



# THE ENGAGEMENT

WHAT  
WILL IT  
TAKE TO  
SEPARATE  
THEM?

K. KIMUYU

# **THE ENGAGEMENT**

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## PROEM

I know your life is vast and there are things you dream and yearn for. I hope you find reflections of yourself in this book. I hope you enjoy *The Engagement* as much as I enjoyed penning it.

To my heroes: My Dad, Julius Kimuyu and my Mom,  
Hannah Njeri.

To my editor Shiku Ngigi. Sometimes you get lucky. I did.

To my readers who validate my pen week after week on  
Kisauti.

The path that is available to us is to be human, to do art,  
and to fly far higher than we've been taught is possible. –

Seth Godin



## CHAPTER 1

**HE WAS** a man in his mid-thirties and at the peak of his career, with a beautiful fiancée to garnish the entire look, yet he had an aspect of loneliness about him. He stabbed his cigarette on the rim of the iron bar at the balcony and threw the butt in the waste bucket and heaved a sigh. It was almost dusk at the Sand Resort in Mombasa. The sun was going down creating that spectacular, alluring paste that resembled Pablo Picasso playing with a brush.

"Honey, aren't you going to join us?"

"I will be there in a moment."

"What is more important out here than your own engagement party?"

He stared at the ocean. The waves were rising in huge mountains and crashing into each other like gladiators in the colosseum. In the far distance a little boy was running with his kite but the wind was too strong and it snatched

it away and the little boy ran after it and disappeared into the horizon.

"The sunset. Don't you think it's beautiful?"

Lily moved from the door to where her fiancée was.

"More beautiful than your wife?"

She was in a purple evening gown with an empire waist that fell from her tiny waist onto her wide hips like a bell, giving her a fairy tale, princess look. It was strapless, revealing her soft shoulders and collarbones. Collarbones that were moody. Sometimes they appeared to be soft and delicate, other times they appeared to be as sharp as an axe.

Resting on the apex of her shoulders was a soft oval face with spaced out eyes, a duchess nose and full lips. She had an uncanny look to her. She looked like a woman who could pass as a business mogul and a woman who could pose on the cover of a lingerie magazine as a spicy mistress.

"Come," she took his hand. "The guests are getting worried, they want to see you hand-in-hand with your wife."

"Wife to be." He muttered under his breath.

## CHAPTER 2

OYUNGA SCANNED the ballroom. It was all an act. It was a big movie scene and every character had their notes. The guests holding their martinis and neat whisky's chattering. Women in their short dresses. Some married, others there to make sure their husbands didn't stray. Bachelors in sharp suits and bespoke watches darting their eyes around, looking for something to warm their beds for the night. Waitresses arching their backs at the point of breaking them and flirting with faces bright with smiles, perhaps to woe the young bachelors or perhaps to get better tips.

"Oyunga, where have you been, everybody is waiting for the man of the moment."

Arigula flashed a smile and punched his friend on the arm with a soft fist.

"You've decided to leave bachelorhood, eh? I'll tell you this, it better be something your heart wants because this is no bed of roses, my man."

Arigula's wife was now craning her neck wondering where her husband had gone too. A short woman whose height was only equaled by her temper, which was even shorter.

"I think you've got bigger fish to fry than the end of my bachelorhood, my guy." Oyunga chirped as the tiny little thing tottered to where they were and nudged Arigula's arm.

"I was worried sick," she barked. "Don't do that again," she continued as if scolding a wayward child.

She was not completely at fault, she had reason to worry. Arigula had; had his fair share of infidelities in Nairobi and they were now in Mombasa. The natives called it Mombasa raha. Girls in tiny garments that made them look more naked than dressed were in plenty and she had a mind to make sure her husband was not sampling anything that wasn't home cooked.

"Darling, I'm here beside you where I have always been." Arigula the smooth talker said.

"Sorry for budging in like this, I'm sure you understand that a woman in love is a dangerous thing?"

"It's okay June, a woman in love is a beautiful thing."

"Congratulations to both you and Lily, you make a damn sweet couple. If it got any sweeter, I'd have diabetes." Arigula jumped in and his wife swatted his arm. "Stop it!" She whispered but both Oyunga and Lily had heard and Arigula lowered his head embarrassed.

"Thank you Arigula," Lily said with a half-smile and tapped him on the shoulder to save face.

"Nice meeting you," June said, while pulling her husband away by the arm like an errant child.

## CHAPTER 3

“OH MY God! Oh my God!”

Rachel penguin-ran in her Burj Khalifa high heels and tight yellow clubby dress towards Lily and embraced her tightly, almost breaking her frame.

“I can’t believe you’re getting married. She pulled her away from Oyunga and held both of Lily’s hands on hers and brushed her eyes over her as if seeing her for the first time, then broke out again, this time her feet doing a small jig as if she was pressed to pee. “Oh my God! Oh my God!”

Lily went the entire nine yards, stretching her arm out almost dislocating her shoulder to flaunt her engagement bling which sparkled like a shooting star. “Eighteen carat diamond. He got it for me in Dubai.” Of course the story kept being tweaked depending on who she was talking to.

"Oyunga you lucky, lucky son of a gun. Ulijinyakulia rangi ya thao, top layer eh?" Rachel chortled in a *coastish* accent. "Huyu hapa hurulaini."

Oyunga blushed. "Asante."

"Oh my God! I forgot. Meet my other Friend, Marion, she's in advertising. Lily, this is Marion, Marion—Lily. Oyunga this is Marion. Marion—Oyunga." If at that moment you told Rachel that, that introduction would be Marion's and Oyunga's undoing, she would have smacked you in the face with a brick and called you crazy.

Marion stood awestricken by her friend's energy, she had never quite gotten used to it. She lifted her eyes shyly and they locked with Oyunga's and she felt as if his brown eyes were searing right through her, unbuttoning her soul. She froze momentarily, the magnetic spark making her tipsy. She steadied herself and looked away, reminding herself that he was an engaged man, a man who was out of bounds. She gave both of them a soft hug and knew she couldn't hang around, scared of what would happen if the spark gripped her again.

"Congratulations you two, it is a pleasure. Rachel has told me a lot about you and I'm glad she was not exaggerating on the picture-perfect bit."

"Thank you," Lily said her face impassive, as if she were seated in a casino playing poker. Oyunga was glad that Lily was the one who responded. He felt that if he was the one who did, he would have gone an extra mile and added a, "You look quite dashing yourself," on top of the thank you. She did look dashing. She was in a white, off-shoulder skater dress, black heels which she complemented with a pearl necklace and cream chandelier earrings. She was a chupalla away from looking like Lupita Nyong'o. Her hair was trimmed short and she had an angelic face. The kind of face that is attractive regardless of whether it is happy or experiencing sorrow.

"I will stretch my legs and let the couple enjoy itself. Au revoir!" And damn were they beautiful legs. Long and sexy. Flowing on and on like a river of chocolate.



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Salut!

KK

## About the Author

Kariuki Kimuyu is a writer based in Nairobi who also moonlights as a media consultant. He graduated from Strathmore with a bachelor degree in management science (because he had to major in something). He has tried his hand in advertising, working in media for over three years but soon quit, bored by the routine aspect of it. He hopes that his writing gains enough notoriety that his parents are able to explain to their friends what their son does for a living. He also hopes that his parents will stop asking him, 'when he will bring someone home.'

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