

THE IPAT EQUATION

by Barti Cox

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INTRODUCTION

This is a republishing of, The EADUN Directive, under a new name.

The story begins in the year 2011. Sironka, a Maasai boy of exceptional abilities, is adopted by a wealthy English couple and, after a successful university education, he becomes embroiled in humanity's desperate struggle for power and survival across three continents in a rapidly changing world.

Contains graphic accounts of heroism and brutality, and episodes of romantic and carnal intimacy.

Please leave a comment, good or bad, as feedback from readers is so important.

Chapter I

SPIDER - 2011

It is December in the year two thousand and eleven. A small Maasai settlement lay on the rim of the Ngorongoro Crater in northern Tanzania. The village is a collection of a dozen of so mud and thatched houses which have been constructed from whatever timber and scrub that could be collected from the savannah. Surrounding the village is an 'enjang', a barrier made of thorned acacia branches which protects the villagers and their cattle from the predatory animals that hunt out on the grassland.

These are Maasai, traditional cattle herders whose distant ancestors had migrated from the Nile valley to the North East. They consider that all the cattle in the world are their property, as decreed by their creator, and what we might think of as cattle rustling is, to them, simply returning the cattle to their rightful owners.

There have been repeated droughts over recent years and it seems to the Maasai people that the climate is becoming hotter, and certainly dryer, than they remember in the past. Looking out from the Maasai village, the shimmering African Savannah grassland reaches out to the distant Kilimanjaro Mountain, a dormant volcano which, at almost twenty thousand feet high and fifty miles across, dominates the horizon.

Just outside the enjang, in the shade of a large acacia tree, is a group of very happy young Maasai men adorned in their traditional woven red cloth. They are standing in a semi circle and are engaged in a jumping dance known as the 'adumu,' which is being watched by a group of excited young Maasai girls and younger boys. The dancers are all of similar appearance, tall and slender and at ease in their surroundings and, as they each take their turn in the circle, leaping as high as they can as the others sing to the rhythm of the dance, the young women are applauding, laughing and teasing the dancers.

One of the girls is standing near the trunk of the acacia tree, and a small boy, too young to join in the dance, notices that a huge

baboon spider which appears to be as large as his hand, is on the ground next to her feet. It has been disturbed from its burrow by the young men's pounding feet and is confused. The boy shouts a warning to the girl who glances to where he is pointing and, at the sight of the spider, she is immediately terrified. She utters a small scream as she backs away but the spider follows her in an effort to keep within the shelter of her shadow. All thoughts of continuing the dance is abandoned as the young people realize what has caused the commotion and, with the exception of the boy who gave the warning, they become disabled with laughter. He feels partially responsible for the situation, and rushes forward to grab the spider across its back between his thumb and forefinger then, having firmly secured the wriggling creature, he brandishes it high above his head in triumph before returning it back into the shade of the tree and releasing it on the ground. The arachnid remains motionless for a moment, as if to recompose its dignity, then casually saunters back to its tunnel and disappears.

The young man is Sironka who is eleven years old, soon to be twelve as he was born on the first morning of the new millennium. Although only a youngster, he is maturing rapidly and an increasingly handsome young man with an open face and generous smile. The laughter had subsided, and with the entertainment concluded, the crowd of youngsters quickly loose interest and resume their dance. The girl, however, just stood and gazed at Sironka, then she grabs him by the shoulders and kisses him on the cheek.

The gesture did not passed unnoticed, and her unexpected behaviour causes the young men to jeer and make silly noises as she turns and quickly walks away; however, before she disappears into the village, she looks back over her shoulder and gives Sironka an appraising smile. She is called Lilo, three years senior than Sironka and a desired beauty. Having spurned all the advances made by several of the young men in the village, she has consequently earned a reputation as being stuck-up and for thinking too much of herself. However, her high opinion of herself has been somewhat justified as she is about to be given in marriage to the senior elder of the village.

Chapter II

UNWELCOME GUESTS

The general noise and commotion of the young Maasai halted and Liloé was forgotten when, in the distance, one of the young men noticed an approaching vehicle on the dusty road. They knew it would not be bringing any tourists, as the villagers were always alerted to their visits by the local guides to give them time to don traditional dress and lay out any items that might be of interest as souvenirs.

As the vehicle drew nearer, with its trailing telltale plume of dust, it could be recognized as a large black sedan, a government vehicle which, from past experience, inevitably meant trouble for the village. The watchers, that now included many of the older residents, became uneasy and apprehensive.

Those who could, covered their faces with the tail ends of their clothing in an effort to avoid breathing in the fine dust cloud as the vehicle recklessly drove past and came to rest at the entrance of the hut belonging to the Headman, Olamayiani. Olamayiani's first wife, Lankenuna, was standing outside as the sedan arrived. She was a proud woman who, although well into her middle age, still retained striking good looks.

Lankenuna's grandfather had been a young Italian army officer who was engaged in fighting the British during 1941. At that time her grandmother was living in Eritrea and, although she was only fifteen years old, she was extraordinarily beautiful. The officer paid her parents well to allow him to make regular visits to her while his regiment was camped nearby and she became pregnant. As the girl swelled with the unborn child, the officer's visits became less frequent until they ceased altogether, and he was not heard from again. Rather than accept that she had been deserted, the girl chose to believe that the father of her baby had been killed by the British as they drove the Italians from their colonial settlements in East Africa, which was quite possible, although less likely.

The issue was a girl child and, when she had reached fourteen years of age, she was married into the Kenyan Maasai. In turn, her first child was Lankenuna who grew to be as beautiful as her grandmother, and tall and slender after her Maasai father. Lankenuna was thirteen when she met Olamayiani, the boy that was to become her husband and the chief of his clan.

Even at seventeen years of age Olamayiani had been powerfully built. Standing at over six feet in height, he had a strong, resolute face with deep-set eyes and a large, broad nose. He arrived at her village on a task set by his elders from across the border in Tanzania; he had been entrusted to buy and drive home some cattle.

Olamayiani's parents had already made arrangements for him to be married to a girl from his own village but, when he saw Lankenuna, all thoughts of complying with his parents' wishes were abandoned and he became determined that she would be his first wife. He paid Lankenuna's father seven of the newly purchased cows in advance for his daughter but, by returning with an unapproved wife, he had not only defied his father but also the whole clan as he had effectively stolen seven cows.

Olamayiani had ignored the traditional practices of his people and, by doing so, he had earned their disapproval. But he was, and remained throughout his life, particularly strong in the head as well as in the body and he would not be turned from keeping his unusually beautiful new acquisition as his first wife.

Lankenuna recognised the newly arrived passengers in the sedan as a couple of government henchmen, and she quickly ducked into the hut to warn her Husband.

Two middle aged, native Sub-Saharan Africans alighted from the vehicle, both dressed in open white shirts and city suits. The first to emerge was in his forties, he was seriously overweight and had no visible neck to support his large and round bald head. The second passenger was lightly built with a long neck and of a slightly Middle Eastern appearance. He sported a pair of cool, wrap-around sunglasses. The third and last occupant to climb out of the vehicle was the driver who was younger than the other two men and,

although not particularly tall, he was built like a heavyweight boxer. He also wore a pair of fashionable sunglasses.

As the two passengers pushed their way past a small group of onlookers, the driver waited and slouched against the hot metal side of the Sedan. He removed his sunglasses to reveal a long face and a heavy brow, and he proceeded to leer at the younger female watchers until they became too uncomfortable to remain in his presence and they returned to their daily business.

Inside the hut, Olamayiani was sitting with two other elders, Mrjooli and Tonkei. They were also his younger brothers. As the unwelcome guests arrived, Olamayiani directed Lankenuna outside, and the two visitors were left standing awkwardly, as they had not been invited to sit.

The fat man was called Lumbwi, and his partner was Chiumbo. Lumbwi smiled at Olamayiani and spoke first in the language of the Maasai, without being acknowledged by the three brothers.

‘Olamayiani, my old friend, I see Lankenuna still looks out for you,’ he said.

Olamayiani glared at the intruder.

‘You are not my friend,’ replied Olamayiani, ‘and my wife is no business of yours.’

Olamayiani regarded Lumbwi with unconcealed frustration; they had met many times before and Olamayiani had been consistently hostile and uncooperative, and it was only the protection afforded to the visitors by being government men that prevented Olamayiani and his brothers from killing them and putting their bodies out for the hyenas.

Lumbwi extended his arms with outwardly turned palms and whined with abject hypocrisy, ‘Why so hostile, I am only trying to help you and your people?’

Olamayiani looked away in disgust as Lumbwi continued, ‘You must understand, Olamayiani, that I cannot protect you indefinitely. The government will have their way in the end; you and your people no longer have a place here.’

Olamayiani had heard this claim and had rejected it so many times before but, once again, he replied defiantly, ‘We are the

Maasai Mara and this is our land, not the Governments. We have always been here and we will always be here. You are wasting your time, go away and leave us in peace.’

‘Well, that’s not exactly true, is it,’ said Lumbwi as he pulled his sagging waistband up over his belly before pontificating, ‘According to the historians, in times past, other peoples have called this place home and the Maasai came and pushed out the Akie people not so long ago. Now it is time for the Maasai to move on in the name of progress but, this time, you’re being offered a safe, new settlement with schools, hospitals, and plenty of simple work; cleaning jobs for the women; honest work to feed your families.’ Lumbwi laughed before adding, ‘Any widows or barren women can always earn extra money by providing personal services, you know, entertainment for the tourists.’

Lumbwi knew that he was being provocative by suggesting that Maasai women could resort to prostitution, but he was tired of having to deal with Olamayiani’s stubbornness and was indulging himself by knowingly offending the elders. Indeed, the three brothers were outraged by his suggestion and, together, they stood and glowered angrily at Lumbwi who, in a moment of fear, stepped back. Chumbo moved forward alongside him and, just for a moment, opened his jacket a little to reveal a gun tucked under his waistband. Olamayiani and the two brothers remained motionless whilst Lumbwi recomposed himself and angrily waved his pointed finger at the three Maasai.

‘Olamayiani, you think you can continue but you are wrong, and you will wish that you had been reasonable’.

The two men emerged backwards from the hut and, as they turned and walked the short distance to the sedan. A small mongrel dog capered up to them in the hope of being given a morsel or two, as so often happened when visitors came to the village. These; however, were not tourists, and Chumbo completely took the little dog by surprise when he savagely kicked it away from their path.

The government men left the village, accompanied by the roar of the large German sedan and the whine of the injured dog as the wheels kicked up another plume of dust through the enclosed village.

Chapter III

MABEL MARS

A middle-aged teacher from England had been watching the commotion, caused by the unwanted visitors, from the window of her small tin roofed schoolhouse. Her name was Miss Mabel Mars and, at that time, she was in her late thirties. She had lived there for many years and had long since become a permanent member of the community which she had no intention of ever leaving. Her home was built alongside the school and in the same fashion.

On Sundays, with a little reorganisation of the seating, the school became a church and surprisingly large numbers of villagers attended the morning service. On these occasions they wore their best robes and elaborate beaded jewellery and Mabel realised that it was mostly an opportunity to display their finest clothing and adornments that brought them to the services. Of course everyone, including Mabel, enjoyed some hearty singing, even though few of the congregation had any notion of or cared very much what it all meant.

Mabel still had an old Land Rover that she no longer used for getting about parked behind the school. At one time it had been adapted as a backup to her small wind generator that perched on the peak of the school roof but, following the instalment of solar panels, the Land Rover was now largely a forgotten relic. Mabel; however, insisted that it was kept in good order along with her short wave radio, another relic from the days before she had her mobile phone and the solitary school computer. The radio was seldom used but, every Saturday night, she would be sitting in one corner of her living room, exchanging a few words with a few diehard short wave radio hams around the world.

Her father had migrated to Britain from Jamaica with his parents in the nineteen-sixties. They were die-hard Anglican Christians, and Mabel shared her family's convictions with enthusiasm. She also felt the desire to follow her ancestral roots and

educate her African relatives in the hope of advancing them into a civilized way of life.

When still in her twenties, she was one of the first women to be ordained into the Church of England. And, soon after her ordination, she gained a position as a missionary teacher in East Africa where she had dedicated herself to the welfare of the village people. That had been almost twenty years ago, and she had long ago given up any hope of persuading the adults to abandon, what seemed to her, a primitive existence.

Soon after she arrived and Olamayiani had become aware that she was unmarried, he had made a nuisance of himself. At first he simply wanted sex, as he found her both attractive and intriguing. But after his advances failed and, being unused to rejection from the village womenfolk, he had become obsessed and, in an attempt to overcome his frustration, he had tried to make her his third wife. For well over a decade he had persisted in the pursuit of her before admitting defeat, and their relationship had become one of distant, mutual respect.

Over the years, Mabel had become increasingly concerned about the future of her flock and the Maasai Mara. When she first arrived she had hoped that they could be persuaded to abandon their traditional lifestyle in exchange for decent homes, schools and hospitals. But she eventually grew to understand, only too well, the deprivation that faced many of the Maasai people who had abandoned their independence and chosen to settle in the urban slums. The authorities were hopelessly corrupt and only sought to clear the tribes-people from large areas of savannah in order to exploit its natural resources and lease the Maasai hunting grounds to hunting syndicates.

These syndicates provided sport for oil rich clients from the Middle East who, having long ago destroyed much of the large fauna in their homelands, were seeking blood sports elsewhere. On the odd occasion when Mabel had attempted to reason with local officials about the exploitation of the animals in the African savannah, they had completely silenced and embarrassed her by pointing out that, unlike Britain, Africa still had forests and wildlife.

Unlike Britain, the Tanzanian wildlife had been preserved in huge nature reserves for posterity. Further more, unlike the UK, the leading members of Tanzanian society did not dress up in garish clothing and gallop over farmland with packs of crazed dogs in pursuit of a small red fox.

Having been humiliated on several occasions by this argument, and having had her comments brushed aside in this way, Mabel concentrated her efforts on educating the children as well as she was able in order to equip them for their future struggles with the outside world.

After the three government men had left, Mabel returned to her chair behind her desk.

Her class was made up mostly of children under thirteen, who were busy at their desks writing when Sironka burst into the room. Out of breath and covered in white salt marks, he stood for a moment while his class mates struggled to hide their giggles and smirks, knowing that he was about to get into trouble. Mabel looked up and beckoned him forward. He slowly approached and was silently directed to the wall, to stand alone as Mabel addressed the class.

All Mabel's lessons were conducted in English, as she considered that her student's best source of support in the future, financially and politically, would be forthcoming from the English speaking world.

'You can put away your books now children. Quietly please,' but the children were habitually very noisy.

'Quietly I said, thank you,' Mabel repeated.

The children eventually settled down and, when they were quite still, she continued.

'Thank you class you may leave, quietly now. Not you Sironka,' she added, as Sironka attempted an escape. 'I would like you to stay behind.'

As the children streamed out from the school, laughing and shrieking into the open air, Mabel collected her possessions. She gestured for Sironka to stand in front of her, and he looked worried as she stared at him over her glasses.

‘I don’t have to ask where *you* have been, covered in salt. You have been to Lake Magadi, haven’t you Sironka?’

‘I am sorry Miss.’

‘To see the flamingos, again?’

‘Yes Miss, sorry!’

Mabel sighed, unsure what to do. Sironka was often absent, and yet he was her star pupil. He seemed to make very little effort but rarely made a mistake in his work. The only class member that she could remember, recently, that even came close to his performance was Lilo, and she had been a most attentive student.

‘This is becoming a bit of a habit with you, Sironka. Tell me the truth; are my lessons so *very* boring for you?’

He didn’t want to upset his teacher and said nothing but, in an attempt to give some sort of reply, he gave an apologetic shrug.

For some time, Mabel had entertained the idea of Sironka attending a school in England, and she found herself saying, ‘Sironka, how would you like to go to an English school?’

Sironka was alarmed; he thought he was being expelled.

‘A different one Miss?’ he said in dismay.

‘Yes, but you would have to leave home and live in England.’

Sironka did not really understand, but he brightened a little at the prospect of living in England, until he remembered his father’s opinion of Westerners.

‘I don’t know, Miss, I think my father would not be happy.’

‘Well, we will just have to ask your father, won’t we? I can’t make any promises, but I have some very good friends in England who I know would very much like to help someone like you, Sironka.’

He simply shrugged, as the prospect was beyond his understanding.

After tidying away her desk, Mabel led Sironka the short distance to Olamayiani’s empty hut, as Sironka was the Head Man’s son. They eventually found Olamayiani at home with Lankenuna, Sironka’s Mother, and Mabel sat with Sironka’s parents and spoke in Maa, the language of the Maasai, explaining her proposition.

Olamayiani wasn't keen on the idea but Mabel persisted with her argument.

'You must realize that Sironka is exceptionally intelligent,' she explained. 'If I can arrange for him to be cared for by good people, I am asking you to allow him to live in England and attend a school where he can reach his potential.'

Olamayiani was still not impressed.

'That would be a foolish waste of time,' he said. 'Sironka is happy here and he has no need to leave his family.'

Lankenuna leant towards her husband and whispered in his ear, but he shrugged her away, it was obvious that she didn't agree with him. Mabel was disappointed and she could see that there was no point in pursuing the matter, for the time being, and she also recognised a potential ally in Sironka's mother.

Mabel spoke again to Olamayiani.

'Thank you for listening to my proposal. I will do my very best to teach your son all that I can, but I fear he will soon need a tutor far more knowledgeable than me.'

As Mabel stood, she remembered to add, 'One more thing, he keeps visiting the lake alone when he should be at his studies. He seems to be fascinated by the place but it is so very dangerous, please speak to him.'

'Soon he will no longer be your responsibility,' Olamayiani replied. 'Soon he will join the older boys and learn to be a warrior and to hunt, and there will be no time left for reading books in the company of women,' he added with finality.

Temporally defeated, Mabel began to take her leave but, as she did so, a conspiratorial look passed between her and Lankenuna.

Chapter IV

MANHOOD

A few days after Mabel's visit, Olamayiani decided that it was time that Sironka began to learn some hunting skills. Although Mrjooli and Tonkei occasionally hunted, Olamayiani no longer bothered; however, all three brothers took Sironka along with some men from the village to hunt gazelle on the Savannah.

Although the three brothers were all traditionally attired with red woollen robes, armed with shields crafted from buffalo hide and carried a hunting spear or a bow, they were distinctly different in appearance as they were all born to different mothers. Mrjooli was the tallest and very slim, apart from a developing pot-belly. Tonkei was the younger of the three, also slim but shorter. Olamayiani was the oldest, and at fifty years of age he still retained an impressive physique. His skin was near jet black in colour and covered in scars from encounters with animals during hunting expeditions, and unwise and unlucky human foes. Sironka had also been armed with a shield and a spear, both slightly smaller to match his stature.

Although the grass was parched and yellowed, it stood high enough to provide cover for the Maasai. Olamayiani, Mrjooli and Tonkei were waiting, crouched in the grass while the remaining men circled ahead to get closer to a small group of gazelle. Sironka was relegated to a position behind and was told to keep out of sight.

Without warning, two gazelle suddenly appeared, fleeing the advancing hunters. When unexpectedly faced with the three brothers, they paused for a brief instant before bounding past, but there was enough time for one arrow to find its mark and a mortally wounded gazelle lay kicking in the long grass.

Sironka jumped up and excitedly ran ahead to see the kill but a young male lion, disturbed from its own hunting of the gazelle, leaped out of cover; Sironka had put himself between the lion and its intended direction of escape. Stepping back from the charging lion, Sironka stumbled and fell, clinging to his spear for support which inadvertently caught the inexperienced lion in the chest. The

unfortunate beast crashed down onto Sironka as the spear passed right through its body and Sironka found himself pinned to the ground in stifling darkness.

The hot sticky fur was suffocating, and the stink of the lion overwhelmed Sironka's senses. As he fought desperately to control the panic that was building inside his head, he could hear muffled voices of alarm as the Maasai ran to help him. The sounds of his kinsmen faded away as he began to lose consciousness and the boom of the lion's heart passed through him and became indistinguishable from his own. He was no longer afraid.

Hypnotised by the slowing heartbeat, he felt an enormous loss and sadness as the last of the lion's lifeblood flowed over him. He *was* the young lion, peacefully standing free on the Maasai Mara. He felt the soft wind vibrate through his whiskers as he surveyed the open savannah before him and he knew joy.

He looked up, and the blinding sun shone painfully into his eyes and the wind was no longer gentle, it began to hurt his face.

'Wake up boy, WAKE UP!'

Sironka opened his eyes and could see that someone was stooped over him and, as he focused onto his father's face, he saw fear. But it was quickly replaced with an expression of anger that struck Sironka as being amusing, and he laughed.

'YOU, STUPID, BOY!' his father shouted. 'Next time you feel like killing yourself, tell me, and I will save you the trouble. And why are you laughing? Idiot child!'

The lion's dead body had been pulled away to reveal an unconscious Sironka and, convinced that his son was dead, Olamayiani had slapped his face in near panic until the boy had recovered consciousness. Sironka's face and upper body was covered in blood, and the men chattered with concern as they wiped it away and checked to see if he was injured. Unhurt, but dazed and shaky, they raised him to his feet and, as he looked around, a huge smile developed across his face and the hunting party burst into laughter and relief at his escape.

Although the people had abandoned the hunting of lions and were now dedicated to protecting those remaining on their lands,

Sironka had been truly blessed and at no fault of his own. The men were in great jubilation; he had escaped injury and, although he could hardly stand, they raised him to their shoulders and chanted “Miterienanka, Miterienanka.” This was a very special name which meant, 'One who is quick to claim glory by killing a lion'.

On their return to the village, with not only a gazelle but also with Miterienanka's lion skin, there was great celebration and it was undisputed that Miterienanka had earned his lion name. All that remained for him to be acknowledged as having passed into manhood would be the rituals leading to, and including, his circumcision ceremony. This; however, would have to wait until he had grown and his body had caught up with his courageous heart. Nevertheless, from then on he would be known by his people as Miterienanka.

Liloe waited for the crowd to finish congratulating him, and when he was almost alone again with his proud father, she caught his eye and they exchanged meaningful smiles. Even though he was only eleven years old, she had decided that Miterienanka would be her first special friend and once they had both undergone the traditional ceremonies of adulthood, they could have a physical relationship, even if her father chose a different husband. She knew this was likely as she was desired by older and more important warriors but, in spite of his youth, Miterienanka was her hero and she was a determined young lady.

She wondered if she could impress his father and, maybe, Olamayiani would choose her to be Miterienanka's first wife. She was not to know that Olamayiani had been impressed by her beauty and wanted her for himself. A settlement had already been reached and the marriage would take place within the year, soon after her fifteenth birthday.

A few days after the killing of the lion, Olamayiani and his two brothers, the elders Mrjooli and Tonkei, were sitting out of the heat of the day in Lankenuna's hut while she served them refreshments; a fermented milk drink.

‘What a palaver,’ said the worried Olamayiani. ‘The trouble with these government men can only worsen.’

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