

Here Comes the Sun

by

windhowler

For months since the Pridelanders had united with the Outlanders under the rule of King Simba, son of Mufasa, Kovu often visited the Gorge, also known as Wildebeest Valley, and his initial reason for each visit was to pay his respects to two lost family members: his mother Zira, and brother Nuka. For Wildebeest Valley was where they had both died.

But every single stop there never failed to last longer than first planned. Kovu couldn't help it being so.

It was on one of Kovu's visits that it rained very heavily. It was early morning, and there was still the moon, to be seen faintly through dark clouds. Kovu approached the gorge, slowly. Rain was running off his pelt, dripping off his mane, down his forehead, into his eyes. However he was completely oblivious of the weather, other than the fact that it made him feel sad, and sadder than he already felt. He often wondered why he bothered calling at the gorge at all. He knew very well that a meditative state would come over him, as it always did. And there he would be, for hours on end, thinking. Reflecting.

Kovu came to the jagged, dusty lip of the Gorge and stared down, down at the faraway floor. Down went the rain, pelting past his eyes into the canyon.

On every visit, from the second he looked into the Gorge, his long, sad, train of thought would begin.

Kovu, standing still and silent, first thought about Zira and Nuka. He thought of them and he missed them. If things had occurred differently, Zira and Nuka might still be alive.

Kovu was reminded about the mark Zira had given him. The cut across his left eye. He did not resent her for it, and never had. But it was the mark of a certain tyrannical King, a certain dark character of the past. Scar. Kovu had always felt some strong relation to Scar, despite they being simply surrogate family, unbiological, and the mark on his face strengthened the sense of connection. He didn't want to feel it. Scar had been wrong in his doings, in his motivations - and many individuals had suffered for them. Because of this connection, Kovu still saw himself an outsider in Simba's Pride. He felt constantly overhung with a dark, shameful shadow. He was somehow afraid of what was to come. Afraid of his future.

At this due stage of his meditation, Kovu always found himself thinking: What if he had the ability to go right back - to alter the past, twist the story? He might be able to change Scar's ways, maybe bungle Scar's plans for the good. Nobody would have suffered. Thinking thus, feelings of frustration never failed to surge up, heave out of the very bottom of Kovu's soul, and make him feel more and more dejected, and powerless.

'Why can't I change the past?'

He knew he must be foolish, thinking that way. But he just couldn't help it.

Before he knew it, Kovu would start muttering a despairing chant through gritted teeth: 'Why

can't I change the past!? Oh, why, why can't I change the past?;

On this dismal, gloomy, wet day at the Gorge, Kovu felt small and just as powerless. 'Just powerless, powerless little child of the Outcast,' he said, and growled. 'Child of The Outcast . . . Mtoto wa Kiwa, Mtoto wa Kiwa . . . ' His words lapsed into Swahili.

He paused, breathing deeply.

'Oh! Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake,' he sighed. It was a Swahili phrase he'd heard the Queen Dowager, Sarabi, his grandmother-in-law, say quite often - usually when she talked of her dead mate, Mufasa . . .

Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake.

Kovu, in his great misery, and somewhat obliviously, began chanting the words over and over, first in his head. Finally out they came, aloud.

'Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake. Ohhhh, Ki-i-i-la ndege haruka na mbawa zake, oh . . . '

Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake? Swahili for . . . what? Kovu's new mantra trailed off as he pondered.

Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake: Every bird flies with its own wings.

What did that mean?

It gave Kovu something to think about. For a few beautiful moments, even though the rain still came down in torrents, he forgot sad thoughts, forced them to lurk at the very back of his mind to allow room for the Swahili phrase to circle.

Every bird flies with its own wings . . .

Hmm.

Aha! Limits! Kovu cracked it, or at least he believed he had.

Birds are limited to how high their wings can manage and no more - that's the way they were made. The limits can't be pushed further than they will go.

Riddle solved. Kovu felt pleased with himself. However, the pride was not long-lasting as his sadness began to seep back in again. Kovu stared down into the gorge.

Then he shut his eyes. No.

He wasn't. Going to. Look. Or think.

Too much thinking. No more thinking.

There's a limit . . .

Limit?

Kovu caught his breath. He almost smiled, in spite of himself.

There are limits to what you can and cannot do . . .

Some long moments later, Kovu was on his feet. There was resolution etched almost as deeply on his face as his scar, as he turned his back on the gorge. Before him lay the Pride Lands, which looked like a land being rid of a dark spell cast upon it; the rain was ceasing - the very tail end of the great dark cloud overcast was close to passing over Kovu's head. Most of the Lands were bathed in sunlight; the Serengeti grass was glistening wetly, reflecting the sun's glare; although the sun had not yet reached the gorge, or even the edge of it, the spot where he now stood.

Kovu took a final look over his shoulder, his firm expression never faltering as he did so. There was the overcast, making its slow, menacing journey onwards, crawling away above the gorge and beyond it drenching the land - and a dark and gloomy land it looked.

When Kovu turned his gaze back to the prairie, the sunlight was seconds from touching his forepaws. He held his head up. He'd been inspired. Kila ndege haruka na mbawa zake, had inspired him.

With an air of absolute resolution, he lifted a forepaw . . . and walked, one step, into the sun.

Suddenly he was submerged in warm, bright rays. They covered him, stretched over his whole body.

Kovu smiled.

No more would he worry.

Every bird flies with its own wings!

So - there are limits to what you can do, thought Kovu. Changing the past is impossible. But the future? No. Not impossible.

And if there was a bit of Scar in him?

Well then, he would be the New Scar: the Scar that never was, the Scar there could have been. Let whatever had been good in Scar, reign in him! Anything bad, Kovu vowed, would never come out in him. Ever. He would make sure of that.

Kovu had never really been afraid of the Future. Just the Past.

And Kovu was no longer afraid of the past.

The End
