

Kituoni

Mayai yaliyochemshwa, ubuyu, kava za simu, crips za muhogo. Maji ya kunwya, pepsi, mirinda nyeusi. Hapa Kituoni Kuna vitu vingi jikoni Supu ya pweza na kachori Dumbikiza iingize mdomoni Bila pili pili hainogi Kusanya nguvu maana Mtapita vichochoroni na Mtakwama nyuma ya malori Hakikisha pochi na simu Umevishika vizuri mkononi Toa hela yako na vitu vya maana Ili zisikae mfukoni Ukishuka hakikisha hujachafuliwa Na ujue wapi unapoenda kama unaweza Kuenda chooni, sisi wadada tunahitaji Akili za kijanja, sisi sio mablaza Ukibanwa unatakiwa kunyamaza Kweli, ukibanwa ata kama ni ile mbaya Unatakiwa kunyamaza Kweli, hiyo mmeona imekaa sawa? hard boiled eggs, sugary baobab seeds, phone covers, cassava crips, bottled water, soda. here is the bus stop, take your pick of delicacies, there is octopus soup, potato balls, dip it, relish it, add some chilli, you won't regret it. energy, you'll need it, for you are about to embark on a journey of dirt roads, traffic jams, long haul trucks packed in a line like a trail of ants. make sure you're holding your purse and phone tight when you get off make sure you've not been dirtied there are stories like that, of skirts being ruined, no discrimination whether you are child or matured, another thing, when you get off make sure you know where you can go for some relief, we ladies must know all the hidden places we can seek, we not men, we can not empty out behind a tree, a woman must know the ways to fold, contort herself, defy nature, deny nature, she must know how to hold herself in, even if not okay hold yourself in.

Kituoni: (English: Bus Stop)

This poem is inspired by the bustling activities of the bus stop across Tanzania. Bus transport often takes a while to arrive and is unreliable due to large numbers and the lack of regimented schedules and public infrastructure. As such, bus stops are often spaces where people wait for extended periods of time. The poem urges the passenger to take notice of their surroundings and the precautions that women have to take often when in transit. One of the precautions is with regards to public toilets, women are not able to 'relieve' themselves publicly in the ways that many men do. The poem speaks to these differences in public space and the mitigating measures that women can - and often do - take.

Credit: Alma Simba - aa noun