

Tanui J. Nelly

Professor Mike Wright

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### A Day of Love and Celebration

On a radiant summer day, amidst the mind-calming swaying and blossoms of the savanna trees and grasslands, and the melody of the wild pretty birds, my cousin's wedding unfolded. It was a day that she had been waiting for eagerly. I had travelled here over a week before the very day. I was going to miss Ohio, but the tranquillity of the savanna was a different thing. I had to be there. We had helped her prepare adequately for this day, from planning, financing, choosing songs to be played and all that could be necessary that day. It was a celebration to be woven into the fabric of our shared memories.

As the day dawned on us, the sub-Saharan sky was painted with hues of pink and gold, casting a soft glow over the landscape. Excitement was all over the face of everyone. The venue was a total bliss. Before the bustling of the day began, I found myself standing at the centre of the venue, my pulse rate increasing with anticipation. The sun blessed the day with a promise of new beginnings, an absolute day worth to remember. It was clear that it was going to be a day filled with love, laughter, and memory-making.

My focus turned to the bride. She emerged from the depths of her makeup room wearing a gown as sooth as silk. The gown was embedded with pearl decorations, complimenting her beautiful look. On her head, she wore a silver crown, with a veil that trailed the hem of her gown. She moved with grace and poise, as if she was a goddess of love. She smiled and waved at everyone, her eyes were filled with anticipation and joy. We quickly

boarded the limousine to church. I had received a call a few minutes before that, informing us that the bridegroom and his family had already arrived at church, and the priest was ready to conduct the wedding ceremony. Passing through the local town, everyone was waving at the convoy. I couldn't help but think about how love brings people together. I even started contemplating having my vows renewed the following year.

Upon arriving at the church, we were received by songs and ululations. Soon afterwards, the mass started. The priest was adorned in his colourful vestments, posing a beacon of spiritual guidance. With the choir leading in the hymns, the mass proceeded well with praises and prayers for love. The couple knelt before the altar to receive the sacrament of matrimony, their hearts united in love and commitment. They exchanged vows before God and the congregation, with their voices trembling with emotion. They pledged a lifelong of devotion and fidelity. With each exchange of rings and the solemn blessing of the priest, their union was consecrated in the eyes of God and the Church, a bond that would endure through the trials and triumphs of life, as it is commonly said, till death do us part. The newlyweds emerged from the church, holding hands together, a symbol of love and unity. The congregation applauded them, we were happy that we had made a connection to another family, enlarging our own in doing so. I was glad that the first part of the day was a success. At the end of it all, love prevailed, and the promise of a lifetime of happiness and devotion shone bright as the morning sun.

It was in the evening, and the reception was the next order of the day. A colourful reception had been setup under the acacia trees with huge canopies. A traditional Kalenjin dance group was performing at the time we arrived there. The rich African culture dominated the air. This was not just a wedding reception; it was a celebration of love, unity, and the rich cultural heritage that defined us as a people. Soon enough, I was carried away by a wave of anticipation and excitement. The bride and the bridegroom arrived in a jubilant procession,

they had switched from the rather formal to floral cultural attires, an embodiment African culture. The couple was greeted with cheers and applause from family and friends. The air was filled with the tantalizing aroma of East African delicacies, each dish a celebration of the region's rich culinary heritage. There were plenty of dishes like mursik, traditional sour milk native to the Kalenjin. Moreover, we had marinated grilled goat meat, served alongside traditional Kalenjin side dishes such as isaget (spider weed plant) and isojek (black night shade vegetables) to fragrant pilau rice infused with aromatic spices of masala and the Zanzibar cloves. Every bite was a journey through the flavours of our blessed homeland. It really felt good to be back home, making memories again.

Now came time for music and dance, to end the day. Traditional dances from the region came to life, the kikuyu with their graceful movements, Maasai and Samburu dancers surprised us with their high leaps, and the Kalenjin amazed us with their warrior dances, holding spears and shields. As I watched each group dance, I couldn't help but feel a sense of awe and admiration for their skill and artistry. My heart filled with a sense of belonging and connection. In that moment, I felt truly alive surrounded by loved ones and immersed in the rich African culture. I knew that this celebration of music and dance would forever hold a special place in my heart.

In conclusion, my cousin's wedding was full of love, laughter and celebration. It left a permanent mark on my heart. The serene beauty of the savanna at dawn to the vibrant energy of the wedding reception, each moment of that ceremonious day had a deep meaning to me. As the day came to a close, I couldn't help but feel grateful for the memories we had created together. Indeed, the day proved that there is power in love, and the beauty of tradition reminded me that I should always cherish every moment of my life.