

### **Act 1, scene 3: the President and his wife receive a letter from their son**

BATELA: Guard, I do not have my glasses here, try to tell us the contents of the letter. Do not skip a single word, period or comma; my wife and I are listening...

(The President and his wife look at each other while the Amazon opens the white envelope, takes out a folded paper, signed at the bottom.)

The guard (reading like a nun): "Mister Head of State"

BADILA: Luckily he isn't addressing me, if he were... we should... this day...

BATELA (sad): Listen, my dear BADILA. Listen

(He gives the guard a signal to continue.)

The guard (same tone of voice): "Excellency, Mister President. The time has come for your suffering and marginalised people to speak up about the wrongs your policies have inflicted. Politics should not be the art of harming a people or sacrificing them. Politics should be the art of educating a people, serving them and their daily needs in all ways, whether morally, culturally, economically.

Excellency, since your politics lack love, respect and sympathy, the sovereign people who I remind you hold ultimate power can only suffer. They are crushed, driven into exile and death. They die like the plants in the desert, are forced to emigrate from one day to the next, to flee like the birds in the sky.

Two days ago "The Mona" was forced to dance and dance and play and play at unbearable length until exhaustion took over. No orchestra in the world has ever reached a death toll so high amongst its musicians. The 52-year old trumpet player and singer choked and died last night, a young boy NSALA, 12 years old, lost his father and mother, the dancers can no longer walk, and a very young and beautiful girl, the daughter of one of your retired advisors, can no longer dance our traditional dances because of her fractured ankles...I ask you to turn to your secret service, who will provide confirmation of all this.

Your Excellency. You refuse advice. Your politics result only in accidents which are tantamount to murder. You are oblivious to the sufferings of your people. You pay heed only to old straw gods and supernatural powers. Your hope rests in these instead of in your subjects. I doubt that the king will always remain king.

All this and my shame, Excellency, make me realise the moment has come. I am leaving the Presidential palace, tomorrow. I cannot remain the heir of a head of state who will never lead his people to a better life. However, I will live in the city where I hope to become heir to the kind of justice, which can be had through freedom, found through self-sacrifice and brotherhood; won through trust, kindness and compassion..."