays an audio clip of a State House official planning a media blackmail strategy.)

Scene 4: Street Protest – Day (Kamau and Zaina lead a protest. Chants echo: "Haki Yetu! Haki Yetu!" Police line the streets. Muli watches, frozen.)

PROTESTOR: Zaina! The police are loading their rifles.

ZAINA: (stepping forward) Let them. We came unarmed but loud. That's our weapon.

(Muli steps forward, lowering his rifle.)

MULI: I swore to serve. Not to kill my conscience.

(Other junior officers follow suit. Chaos erupts. Tear gas. Gunshots. Silence.)

Scene 5: Makeshift Morgue – Basement of a Church (Mama Njeri washes Zaina's lifeless face.

Kamau is seated, shaking. Ghost appears.)

MAMA NJERI: She marched with hope. Now she lies here.

GHOST: Hope never dies. It reincarnates in those left behind.

Scene 6: National Broadcast – Wendo’s Last Report (Wendo hacks the national TV feed. She’s in a small room with backup generators.)

WENDO: Tonight, I break protocol. They assassinated Zaina. They poisoned our hospitals. They auctioned your future. But you’re not helpless. You’re a nation.

(Clips roll showing crowds chanting: “President Must Go.”)

Scene 7: Parliament in Session (The opposition leader, once a government sympathizer, speaks to a divided house.)

OPPOSITION LEADER: We joined hands with power to stabilize. But we ended up enabling tyranny. Today, we defect back to the people.

IMBA: Traitor! This will break the republic.

OPPOSITION LEADER: No. It might just rebuild it.

Scene 8: Bedroom – Kamau in hiding (Kamau types on a laptop. He’s scarred, shaken, but eyes burning with resolve.)

KAMAU: Zaina died with courage. I live with rage. I will run. I will speak. I will rise. They wanted fear. We'll give them fire.

(He clicks "upload" on a manifesto titled "The People's Charter.")

Scene 9: Ghost Realm – A misty, otherworldly space (Zaina, Otieno, Mwikali, and other fallen activists walk in silence. They pass a torch among themselves. Ghost stands solemn.)

GHOST: When fire meets silence, it births dawn.

(They pass the torch toward the audience.)

(Curtain closes on ACT III.)

ACT IV: The Masks Fall

Location: Parliament, Streets, Social Media, Churches, Courtrooms

Scene 1: Parliament Chambers – Afternoon (The chamber is tense. Cameras live-stream everything. MPs murmur. One backbencher stands with passion.)

BACKBENCHER MP: Mr. Speaker, we cannot close our eyes while the country burns. Our people are bleeding in the streets! This is not governance—this is a betrayal. This House has become a club of elite merchants and agents of death!

(The Speaker hammers the gavel. Commotion.)

Scene 2: Livestream Broadcast (Muli appears on screen from an undisclosed location. His face is tired but resolute. Behind him, a faded Rukanga flag.)

MULI: I was once a police officer. Then I was given an order—to shoot unarmed protesters. I refused. I was fired. But today, I speak for those denied a voice. For those whose stories end in silence, whose justice was buried with their bodies.

(The stream is shared thousands of times. Hashtags trend.)

Scene 3: Public Rally – Capital City (President Njatha addresses a crowd from a well-guarded podium. Behind him, flags of foreign nations flutter.)

PRESIDENT Njatha: We are thankful for peace. We have friends from abroad, ready to invest and support our development agenda.

(A section of the crowd begins to boo. Then chant.)

CROWD: Go back home! Go back home!

(Security forces tense up. Journalists record. The president hesitates, then forces a smile.)

Scene 4: The Streets – Chaos and Defiance (A massive protest. Journalists with press jackets are filming. Suddenly, teargas canisters fly through the air. Screams erupt.)

WENDO (journalist): They're gassing us! We're press! We have credentials!

(The camera tumbles. Smoke engulfs the screen. Protesters run. Some duck into a nearby church. Inside, pews are turned into shields. People pray. Children cry.)

PRIEST (shouting): This is a house of God! Do not fire—

(A teargas canister smashes through a stained-glass window. Chaos.)

Scene 5: Across the Nation – Pulpits of Rebellion (Churches nationwide. Different denominations. Pulpits become platforms of defiance. Religious leaders rise.)

BISHOP WANJI: From today, no politician shall speak in our churches. We will not be stained by their silence. Their blood deals. Their greed.

IMAM YUSUF: Our mosques will not host those who use religion to clean their crimes.

PASTOR NJOO: Let the faithful rise. Let us shelter the hunted. Heal the wounded. The temple is for truth.

Scene 6: Legal Rebellion (Office of the Law Society of the Republic. Lawyers working late. Printing documents. Phones ringing.)

LAWYER: We've submitted the petition to the Continental Court of Human and Peoples' Rights. We're also reaching out to UN rapporteurs. This is beyond politics—it's human survival.

YOUNG ADVOCATE: We'll represent anyone arrested unjustly. Pro bono. We're the last shield.

Scene 7: Opposition Disruption (An opposition rally. Peaceful. Kamau on stage. Suddenly, chaos as plainclothes goons arrive, hurling stones, shouting.)

GOON: You're traitors! You want to bring down the country!

(The crowd disperses. Wendo gets footage of police escorting goons away, not arresting them.)

WENDO: You see that? They were protected. Not punished.

Scene 8: Inside Government – Cracks in the Machine (President Njatha fires several cabinet secretaries in a sudden reshuffle. Cameras capture sullen faces. Days later, one appears on a news special.)

FORMER CABINET SECRETARY: I have nothing to lose now. The government was laundering money through fake NGOs. We were forced to sign documents we never read. When I said no—they started surveillance. And now they've thrown me out.

SCENE 9: Digital Frontlines (Wema and a team of digital warriors analyze facial recognition footage. They identify the goons. Publish details. Citizens begin calling them out online and offline.)

WEMA: They can buy the media. But they can't buy our memory.

SCENE 10: Kamau – At the People's Court (Kamau now speaks to a massive crowd. Drone footage captures the swell. He reads names of the disappeared.)

KAMAU: We remember them. We speak for them. We won't stop until this nation stands, clean and proud.

CITIZEN CHORUS: (chanting in rhythm) Justice delayed is not justice denied!

(Lights dim. Ghost walks through the crowd, smiling.)

GHOST: Truth walks taller now. The masks have fallen. And the storm... has found its voice.

(Curtain falls.)

ACT V: Dawn in the Republic

Scene 1: Village Square – Morning (A new day. Clean air. Children play. Mama Njeri cooks. A mural of Zaina is painted on a wall. Kamau steps onto a wooden stage with a microphone.)

KAMAU: Years ago, this square was silent. Fear ruled. We whispered. Today, we speak. Loud. Proud. Because we remember.

(Crowd cheers. Photographs of fallen heroes hang around.)

Scene 2: Parliament Chambers – Transitional Council (New MPs, many young, fill the seats. Kamau sits among them. Wema appears virtually. Muli stands as Chief Ethics Officer. Mama Njeri sits in the gallery.)

SPEAKER: Motion 01: Accountability Act. Full audit of all state dealings in the last twenty years.

MP 1: Let the ghosts of corruption be dragged into the light.

MP 2: And let those who bled for truth be honored—not just in song, but in systems.

Scene 3: Courtroom – Day (Hon. Imba sits in the dock. The judge is stern. The court is full. Media present.)

JUDGE: For orchestrating abductions, looting public funds, and weaponizing state power, this court sentences you to life imprisonment with full asset forfeiture.

IMBA: (defiant) I built this country.

KAMAU: (standing) No, sir. You stole it. We're here to build it.

Scene 4: University Campus – Afternoon (Kamau lectures a political ethics class. Students debate justice, reform, and memory. Posters read: "Education for All.")

KAMAU: Democracy is not a building. It's a habit. Guard it. Question it. Feed it.

STUDENT: Sir, will they try again? The corrupt?

KAMAU: Yes. But this time, we're watching. Together.

Scene 5: Mama Njeri's Kiosk – Sunset (The kiosk is refurbished. More vibrant. A young girl helps Mama Njeri serve tea. She wears a T-shirt with Zaina's face.)

MAMA NJERI: (quietly) We lost many. But we gained a nation.

Scene 6: International News Broadcast (A Rukangan peacekeeping team helps mediate in a foreign conflict. Kamau addresses the UN.)

KAMAU: We know what state failure looks like. We survived it. We rebuilt. Now we offer hope. Not perfection. But courage.

Scene 7: Hill Overlooking the Town – Evening (Ghost stands, watching the town. Now, it glows. Zaina joins.)

All: We created our own path .We exposed them one by one. We told stories. We created jobs.
We ran for office. We lost. Then we won on ballot.

And we never forgot them. Otieno. Mwikali. Yusuf. They walk with us still.

GHOST: The silence is gone.

ZAINA: Replaced by song. By memory. By people.

(Ghost walks through the crowd. No longer cloaked. Dressed in light. The future.)

GHOST: We walk no more. They walk for us.

Ghost: (softly) Tell our story. Not just how we died. But why We lived.

(Lights fade. Choir hums “Tutaonana Baadaye” softly. Final spotlight on the mural of Zaina, as children play beneath it.)

(Blackout. Curtain falls.)