

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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The Lost Boys of Sudan

by
Lonnie Carter

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CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

A CHORUS OF CATTLE, wanting to be herded, wanting to be heard
with AYOUN, the prima inter pares

The BOYS of the Dinka Tribe, a Chorus

A.I. JOSH, a Dinka Boy

T-MAC SAM, a Dinka Boy

K-GAR OLLIE, a Dinka Boy

TWELVE, a wizened twelve year old warlord

Christian Warlord

Muslim Warlord

Guerrilla

Crazed Boy Radio Operator

COPERNICUS PTOLEMY PATRICK, the Head Master at Camp Kakuma

A CHORUS of ELDERS

MIRIAM MAKER, formerly of the Southern Sudanese Parliament,
administrator of Camp Kakuma

CRISPUS ATTUCKS, a driver in Fargo, North Dakota

CLAYTON POWELL, works for Social Reach

MOIRA MIDNIGHT, Student Placement Counselor

KOOKOOROOKU, a Dinka Boy

RUMMY, an American High School student

MOLLY MIDNIGHT, high school student and daughter of MOIRA MIDNIGHT

BASKETBALL COACH

PLACE

The Sudan and points in all directions including Fargo, North Dakota

TIME

Sadly, The Eternal Present

SCENE ONE

(Our CHORUS, a Herd of Cattle wanting to be herded,
wanting to be heard)

CHORUS OF CATTLE

We are the Cattle of the Sudan

We are proud four-footed creatures

Dinka Boys of Dinka tribe tend our herds

where and all they can

They are students, we are teachers

This is our school, out in this bush

Where boys learn to be men

We are the rule, here in this bush

For boys twelve, even eight and ten

At night ourselves are sides, our sides are pillows

We cattle rest a little in the dark, under weeping willows

We hear the sound of insects whirring, lions purring,

hyenas laughing at us loudly

We're all a little frightened, in and out of sleep,
but still we're feeling, feeling proudly
At dawn we move - they move us - after we've moved them awake
We scatter birds, all types of fowl, even wildebeests
We look out for the cheetahs, eyeing us, so many feasts
We have our favorite faves, we cannot hide that
These boys, each and every one,
Is precious to us
These three called A.I., T-Mac, K-Gar
We put them forth as best; it isn't fair
Perhaps, but each one, lovely, always tries
To soothe our limbs and horns and stroke each hide
And make us feel like we're the only one
A.I. Josh, T-Mac Samuel, K-Gar Olliver

(A.I. JOSH, discovered with his favorite cow, Ayoun)

A.I. JOSH
Ayoun, my precious cow. You know today I am a man
But how I know this when I can barely shave
I've passed this dozen years, I know I can
Take care of you
And now we're out here in this bush alone
With twenty other boys and cows who're theirs

We're all, each tested, each is on his own
We're not alone, we're each of us in pairs
We face the days, the nights, we're joined as one
Ayoun, Ayoun, together we aren't none.

(A.I. JOSH falls asleep at the edge of his village
on the side of AYOUN)

T-MAC SAM

I don't want to
I don't want to

I won't go into the bush

I don't want to grow up

as they say I must

I don't care about cows

Why don't they walk on their back legs as I do

In all the generations they never heard a boy about to be a man

Once utter a complaint about going to the Bush?

Hooray for them!

I set the record

Yes, I love our cows, but they will understand

Neither of us, my personal cow or me, if we stay here,

will be the slightest bit disappointed

The Bush be damned!

(K-GAR OLLIE, with his mother)

K-GAR OLLIE

Mother, I'm off to the Bush

Mother, how can you hold me back

Mother, know I am duty-bound

I can't stay here forever, Ma

You should be glad I'm doing what boys must do

I would never do a thing to hurt you

I would never leave you alone - you'll be alright

Yes, I have my cow -

Mother, now I'm off to the Bush

Mother, how can you hold me back.

(The CHORUS OF CATTLE appears)

CHORUS OF CATTLE

We have a premonition - we see our boys so bled-dead-tired

sleep-walking day after day

They cannot move another foot

their arms have fallen away

The Boys the Dinka Boys find us water, keep us safe

But safety's less and less these days, alas

Men are getting angry and anger doesn't pass

All of them are warriors, who worship different gods

The ones of North fight ones of South

A battle scream pours from each mouth

Children everywhere they threaten

We cows and bulls are frightened

we need some gentle pettin'

Everyone's got bad gripes and awful fears

No one says, 'I'm sorry', babies are in tears

Now what's the word we're looking for

when there is civil war

What will happen to us

if these boys no longer tend us?

(A.I. Josh asleep on the side of Ayoun. His FATHER approaches and speaks over HIM)

FATHER

My son, I have been given a choice

The rebels say you have betrayed them to the government

They say I must kill you or they will kill our entire family

They will not kill you

They say I must do the deed

kill my son

and break the cycle of violence

I do not understand how this breaks the cycle

(HE pulls a knife. HE hesitates and falls.

His falling wakes the A.I.JOSH)

A.I. JOSH

Father -

(A wizened twelve year old, flanked by two young women
in paratrooper uniforms, appears)

Wizened Twelve Year Old

I am Twelve, here to protect you

Just Twelve years old but this gun makes me bold

He was about to kill you, little one

He had his orders, and not with a gun

But with this knife he would have slit your throat

As if you were some sacrificial goat

A.I.JOSH

My father wouldn't raise his hand to me

He's raising me to head the family

TWELVE

Little Man

Slit your father's throat.

He's now the sacrificial goat.

A.I. JOSH

No. He cannot die.

TWELVE

No matter, the deed is done

You told the government, on the run

That Twelve would be moving south

Now Twelve's here to smash your mouth

First Female Bodyguard
But Twelve Year Old Dear Leader, we were moving north

A.I. JOSH
I never spoke to anyone.

Second Female Bodyguard
Dear Leader, this isn't the one who came forth.

TWELVE
What -

A.I. JOSH
Now I'm the father, no longer the son. What are you going to do?

TWELVE
Teach you a bloody lesson
Torch your huts
Waste your herds
Kill your girls
Emasculate your boys
Leave your skeletons for somebody's toys
Leave your parents for vulture birds
Blow your village all to bits
We are the Revolution
The Twelve Year Old Solution.

(To his Bodyguards)

Right, my honies?, you my sisterly twins?

Let's hear it for Twelve!
Twelve wins! Twelve wins! Twelve wins!

First Bodyguard

Twelve loses.

Second Bodyguard

We are the Revolution.

(Explosion. Firestorm. Conflagration of village.

Enter on steed, a Christian warlord. Speaks to T-Mac Sam)

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

This village is being swept of Muslim scum

We all know where they come from

T-MAC SAM

I want no part of your god or his fire

I understand nothing of your desire

(Suddenly the Elephant RAMPAGE has found THEM.

Gunshots. T-MAC and the CHRISTIAN WARLORD are swept along.

K-GAR OLLIE sees someone seize his Mother.)

K-GAR OLLIE

Get away from her

you - I don't care who you are

Keep away from my Mother

(We see a man about to rape K-GAR OLLIE'S MOTHER
when suddenly another man rides in on a camel and beheads the
first man. A Muslim Warlord appears
on his camel, the dangling head in its mouth.)

(The Christian Warlord crawls onstage)

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

Muslim Scum.

MUSLIM WARLORD

Christian Swine.

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

Muslim Toad

MUSLIM WARLORD

Christian Slug

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

Muslim Bug.

MUSLIM WARLORD

Christian toad.

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

Muslim Mine

K-GAR OLLIE moves to bring CHRISTIAN WARLORD water.

MUSLIM WARLORD

I will gladly die for GoodGodGodGood

CHRISTIAN WARLORD

This is Blasphemy
Mortal Sin.
Six thousand times and more
You'll rot in Hell
There's more war in store.

MUSLIM WARLORD

I know you, Christian Warlord.

Leave our soil
Or we'll boil you
Infidel, For food.
In sixty dollar a barrel oil crude.

K-GAR OLLIE

I don't want either of you

Neither of your cutting ways

You won't assault me nor my mother

(K-GAR OLLIE's MOTHER appears)

MOTHER

We'll fight you and fight you,

 'til there's no other of you

If you know what's good for you

 You'll climb upon your camel's hump

 And rumped together, from this trouble you'll bump

MUSLIM WARLORD & CHRISTIAN WARLORD

Climb, rump, bump together? - he's an infidel!

K-GAR OLLIE

Mother, now's our chance

Leave these cutters, slashers, killers of each other

(K-GAR OLLIE and MOTHER make their escape.

The CHORUS OF CATTLE appears)

THE CHORUS OF CATTLE

As young as seven, old as seventeen

Are forced to fight - here there, this side or that

You Dinka, flee! - the word we're looking for

We're just cattle, ever thin, never fat

You've learned our ways, we've had our silent joys

When it was sleep time

on us you would lean

It's time for us to low as you lie low

(The BOYS, bone-weary and starving, come to a stream,

where THEY drink - and cough and sputter)

A.I. JOSH

Not so fast - or we'll have no fate to seize

I've been thinking -

T-MAC SAM

And not eating, o please -

K-GAR OLLIE

I've been thinking too and I'd like to know why we -

A.I. JOSH

- don't set up camp beside some stream and stay -

T-MAC SAM

- and try to grow some food and have a life -

K-GAR OLLIE

- it's not too much to ask or is it now?

What tribe are you?

T-MAC SAM

And what's your religion?

A.I. JOSH

What does it matter? I'm from the Upper Country. I have my gods.

T-MAC SAM

And so do I. My gods are from the Middle Country where I am from.

K-GAR OLLIE

I have a god whose face I keep around my neck.

T-MAC SAM

I don't see your god.

K-GAR OLLIE

Around my neck.

A.I. JOSH

I don't see your god.

K-GAR OLLIE (feeling at his neck)

My god is gone.

I keep my god in my heart.

A.I. JOSH

I don't see your god.

K-GAR OLLIE

That's because he's inside me.

A.I. JOSH

I want to see your god.

T- MAC SAM

I feel my god.

A.I. JOSH

Let me feel him.

K-GAR OLLIE

I can't just let you feel inside me.

A.I. JOSH

You could see and feel my god - if I still had him.

K-GAR OLLIE

I can't just open myself up.

A.I. JOSH

Why not?

T-MAC SAM and K-GAR OLLIE

Because my god doesn't like to be looked at.

A.I. JOSH

My god likes - liked - to be looked at all times.

K-GAR OLLIE

I wonder who's looking at him now.

(K-GAR OLLIE is having a tough time)

What tribe are you?

Dinka. A.I. JOSH and T-MAC SAM

Dinka? K-GAR OLLIE

Yes. A.I. JOSH

Yes. T-MAC SAM

You speak a little - strange. K-GAR OLLIE

What's strange? A.I. JOSH

Strange? T-MAC SAM

I am Dinka. K-GAR OLLIE

You are Dinka? A.I. JOSH and T-MAC SAM

A.I. JOSH

You speak -

T-MAC SAM

Strange.

A.I. JOSH

If we are all Dinka, we must be from different parts - that is why we speak differently, one from the other.

K-GAR OLLIE

But then we all have the same gods.

So your god inside is my god on my neck.

A.I. JOSH

So you don't have to see him, because YOU SEE HIM -

that is, around your neck

and I can see him too

and feel him because he's inside

T- MAC SAM

Who's my god? I thought I knew. He's in the sky behind that cloud.

Are you sure we're all Dinka?

I know I am - Middle Country.

K-GAR OLLIE

Lower Country.

A.I. JOSH

Upper Country.

AND ALL DINKA!
The BOYS

I've been thinking -
A.I. JOSH

I've been thinking too and I'd like to know why we -
K-GAR OLLIE

- don't set up camp beside some stream and stay -
A.I. JOSH

- and try to grow some food and have a life -
T-MAC SAM

- it's not too much to ask or is it now?
K-GAR OLLIE

No, it's not. It's just what we must be doing.
A.I. JOSH

Upper, Middle, Lower

- join together
K-GAR OLLIE

With gods inside out and outside in
T-MAC SAM
and behind - that cloud is gone

There are some fish in this stream and I'm going to catch me one.
A.I. JOSH

Catch and cook.
K-GAR OLLIE

Or eat one now. T-MAC SAM

Raw fish? You Middle Country Dinkas - K-GAR OLLIE

Ayoun - A.I. JOSH

(Other cows drift on)

This is my god too. T-MAC SAM (referring to his cow)

And mine. K-GAR OLLIE

Who will wear ME around HER neck.

I'm seizing a fish. A.I. JOSH

Dinner will be served! K-GAR OLLIE

AHA! T-MAC SAM

It's not too much to ask now, is it? A.I. JOSH

To make - to have a life?

(As the BOYS exult and dance, AYOUN steps forward)

AYOUN

I am taking it right down to you and speaking from my heart

These Boys are only beginning a journey - this is the start

There is a camp called Camp Kakuma

And there there's a measure of Peace.

It's for boys like ours

But it will take thousand millions of steps to get there.

(Tracer fire. An all-out attack)

'RELIEF WORKERS'

We are your friends. We're gonna put you to work. We're here to take you to the oil fields.

We're here to assist you

What are your names?

What are your names and whom are you protecting while we are protecting you?

A.I. JOSH

I am - this is my cow - Ayoun and I am protecting her. Ayoun - I -

'RELIEF WORKERS'

A.I., Are you - speak up, O.K.?

A.I. JOSH (terrified)

A.I. ?? - Ayoun - we are one - who are you protecting us from?

'RELIEF WORKERS'

Enemies of the State -

A.I. JOSH

The State - of what?

'RELIEF WORKERS'

The State of the State - you, second boy, what is your name?

T-MAC SAM

Don't - Don' - Don' - T-t-t-t-t - Smack me - T - Smack me - don't smack me!

'RELIEF WORKERS'

We won't hurt you, smack you upside the head

Not a chance, we'd rather leave our own selves for dead

Trust us, we bring you relief, keep you out of harm's way

What you get in return, a spot of work in the oil fields it's almost like play.

So, T-Mac, we never 'mack you

And you, Third Boy, who are you and what is your name, O.K.?

K-GAR OLLIE

O.K., K - K-k-k-k-k-

'RELIEF WORKERS'

K? Great. K-Great, we'll call you K-Great Oliver, my uncle's middle.

We really must bring you into the modern world.

Forward, march!

(TIME has passed.

The BOYS have marched for several hours.

The 'RELIEF WORKERS' are high and drunk)

'RELIEF WORKERS'

Yes, my lads, a spot of rum n' runnin'

To the Pump

What could be better, shootin' n' funnin'

To the Pump

Let's hear it for the oil from the soil, let's not be late!

Here we are - At the fields.

On to the Pump

You set the drills below the earth

The oil pours forth for all it's worth

And on to the pump

We'll pay you at the pump

And you'll pay us at the pump.

(The oil wells burst forth and drench our heroes)

'RELIEF WORKERS'

Yes, we're here, we're so here in the land of Oil

Sticky wet from boiling soil

Pump away

Pump away

Pump away

Gasoline

O, I wish I were in the land of Oil

Sticky wet from boiling soil

O what fun, pump away

Pump away, Gasoline

So We pump away our life blood

the earth is dry dust and caked mud

we must not die/ yes we are/yes we are/yes we must

Pump away

Yes we must

Pump away

Pump away

Gasoline.

(The oil wells are set on fire)

The BOYS

We are the Boys of Dinka Tribe

We now set forth for Camp Kakuma

A camp with a measure of peace.

A camp of peace not quite without cease.

A.I. JOSH

The shortest march will get us to Kakuma.

T-MAC SAM

I'm not so sure the walk will be so short.

K-GAR OLLIE

If only we had our cattle.

A.I. JOSH

We have to leave- they're soldiers over there!

T-MAC SAM

We follow paths we've many times before.

K-GAR OLLIE

With herds we've grown to love - now where's their touch?

The BOYS

O, Josh - O, Sam - O, Ollie, is it doom?

A.I. JOSH

Have we found ourselves without support?

T-MAC SAM

Our cattle were our strongest comfort – so

K-GAR OLLIE

We'll never see them more - it's just not fair.

A.I. JOSH

They told us we must go, but what's it for?

T-MAC SAM

They're sure they didn't want us o so much?

K-GAR OLLIE

O, Josh, O Sam, O, Ollie, what we've done

The BOYS

Is cut our ties to youth to face the gun

(Gunfire. A Guerrilla Soldier appears)

GUERRILLA

Hey, mes garçons, you're just the ticket, Oui!

To fight the South you need the North so bads

Protection's what we offer you, mais oui, you see?

We need you much as you need us too, lads

Please take these guns and pump them up like this

Get set to shoot when I tell you to

The enemy is everywhere, snakes hiss

Snakes always take the form of South'ners too

Now leave your older ways, we'll show you fame

You've never had such glory, that's the name

Of what we're fighting for, it's why we chance

Just ev'rything, we've nothing but this dance

(T-MAC SAM takes the offered gun)

T-MAC SAM

Let me see this - what's it called?

GUERRILLA

A-K 47 or Kalishnikov.

T-MAC SAM

How you pump it - just like this?

GUERRILLA

You feel it and now you're better off.

T-MAC SAM

I'll join and so will my new brothers.

K-GAR OLLIE

No, I won't. It's crazy, T-Mac Sam.

T-MAC SAM

Feel it, it gives you power.

A.I. JOSH and K-GAR OLLIE

Over what?

T--MAC SAM

Over this.

GUERRILLA

A little joke, little man, you'll make a good Guerrilla.

T- MAC SAM

No joke, it's already pumped

A.K. or Kalish, run now, big man has been dumped.

K-GAR OLLIE

We'll join our brother now.

A.I. JOSH

Go - Rilla, boom boom POW

(Guerrilla rushes off)

K-GAR OLLIE

T-Mac, that was great

A.I. JOSH

Really good, T.

T-MAC SAM

It's the gun, it makes me feel so -

FRIGHTENED!

The BOYS

We see them all - we must takeoff, escape

These Go - Rillas, they take the strangest shape

K-GAR OLLIE

I see them everywhere - they're stalking boys

These soldiers who would take our lives away

We must move fast, escape this war and then

We've got to get to Camp Kakuma, what's there?

I fear I hope I hope I fear that there's

The answer to our needs, but what'll we do

If there's danger there and awful jungle noise

O, cattle dearest, we're so far away

we miss you, miss you. We just want to play.

(The CHORUS OF CATTLE appears)

CHORUS OF CATTLE

And so the boys trudged and crawled and marched and ran across the bush,

dodging bullets, foraging for roots and the sometime berry, aiming their way to -

The BOYS

Kakuma we thought was just a bit away

Not the thousand miles 'twas, the cattle didn't know

CHORUS OF CATTLE

And even if they could have gone as straight as a Masai spear

The armies, krypto armies, pseudo armies, would have stopped them in their tracks.

KRYPTO ARMY MEMBER

Stop!

A.I. JOSH

Not again.

K A M

Now you're ours, we need you for the fight.

CHORUS OF CATTLE (to audience)

And so they were conscripted by every remnant of every colonial power.

K-GAR OLLIE

What is 'colonial'?

CHORUS OF CATTLE

'Colonial' is when someone who is not from where you are comes to where you are and tells you what to do and say and think.

T-MAC SAM

I do not like that.

CHORUS OF CATTLE

'Colonial' is someone coming to where you are and taking what is yours and telling you you better like it.

A. I. JOSH

That is something I do not like.

CHORUS OF CATTLE

'Colonial' is someone coming to where you are and forcing you to work for them and taking all the things you make.

The BOYS

That is all the things we do not like!

CHORUS OF CATTLE

But for this moment, this precious fleeting moment, you have this moment to breathe before the next invasion takes you away.

A.I. JOSH

So let us form a camp so we may better protect ourselves.

T-MAC SAM

Let us cook a meal so that we may better fill our hungry selves.

("Lentils Onions Rice" rouses K-GAR OLLIE

and he takes the lead on this song)

If only we had lentils, onions, rice

We'd have a lovely meal, o so nice

We'd put them in a pot and boil them, boil them hot

If we had a pot

If only we had lentils, onions, rice

If only we had spices and an herb

These roots, these flowers, weeds would taste Soup-Perb

If only we had lentils, onions, rice

How sweet to be our tongues,

when tasting something

O so nice

If only we had lentils, onions, rice

AND A POT!

(A Young Boy in green smock and green plastic slippers -
As someone wrote - looking like a deranged hospital orderly - stumbles
on, a large battery atop his head)

BOY

I am the radio operator's assistant. Have you seen him?

A.I JOSH

Radio oper - - what?

BOY

All you need to do is plug me in. I have to get the message back.

(HE puts down the battery, sits and ceremoniously empties his shoe of
blood)

T-MAC SAM

You have put this thing upon the ground –

K-GAR OLLIE

And your hand is full of blood.

(The BOY puts the shoe back on, the battery back on his head and exits)

BOY (exiting)

I have to get the message back. I am the Radio Operator's Assistant. Have you seen him?
Just plug me in.

(The BOY exits)

The BOYS

And suddenly we had to leave this makeshift camp

Boys by the tens, hundreds pouring out of this makeshift camp.

War in Ethiopia like Sudan before it

Soldiers driving us into Kenya south

Pushed to cross the Gilo River

The whole column of boys

Crocodiles snapping the surface beneath

Barely above the water was a bridge of swaying rope

We dozens hundreds clinging to each other without hope

Our tongues twisting in and out our lips

blood across our teeth

CHORUS OF CATTLE

The crocodile has a toothsome smile

He opens his mouth for all to see

He shuts his mouth with you inside

Your arm, your leg goes for a ride

And all that's left for you to be

Are stumps, your trunk and a little pile

A.I. JOSH

One boy grabbed my foot he would not let go

On the bridge swaying splashing all my brains were in my foot

I shook I shook him off he grabbed again

I hobbled forward dragging him along

My foot my foot I had to have my foot

Let go! I NEED MY FOOT!

and then he was gone and I could move

My chest hurt I couldn't catch my breath

My foot felt for him I couldn't look my foot looked

my foot couldn't find him

I didn't even hear him cry

Now I hear him cry

Now I hear him cry

He, my colleague, tells me he has drowned

SCENE: CAMP KAKUMA THE CITY OF CHILDREN

(COPERNICUS PTOLEMY PATRICK enters)

COPERNICUS

Boys hundreds thousands exhausted out of their skulls

came to Camp Kakuma

They tripped slipped upon the dust the mud and fell to the ground

some wearing little cloths around their middles and nothing more.

One boy with a jaunty hat came with nothing else and did not seem to mind
nor did the others

Another I recall kept flailing and rolling on the sand and pebbles
and kept jolting up as if he'd had this hideous nightmare
and kept screaming at the other boys to keep on singing,
even though no one was singing

They lose their culture when they are driven so hard

They are mad and dangerous to themselves

and you hope you hope they will pass out
so that you can move them a bit
and stroke their foreheads with a damp cloth

Then when they finally do, they either sleep fitfully

so still like a stone so much that they appear dead

And some of them are

When the others awake, we give them broth, a little meat,

gristle really, to try to build their strength

They are surprisingly strong, or at least resilient

and in a few days they, some of them, even get a bit cheery

Others remain delirious

The boy who insisted upon the singing now just stares ahead

I am not hopeful he will come around.

Today is the first day of class.

Yes, there is an attempt at schooling.

I am Copernicus Ptolemy Patrick, head Master.

Good morning, class. You may say 'Good Morning' back

The BOYS

Good morning
Back
Good morning back

COPERNICUS

I see. Just three of you today. Well, we have to begin somewhere. What are your names?

A.I. JOSH

A.I. Josh.

COPERNICUS

What does the A.I. stand for?

A.I. JOSH

What does the A.I. stand for.
Stand for.

COPERNICUS

I see. And you?

T-MAC SAM

T. Mac Sam.

COPERNICUS

The 'T' stands for -

T-MAC SAM

T.

COPERNICUS

And the Mac stands for - Mac. Alright, Sam. You, young man?

K-GAR OLLIE

K-Gar, stands for Kevin Garnett.

COPERNICUS

Who's he?

K-GAR OLLIE

I don't know.

COPERNICUS

What about numbers, that is, counting?

A.I. JOSH

One, two - eight!

COPERNICUS

O.K., that needs some adjusting. The alphabet?

T -MAC SAM

Soup.

COPERNICUS

K-GAR?

K-GAR OLLIE (singing)

Next time won't you sing with me?

COPERNICUS

How is it that you know these snippets? Where do you pick these things up? And how will we ever fill in the gaps? (speaks to the audience) The Boys worked very hard and although their progress was slow, it was steady and in no time, well, years, really, they began to sound - rather like me.

A.I. JOSH

Mr. Copernicus Ptolemy Patrick, explain your name Copernicus to us. What, pray tell, does it stand for?

COPERNICUS

You explain it to me.

A.I. JOSH

He was a man who reversed the Ptolemaic system. Now explain to us who Ptolemy was?

COPERNICUS

Alright, I shall, seeing as how I think you're all bluffing - he was a man of ancient times -

T-MAC- SAM

He devised a system of the universe which had the earth at its center, with man at the center of the earth.

The BOYS

Brilliant, my dear man, you have an excellent future ahead of you rotting right here at Camp Kakuma.

COPERNICUS (to the audience)

The boys had a point, a painful one. The longer that they stayed at Kakuma, the more they learned - up to a point. In fact, they stopped learning because they ceased to see the point. When one war was supposedly over -

(A Boy rushes on)

BOY

The war is over! It's time to call it a day! DAY!
Let's all return to our hearth and home

'cept no home and hearth exists

Let's stay right here at Kakuma Camp

COPERNICUS

There's been a new development.

What's a 'development'? K-GAR OLLIE

It has to do with settlement. COPERNICUS

And what the Hey is settlement? T-MAC SAM

It's when you're moved to safer places. COPERNICUS

Moved where? A.I. JOSH

To America. COPERNICUS

To A-m-e-r-i-c-a? T-MAC SAM

Chicago, Arlington, Massachusetts - COPERNICUS

That's where I want to go - Massa - Choo choo where the trains are - K-GAR OLLIE

Chicago where the bulls are. I have read about this, where there are a lot of bulls. A.I. JOSH

Minnie - Soda - where the tiny soft drinks are. COPERNICUS

Minnie - Soda, what is that? K-GAR OLLIE

COPERNICUS

Where very light bright people with down upon their faces speak in strange high-pitched sing-song tongues.

K-GAR OLLIE

I do not want to go there. I have my own high pitch and I am from the South where I want to stay.

COPERNICUS

And Fargo.

T-MAC SAM

Far Go? Go Far? How far far go?

COPERNICUS

Very farther than Ethiopia. No - Fargo is name of place.

K-GAR OLLIE

And how to get there? Why would we go to all these places?

And who wants to take us there?

COPERNICUS

The Lutherans, the Catholics. They have a mission to save you - or at least give you the chance you don't have.

(COPERNICUS recedes and the three BOYS are left alone

Our Three BOYS sing a trio, a little of African Mills Brothers)

Who are these Catho-licks and Luther Anns

And what have they in mind for us, we fear

They have some plans, these Luther Anns they say

To work for them and herd their cows with sticks, blacks, tans

And what of Catho-licks who now abound

What if they want to take our souls and run

why can't we have some fun

Just sitting in the sun

We're children, wanting all the wholes, the parts

You Catho-licks, you Luther Anns, your names

You drive us crazy, crazy with your games

COPERNICUS

They're not games. All of us—me here in Kakuma in this makeshift room I call a “school.” The well-meaning missionaries so far from here. We don't pretend to think we're saving lives. We only do a bit. We try to do our bit. Our little bit. This tiny itsy bitsy spider bit. We're climbing up a waterspout and the drain is pouring out and we the itsy bitsy spider climb up the spout again.

SCENE: THE ELDERS OF THE TRIBE JUST SAY NO

MIRIAM MAKER

We're sending you off but we won't lose you

We'll follow your progress and if you choose, you

Can be our leaders of the southern Sudanese

We're sorely short of leaders, tyrants have them on their knees

We're asking you politely when really what we mean

Is you have an obligation to save another teen

So go away and get your education proper

But we know that when you can return you must

Our many men who work the manganese and copper

Deserve your generosity, you now have all their trust

Some warnings few when in the USA

You'll be few boys inside of thousands mens

And ladies looking straight ahead

Big, tall - they cannot be, they seem

Glass buildings, bright lights, like you never fantasize

Don't go and be attracted by all play/ whatever they tell you, it's lies

Don't drink the beer, it's new to you

You'll burp like not before

There's something called 'Fast Food and Drink' you'll slurp while craving more

And sweet things 'Skittles' that they call

What they are, after all, I cannot tell at all

Just keep your wits about you when you dream

The thing you want the most is never what it seem

(A bearded bony man – the Justice Minister –bursts upon the scene)

JUSTICE MINISTER

Don't go at all, black boys

There are many Negroes in those States

Don't think you know them because of their hair

They're not like us

They sprinkle smelly things upon themselves

They put these smelly things underneath their arms

And then they rub them there and in their crotch
They rub their behinds' cracks with white things made from trees
Then they throw these white things down white holes
And water rushes them away
They are barbarians who have pulled up their African roots
And left them to rot in the sun
They would spoil the earth
They are not from here, they are not from there

MIRIAM MAKER

Who are you that you know so much?

JUSTICE MINISTER

Who are you?

MIRIAM MAKER

I am Miriam Maker, formerly of the Southern Sudanese Parliament, sent here to administrate this camp.

JUSTICE MINISTER

I AM THE Justice Minister from Khartoum and I know that the Southern Sudanese Parliament no longer exists.

MIRIAM MAKER

You're telling me. And do you know, Bony Bearded Man, o you, the Justice Minister of Khartoum, the terrible injustice in and of these camps?

JUSTICE MINISTER

I know what I need to know. And there boys must not go.

MIRIAM MAKER

They are too precious to be left in harm's way.

JUSTICE MINISTER

And what of the others? Are they not precious too? Thousands, tens of thousands, how many can you save, if save is what you're doing?

MIRIAM MAKER

Among these boys is the future President of Southern Sudan.

JUSTICE MINISTER

There will be no Southern Sudan. It will all be destroyed by this war between those that smell one way, and those who smell the other.

MIRIAM MAKER

These boys are too precious to be left behind. That's just the way it is. Few are chosen and many are left behind.

JUSTICE MINISTER

And will these few return?

MIRIAM MAKER

I do not know. I DO know that THERE is a law and that here there is no law

JUSTICE MINISTER

And if they do, will they be corrupt? Will they be common thieves?

MIRIAM MAKER

I do not know. I DO know that they are going to a land where they cannot just come and kill you.

JUSTICE MINISTER

And what of women who will tempt them so, with their tempting ways and their tempting dress?

MIRIAM MAKER

What are you speaking of? They have seen all the tempting dress and undress in the world. The women in the bush - what do they wear? Next to nothing.

JUSTICE MINISTER

You have been in the world?

MIRIAM MAKER

I have been in the world and I have imagined all the rest.

JUSTICE MINISTER

They will come back, if they do, and they will bring revolution.

MIRIAM MAKER

True revolution. That is what I hope. These boys are off to a better life so that they might return and help us all to a better life.

JUSTICE MINISTER

Isn't it pretty to think so?

MIRIAM MAKER

Tomorrow when you are on the plane and travelling to the West

You'll then have been much farther - think that it's a test

Than any of your forbears ever dreamed that they would be

You'll be crossing oceans vast, 'though you've never seen the sea

A year will pass like nothing - at its end

You'll ask why we did not you, you, and you sooner send

SCENE: THE MARCH TO THE PLANE OF JOSH SAM AND OLLIE

A.I. JOSH

The airplane's here. Let's march.

T-MAC SAM

It will come back. It will keep coming back.

K-GAR OLLIE

I'm not marching anywhere.

A.I. JOSH

It's not going to keep coming back, are you crazy? It's here once and then it's gone.

T-MAC SAM

It will come back. It will keep coming back.

K-GAR OLLIE

I've marched my whole life, and then some.

A.I. JOSH

And then some what? Don't you want to go to America? Don't you remember what Miriam Maker said -

A.I. JOSH and K-GAR OLLIE

"America is not a country where they can just come and kill you. They can't just come and kill you!"

T-MAC SAM

It will come back. I'll take the next one.

A.I. JOSH

It will not keep coming back. This is the first, last and next one.

K-GAR OLLIE

How can it take all of us? There are hundreds, hundreds.

A. I. JOSH

That's why we have to march now. Miriam Maker said there is a law and here there is no law.

T-MAC SAM

A - m - e - r - i - c - a. I wrote it in the mud, on the wall.

K-GAR OLLIE

In America there are doors. I don't want doors.

A.I. JOSH

What do you mean 'doors?' How do you know there are doors? What are doors to you and me?

T-MAC SAM

I'll take the next one. It will keep coming back.

A.I. JOSH

You are out of your skulls. It's time to move. March, walk, crawl, I don't care, The plane is taking us to -

A.I. JOSH and T-MAC SAM

A-m-e-r-i-c-a!

K-GAR OLLIE

In America there are doors. I don't want doors.

A. I. JOSH

You two, you two, you two repeat yourselves.

T-MAC SAM and K-GAR OLLIE

You too, you too, you too repeat yourself.

A.I. JOSH

I've dreamt of this day for two whole years. Ever since I was –

T-MAC SAM

Ever since you were what?

A.I. JOSH

Twelve years old.

K-GAR OLLIE

I'm two years older than you and I am staying put.

A.I. JOSH

Two years? What do you mean? I'm sixteen. I thought you were sixteen.

K-GAR OLLIE

I am. You're fourteen.

T-MAC SAM

I'm twelve. I haven't been dreaming of this moment for two whole years.

A.I. JOSH

I'm sixteen. That makes you twenty.

K-GAR OLLIE

Who says you're sixteen? You're fourteen and I'm sixteen, not twenty.

A.I. JOSH

I'm sixteen not fourteen as you say I am and you too, you too, you too are sixteen

T-MAC SAM

I'm twelve.

A.I. JOSH

The airplane's here. The oldest goes first.

K-GAR OLLIE

Now I have you. If the oldest goes first, and you and I are the same age of sixteen, and Sam at twelve, then there IS no oldest, only the youngest Sam at twelve so no one goes

first, we don't march to the plane or march anywhere especially A-m-e-r-i-c-a which can stay in the mud on the wall and never have doors. So there.

A.I. JOSH

Alright, you're twenty I'm sixteen, Sam is twelve, you go first. Sam second, and I'm last.

T-MAC SAM

That would work nicely, if the plane weren't coming back, which of course it is, so it won't work nicely.

A.I. JOSH

It will work nicely, oldest, next oldest, next next oldest oldest.

(The sound of an airplane engine)

T-MAC SAM

I wrote it in the mud, on the wall, A-m-e-r-i-c-a.

A.I. JOSH AND K-GAR OLLIE

They can't just come and kill you

A. I. JOSH

The airplane's really here. Let's march.

K-GAR OLLIE

Does the plane have a door.

I don't want to sleep alone inside some plane behind a door.

A.I. JOSH

If there's a door, I'll open it.

If there isn't, I'll open it anyway. Oldest first - Sam, Ollie, Josh, Josh, Sam, Ollie, Ollie, Josh, Sam, Josh - let's count - one three two, two three one - I'm frightened -

(A ladder drops from the plane door)

A.I. JOSH

Just like the Gilo River. The Sudanese Liberation Army is chasing us, pushing us hard.
We come to a rope ladder to climb up to the bridge, crocodiles below –

T-MAC SAM

This is a plane, this is not the Gilo, no crocodiles, no army chasing us, your foot won't be
looking for your colleague.

K-GAR OLLIE

Not my foot –
your foot and yours - I'm the oldest and I go first.

A.I. JOSH

You've changed your mind - hooray!

K-GAR OLLIE

Never any doubt - I'm going too!

T-MAC SAM

O, what the Hey -

A.I. JOSH and K-GAR OLLIE

Hey Hey!