



# Ameeru A'mukaka

## Grandma's bananas

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Akalima k'amukaka kabya kiwene ndeke. Imuli omuhemba, obulho, haima n'omuhogo. Aliriryo ibwa ekikasinga w'ameero, othusukali othwerire. Ibwa mukaka nomwanabya awithe abitsikulhu banene, ingye inganasi omwambitha kuningye mwanzibwa wiwe. Inyakambirikira ewiwe kandi inyakambwira okwa thupitha thwiwe. Kyonga hali embitha nguma isialy'athambwira: ameeru iwe ngakereraya wahayi.

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Grandma's garden was wonderful, full of sorghum, millet, and cassava. But best of all were the bananas. Although Grandma had many grandchildren, I secretly knew that I was her favourite. She invited me often to her house. She also told me little secrets. But there was one secret she did not share with me: where she ripened bananas.



Neryo kiro kighuma munhangira ekithiri kiwe ikine okwathwisi okwabuthala. Nanabya namamubulia indi ibwa ekithiri nikyaki mukaka? Inyakasubamu, “eyo nimbitha yaghe”. Hakuhi n’ekithiri habya ihane amababi awa mukaka abya inyanemubindulikania. Neryo namayibulya, “ibwa amababi aya niaki mbwino, mukaka?” Mukaka inyakwama ky’ambwira ati, “eyo nimbitha yayi”.

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One day I saw a big straw basket placed in the sun outside Grandma’s house. When I asked what it was for, the only answer I got was, “It’s my magic basket.” Next to the basket, there were several banana leaves that Grandma turned from time to time. I was curious. “What are the leaves for, Grandma?” I asked. The only answer I got was, “They are my magic leaves.”



Mukyabya ekyeriswekya ingathalangira mukaka, amasukali, n'amababi kandi n'ekithiri eribihira hauma. Neryo mukaka mwan'yithibithako athi ngaghende eyiri mama. "Mukaka, kyisi kyisi leka ngalhangire kuwukathekatheka nerithalikirira amasukali..." Iwe mwana, leka erinzathisya, ghenda eyiri mama waghu nkokunabirikubwira. Mukaka amabya abirihathikana, neryo munakulika namaghenda.

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It was so interesting watching Grandma, the bananas, the banana leaves and the big straw basket. But Grandma sent me off to my mother on an errand. "Grandma, please, let me watch as you prepare..." "Don't be stubborn, child, do as you are told," she insisted. I took off running.



Nabere ingasubulha namasangana mukaka inyanikere okwabuthalha kyonga ekithiri, namasukali haima namababi isibikiriho. Namabulya, “ibwa mukaka ekithiri, namasukali n’amababi... byayirehayi? Mukaka mwakwama kyasubamu, “esyo nimbitha syayi”. Neryo munayibulhabulha!

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When I returned, Grandma was sitting outside but with neither the basket nor the bananas. “Grandma, where is the basket, where are all the bananas, and where...” But the only answer I got was, “They are in my magic place.” It was so disappointing!





Habere hahwa biro bibiri, mukaka mwanyithuma eriyenda omusokolho wiwe w'ekathi. Nabere ingakingulha olhuyi neryo munowa akabeho k'amasukali awerire omwakathi neryo namalhangira ekithiri ky'amukaka ikinaswikire kwakabbulangiti. Neryo namasumba erilebererya omw'akithiri. Ahaaa... neryo namowa akibehe ky'ameeru.

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Two days later, Grandma sent me to fetch her walking stick from her bedroom. As soon as I opened the door, I was welcomed by the strong smell of ripening bananas. In the inner room was grandma's big magic straw basket. It was well hidden by an old blanket. I lifted it and sniffed that glorious smell.



Neryo namowa omulenge w'amukaka amabirikira, "ukakolhaki kawamasibayo, ndethere omutso waghi lhuba". Neryo namanguhya omutso w'amukaka. "Ukabehererayaki kwawamayisekererya?" mukaka mwabulya. Neryo namamina indi mukaka mwalhangira inganemuseka ngokunamabirifumbula embitha yiwe.

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Grandma's voice startled me when she called, "What are you doing? Hurry up and bring me the stick." I hurried out with her walking stick. "What are you smiling about?" Grandma asked. Her question made me realise that I was still smiling at the discovery of her magic place.



Ekindi kiro mukaka abere abiryasa erisalebya mama, neryo munayiwusa ewiwe namayalebya omw'akithiri kiwe. Namalhangira mw'ebisaki ebyerire. Namakuthulha kw'alighuma, neryo namabisalyo omwalhukyimba. Neryo namaghenda eyihya omwabalazi ekanyuma. Namalirya lhubalhuba, umhhh obusihe bunene.

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The following day when grandma came to visit my mother, I rushed to her house to check the bananas once more. There was a bunch of very ripe ones. I picked one and hid it in my dress. After covering the basket again, I went behind the house and quickly ate it. It was the sweetest banana I had ever tasted.





Ekindi Kiro, mukaka abere inyane omwakalima kiwe, neryo munanyonya, nerisoba erithasiayalebya omwa kithiri ky'amukaka. Namasangana awosi inyabiryera. Namalhusiako awali ng'ani, neryo munahirawo omw'alhukimba. Neryo nkanimusoba, munowa mukaka akakoholha. Namakwama kukyeribisa amasukali womwakiteteya, neryo namalhaba okumukaka.

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The following day, when grandma was in the garden picking vegetables, I sneaked in and peered at the bananas. Nearly all were ripe. I couldn't help taking a bunch of four. As I tiptoed towards the door, I heard grandma coughing outside. I just managed to hide the bananas under my dress and walked past her.



Ekindi kiro, kyabya kiro ky'akathale. Mukaka mwabuka omwangyakyakya akayaghulya ameru haima n'omuhogo omwakathale. Mungathanguha eriyamulebya, kyonga isinangayitsunga erithindiyamulebya nganemuthalengekania okwa masukali.

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The following day was market day. Grandma woke up early. She always took ripe bananas and cassava to sell at the market. I did not hurry to visit her that day. But I could not avoid her for long.



Neryo ibwa omwigholhogholho, mama, n'athatha, haima n'amukaka mubambirikira. Neryo munaminye ekikaleka ibambirikira. Mubanyikalya neerinyikanirya. Nabere nayawotsera, munathwamu indi sinangathasiba okumukaka, kutse mama rundi thatha, rundi mundu wosi wosi.

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Later that evening I was called by my mother and father, and Grandma. I knew why. That night as I lay down to sleep, I knew I could never steal again, not from grandma, not from my parents, and certainly not from anyone else.





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