**RED IS ALSO THE ROYAL BLOOD**

**A Radio Drama**

**By**

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**Characters**

**Garcia** the artist

**Alvaro II** the king

**Beatriz**  the princess

**Bernardo** the king’s brother

**Dona Zabela** the king’s mother

**Joao** Justice civil servant

**Pedro** Foreign affairs civil servant

**Ne-Nsaku** Commander-in-chief of the army

**Ndungi** The king’s shaman

**Simao** First notable

**Other** **notables**, **messengers**, **guards**, **peasants and his two children**, **dancers** (male and female), **Ne-Nsaku’s first wife** …

**FX SOUNDS OF THE TRADITIONAL DRUM**

**STORY TELLER:** During the mid-sixteen century, the king, his daughter, his brother and some civil servants admire the work of a young artist in a kingdom of Kongo. The artist has sculpted a stunning likeness of the princess’s face. The king is so pleased with the artist’s work that he promises to give him anything he would like in return. The artist, in love with the king’s daughter, asks to marry the princess. Will the king honour the artist request? A man recently appointed as the kin’s commander-in-chief of the royal army has been charged with deterring all future rebel activities in the kingdom. He is vehemently against a marriage between the artist and the princess. He claims that the royal blood must not marry only those with royal blood. Could there be another reason for his oppositions? Could he be also be interested in the princess? One thing is, the commander-in-chief will stop at nothing to keep the artist and the princess apart. Will the artist, a peasant’s son, be able to escape his wrath? While many believe the artist and the princess should marry, some will stop at nothing to prevent such a union, because Red is also the Royal Blood.

**SCENE 1 EXT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**FX MEN AND WOMEN SING AND DANCE UNDER THE**

**RHYTHM OF A TRADITIONAL DRUM**

**SCENE 2 INT. GARCIA’S WORKSHOP**

**FX GARCIA IS SCULPTING THE PRINCESS FACE**

**GARCIA:** Woman or shall I call you wife. Today, I am shaping your face, which will be admired from generation to generation as proof of my infinite love.

**BEATRIZ:** I will be your wife from eternity to eternity.

**GARCIA:** How will be your father’s reaction if he finds out about it? Could you convince him?

**BEATRIZ:** My father is an understanding man. I know how he acts and reacts pretty well. King my father wants my happiness. The only unpredictable antagonist will be his Notable’s reaction. They are very conservative. For them, I shall be the princess, which is breaking taboos and tradition by marrying a sculptor.

**GARCIA:** That is why I am wondering about those conservators’ men who only have a same word “*Tradition*”.

**BEATRIZ:** I know, we will face a hard opposition, but we must not stop. Prejudices and chattering of the kingdom will never separate us.

**GARCIA:** Power and strengthens of our love will break all those who will want to hinder it.

**BEATRIZ:** In two weeks, my father, his Notables and his civil servants will come and visit your workshop. Show him my portrait. I am sure my sculpture will please him. Then, do not hesitate; express to him your feeling about me.

**GARCIA:** Under no circumstances, I shall allow people to destroy this love, because it has been increased by what we have been through together.

**FX GARCIA PUTS THE SCULPTURE MATERIALS ON THE FLOOR**

**BEATRIZ:** What a wonderful work! It's splendid! I have never received such a gift in my life before. I will do everything to take my paint to the royal palace.My father will admire it night and day, and the spirits of ancestors will lead my mother to come to contemplate this wonderful painting the like of which she has never been seen before.

**GARCIA:** I can understand that my dear. I expressed all my love sculpting your face. Now, go back to him. You know that at thistime, you must stay with your grand' mother helping her in certain tasks.

**SCENE 3 EXT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**FX SOUNDS OF DRUMS**

**FX NOTABLES FOOTSTEPS**

**ALVARO II:** Gentlemen, I welcome you. Some times ago, our kingdom knew a trouble period. We lost our valuable civil servants during the war against our neighbours. The reason of your presence here is the confirmation of your appointment. Joao!

**JOAO:** Majesty?

**ALVARO II:** Today, you shall have Justice's responsibility in the Kingdom. You will judge and condemn culprits and acquit innocents with proof and evidence. Be righteous and equitable. Will you be ready to be committed?

**JOAO:** Yes, Majesty. I do.

**ALVARO II:** Ne-Nsaku!

**NE-NSAKU:** Majesty?

**ALVARO II:** I appoint you commander-in - chief of the army. Your job would be to avoid all future rebel incursions in our land. Are you able to taking this new responsibility to the point of throwing your own life?

**NE-NSAKU:** Yes, Majesty. I do and I promise to be faithful to your Majesty and in the kingdom.

**ALVARO II:** Pedro!

**PEDRO:** Majesty?

**ALVARO II:** I appoint you to be responsible for Foreign Affairs. Are you ready to respect the code of good neighbourhood and be respectful to our guests?

**PEDRO:** Yes, Majesty. I do.

**ALVARO II:** On the fourteenth day of May 1655, I declare you civil servants.

**SCENE 4 EXT. FOREST OF LOANGO**

**FX BIRDS SINGING**

**FX A PESANT BOILS A TRADITIONAL DRINK**

**PEASANT:** *(To his children)* Make sure it is boiling in hundred degree. I don’t want people to die because my alcohol.

**PEASANT’S SON:** Are you afraid of going to prison?

**PEASANT:** Not to the prison. It is a death penalty with the new commander-in-chief of the army?

**PEASANT DAUGHTER:** Oh! The honourable Ne-Nsaku.

**PEASANT:** Yes. The evil, I have never seen in my life.

**FX STEPS OF PEOPLE WALKING**

**PEASANT’S SON:** Can you hear that? People are coming here.

**PEASANT:** Yes. What are they coming to do here? Let see. Oh God! Speaking of the devil!

**NE-NSAKU:** *(With arrogantly)* Peasant! *(Laughing)* Are you surprise?

**PEASANT:** No. Not really honourable notable.

**NE-NSAKU:** Commander-in-chief, please! My men informed me you have not paid yet your tax for your protection.

**PEASANT:** My lord! I do not have money at the moment. This year, palm tree and canes did not make good wine. Next month, I shall pay twice than usual.

**NE-NSAKU** *(Roars with laughter and to his men)*

Have you heard that? Tell peasant how much Nzimbu someone who failed in the payment owes to the commander-in - chief of the army next time?

**ONE OF NE-NSAKU PEOPLE:** Four.

**NE-NSAKU:**  Good. Have you heard that, peasant?

**PEASANT:** Yes, my Lord. I…

**NE-NSAKU:** *(Looks at the girl)*We shall retain her as a hostage.

**PEASANT:**  No, Me lords. Pity!

**NE-NSAKU:** Tell me, peasant. Is she betrothed to anybody?

**PEASANT:** Yes, my Lord. She is betrothed to Perreira’s son.

**NE-NSAKU**: Perreira's son? This mugger? *(To his men)* Take the girl away.

**PEASANT:** Have mercy my Lord. She is very helpful since her mother passed away.

**FX PEASANT’S DAUGHTER SCREAMS**

**PEASANT:** Spare my daughter, my Lord, I shall pay four times.

**NE-NSAKU** Good.

**FX NE-NSAKU FOOTSTEPS**

**NE-NSAKU***(To his men)*Release her.

**FX FOOTSTEPS STOP**

**SCENE 5 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**NDUNGI:** Get out from here! Let Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo protects the one who reigns among us with justice and fairness. Get out from here malevolent spirits that brings darkness. Let Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo protects our King and his family. *(Back the King and kneels.)*Majesty, you are the greatest king on earth.Your Kingdom is the largest, most powerfuland beautiful in Africa. You take care of your subjects. You treat them with kindness. When you give a feast for the principal men of the capital who come to visit you from everywhere, you regale them magnificently with the best millet bread, much meat, and mwamba in abundance. Our ancestors sent me to grant you force and strength to rule this Kingdom. Your reign will last years and years. No malevolent spirits will be able to destroy you. Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo will protect you. The great way is not the work of men; the way of death, it is Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo A Mpungu Tulendo, who made it. Nobody can grant you death. Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo A Mpungu Tulendo processes us.

**ALVARO II:** Ndungi, you've all my confidence. From generations to generations, your family was loyal to my family. In misfortune or in the happiness, he is always 5ear our family. Our gods bless you as well.

**NDUNGI** Majesty! Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo sees all and rules all. His will has always done. He has given us basic laws, and tradition derived all its power from its reference to this age of beginning. It was his law and his absolute wisdom that underlay the oaths and rituals of loyalty.

**BERNARDO:** We can't go against his wishes, shaman Ndungi. We owe him reverence and respect.

**NDUNGI**: Majesty! This morning, some of Notable yours, will try to oppose to your desire, but Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo will always be with you.

**ALVARO II**: Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo deserves our devotion. *Mother, Beatriz, Dona! You can leave us. The notable’s Council will soon begin.*

**FX THE SOUNDS OF THE DRUM ANNONCE THE BEGINNING OF THE ELDERS’ COUNCIL MEETING**

**SCENE 6 EXT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**JOAO:** *(claps his hands)* Gentleman, the King Alvaro II. All stand.

**FX NOTABLES SIT**

**NDUNGI:** Oh Majesty! The Master of the Universe! You are the protector of our Kingdom against malevolent forces. You are the protector of our wives and our children. Without you, no life exists. We are here to honour your greatness. You provide the light and the rain, which sprinkle our harvest. Be blessed by our gods and our ancestors. We are here to glorify you. We are…

**NE-NSAKU:** *(Interrupting)*Oh! You, shut up and stop this humbug.

**NDUNGI:** Humbug? What are you talking about?

**NE-NSAKU:** I am talking about your humbug.

His majesty does not need your flattery. Do you forget your role? You are here to predict the future and especially to tell us when our enemies will attack us. Of course *you* have only bad omens. And another thing, in this Kingdom, Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo A Mpungu Tulendo ya Mpungu is our God. We have to glorify only on his name.

**NDUNGI:** Does your rank of a dignitary give you the right to defy the ancestors and the established order?

**NE-NSAKU:** Established order? Established order? I am neither defying ancestors nor established order. Do you want to cast a spell on me? Who was the last person you put a spell on? Ah! I remember now. Matondo's husband. (Pause) Why? This is because you desired his woman. Very funny, isn't it? Poor little man! Now he cannot walk anymore. Nor can he perform in the marital bed.

**SOME NOTABLES:** *{Laugh) That is weird.*

**NDUNGI:** Sacrilege! There is the natural power of nature, which is sacred. The force of domination which is political and power that is from our ancestors and tradition. The second is derived from the third, and this lead to permanent order. Transforming these powers just for innovation will lead to disorder. Honourable Ne-Nsaku has to respect theorder.

**NE-NSAKU:** Philosophy! Philosophy! Always philosophy!

**NDUNGI:** Insane person.

**NE-NSAKU:** No. I am not insane. You are insane.

**NDUNGI:** How dare you insult the protector of all spirits? Tell us about your concubines. To carry out some superstition, one of them sacrificed her baby. Do you remember? She strangled him and buried the body in the Kenge Cassavas' field. She thought this act would increase her fertility. It is ridiculous isn't it?

**CHORUS:** This is ridiculous. This is ridiculous.

**NDUNGI:** You came and asked me for help.

I gave you idols to protect you, your concubines, your family and your house. Shall I continue?

**NE-NSAKU:** Rubbish. I did not do such thing.

**NDUNGI:** Rubbish? I know many secrets in this

Kingdom.

**ALL NOTAB:** Oh! Oh! Oh!

**NDUNGI:**  No one can challenge me.

**MWE MBUKU:** Have you no shame you two? It is a dishonour of you to wrangle in front of his Majesty. Today is the tenth anniversary since our Royal Highness passed away. We accept the duty to honour her memory. *(To his Majesty)* Majesty! Forgive us for this misunderstanding.

**ALVARO II:** Our concern today is to seal our bond with the Mani Soyo. Nevertheless, our spies tell us the chief of Mani Soyo is trying to help rebellious.

**PEDRO:** What can we do, Majesty?

**NDUNGI:**  Have we lost faith in our gods?

**NE-NSAKU:** Always wand and statue in your hand. What do you think to do with that? I command the armed forces of this Kingdom. Our soldiers are sufficiently equipped to fight any army.

**BERNARDO:** Silence! What is the matter with you two today? What kind of rivalry is this? We should be discussing the current problems. We should look to the interest of the Kingdom. Your arguments are beyond pathetic.

**MWE-MBUKU:** Majesty! We are really sorry about this argument, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** Dear compatriots, today is the tenth anniversary of the death of our royal highness. We cannot forget her because she did many good works in the country. But, today we have another priority; then there is no official ceremony for the queen. The situation is extremely serious. Our Kingdom is threatened by rebels. Their swords are more powerful than ours. I accept that times are very tough at the moment, but quarrels between us will simply destroy the Kingdom. We have to extend our Sovereignty and our territorial area of influence, annexing rebellious provinces. We are and remain the powerful Kingdom in Africa. Then villagers have to contribute and make some effort. Now! Ne-Nsaku! Can you explain to us your plan?

**NE-NSAKU:** Thank you very much, Majesty. I will recruit all males between the ages of fourteen and forty.

**ALVARO II:** Honourable Ne-Nsaku. Fourteen years? Is it not too cute?

**JOAO:** Majesty. I shall suggest sixteen years old.

**ALVARO II:**  What is your suggestion Bernardo?

**BERNARDO:** Sixteen years old, it is the reasonable age. I agree with honourable Joao.

**NE-NSUNDI**: Honourable Pedro?

**PEDRO**: Same opinion.

**ALVARO II**: Honourable Ne-Nsaku! Go on.

**NE-NSAKU**: At the moment, a smaller corps of heavy infantry will be necessary. I will require soldiers to hold two weeks’ worth of food upon reporting for campaign duty. We will take the position from the North to South and West to East. We will defeat them. We must encircle enemies on all corners.

**PEDRO:**  Is that all?

**NE-NSAKU:**  What do you mean?

**PEDRO:** You know what I am talking about. Your plan is unclear. We know your position. You will attack from North to South, West to East. However, you do not tell us how you would proceed.

**JOAO:** We need a coherent plan, **o**therwise…

**NE-NSAKU:** *(Interrupting)*I know their position. In order to raise support against our enemies, we have to make concessions to others. One of the most important concessions is to forge an alliance with the Duke of Kimpanzu and Mbwila.

**PEDRO:** Are you sure?

**NE-NSAKU:** Yes, of course. Instead of having the Kingdom fall into the hands of Soyo and its allies, we have to stick with my plan.

**ALVARO II:** Alright.I hope that your plan will work; otherwise, we will be all reduced to slavery. Dispatch a spy to go and find out what is happening on our borders. Send our emissary in order to make contact with our future allies. Your plan has to be explained in depth.

**NE-NSAKU:** Yes, Majesty. I will go at once.

Notables! Next week, we will initiate the second period of slashing and-burning fields in Mpyaza. It will be the beginning of the thirteenth month. Everyone knows this date is marked by the death of Mbenza, the initiator of our painting workshop. Every year we make this visit to appreciate the talent of our artists.

**ALL:**  Yes, Majesty.

**SCENE 7 INT. GARCIA’S WORKSHOP**

**FX THE KING AND THE NOTABLES FOOTSTEPS**

**ALL NOTABLES:** *(Stunned, except Ne-Nsaku)*That is fantastic as a sculpture.

**BERNARDO**: What beautiful work!

**ALVARO II:** It is, indeed. My daughter! Have you seen the way you have been honoured by Garcia?

**BEATRIZ:** Yes, father. It's so wonderful.

**NE-NSAKU:** Hum! Wonderful, yes? I don’t know what you are talking about.

**JOAO:** Ne-Nsaku! For once in your life, you need to admire someone work. Everyone thinks it is fabulous. Why not you?

**ALVARO II:** Garcia! Your sculpture displays a rare of emotion and beauty. This is something magical and wonderful.

Everything is sacred. In my lifetime, I have never thought work of arts could be splendid like that. It genuinely seems like have brought a paradise to our Kingdom.

**GARCIA:** Majesty. It's an honour for me that his Majesty recognizes the value of my work. I am an artist. I am working with wood and clay, but only artistic eyes like yours, Majesty’s can understand the beauty of the work. A sculpture can see his dream coming reality in his art.

For me as an artist, sculpture is not only a work, but also the conservation of the tradition of whom his Majesty is the guardian. Majesty, you gave me all freedom to realise my art. I am thankful to you.

**ALVARO II:** No. Stand up Garcia. I have to thank you because you are furthering the greatness of our Kingdom. People can die. Generation can overtake, but your art can never be destroyed. The glory of our Kingdom will be sung, tales will be told from generation to generation. Artist, tell me. How can I reward you for this? What gift can I give you?

**GARCIA:** Majesty, your appreciation is the best thing I got from you. An artist does not need material gifts but the recognition of his work.

**ALVARO II:** Garcia! I know. I really appreciate your art, and I must reward you. This will be the proof of my gratitude. If I did not reward, how can I convince myself that I really appreciated your work?

**GARCIA:** Majesty, I cannot answer you. It's a huge dilemma for me. My inspiration has come from his Majesty. It's only his Majesty, who can grant me. *[Pause]* Majesty! If I ask you something precious, will you give it to me?

**ALVARO II:** I will give you anything you want.

**GARCIA:** Majesty, I am in love.

**ALVARO II:** *(Laughs)*Are you? Tell me who's this woman? Since I am your king, I can give you whatever you want. Who's she? My guard will be ready to bring her to you now.

**GARCIA:** Majesty! I would devote all my soul and my body to her. I have never stopped loving her.

**ALVARO II:** Tell me who is she?

**GARCIA:** Princess Beatriz, your daughter is one, I…

**NE-NSAKU:** *(Interrupting)* Sacrilege! Blasphemy! Profanity! This is an offence against Majesty. He deserves the death sentence for this Majesty.

**BEATRIZ:** Death sentence? Did you say a death sentence? Are you serious? Who are you to pronounce a death sentence? Why does a man in love deserve this kind of penalty?

**NE-NSAKU:** You are a mere girl and as such have no right to speak in front of the elders and notables of the Kingdom.

**BEATRIZ:** Mere girl? A girl who can provide seed, do all those things that a woman can carry out at home, and satisfy a husband, still a mere girl? It is a long time, since I was a small girl. I am now a woman. The choice belongs to me; and I alone.

**NE-NSAKU:** Do you know why the Queen Mother, your grandmother did not come here? Because she knows that her place is not among men.

**BEATRIZ:** Really? Do you usually ask questions and give answers yourself? Are you God for taking decisions in the stead of others? My grandmother? My grandmother, however, belongs to the old class, who believes women have no rights.

**BERNARDO:** Ne-Nsaku! Can you leave my niece to express her opinion on this matter?

**NE-NSAKU:** Your Royal Highness, with all respects due, the rules concerning the silence of women in front of men are strict. Garcia deserves a death sentence.

**BERNARDO:** Who are you to pronounce a death sentence?

**NE-NSAKU:** Then his heart has to be pulled away. Consequently, he will cease loving a princess with pure blood.

**ALL NOTABLES:** Oh! Oh! What a sacrilege!

**GARCIA:** Death sentence? Majesty said, he could give me, whatever, I ask. Can someone deserve a death sentence because his heart decides to feel love for someone?

**NE-NSAKU:** Shut up, Garcia. Do you suppose to own the world because they say you are an excellent artist?

**GARCA:** I wonder, you appreciate my art, but…

#### NE-NSAKU: That's insane. And…

**BERNARDO:** Notable Ne-Nsaku. You should avoid confrontation all time with others. This often causes enemies.

#### NE-NSAKU: What are you talking about?

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**BERNARDO:** Don't you remember about your last confrontation? Ndungi had not appreciated your words.

**GARCIA:** Do you know why the mouth is first to rot after death? Because it talks a lot of nonsense.

**NE-NSAKU:** Garcia, you should turn your tongue a thousand times before speaking. It will be better for everybody.

**ALVARO II:** *(Interrupting)* Enough. Garcia!I heard your demand. A decision will be taken in the next council session.

**GARCIA:** Majesty…

**ALVARO II:** Notable? I said a decision would be taken in the next council session. I have spoken.

**GARCIA:** Yes, Majesty. Your decisions are incontestable.

**ALVARO II:** Good. A decision will be made. You will be notified as soon as possible.

**NE-NSAKU:** Majesty, Lions and sheep will never drink water from the same pond.

**ALVARO II:** Notable! Keep your expression for yourself. Council will decide either Garcia will be or not authorized to marry princess Beatriz.

**GARCIA:** Thank you, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** Now, it is time to let Garcia continue his extraordinary work.

**SCENE 8 EXT. FOREST OF LOANGO**

**FX BIRDS SINGING**

**BEATRIZ:** I am praying Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo days and nights. I am asking him to withdraw any notable resistance.

**GARCIA:** What can we do if there is one?

**BEATRIZ:** We shall fight. We shall fight till the endof my life. Nobody. Neither my father, my uncle, my grandmother nor Notables will be able to take away what I feel in you. I want our meeting not to be any more secret.

**GARCIA:** My love in you will remain endless. I shall live with this love to my tomb. You are my love and you will be forever.

**BEATRIZ:** You are kind and honest.

**FX THEY HEAR SOMETHING MOVING**

**BEATRIZ:**  Have you heard this noise?

**GARCIA:**  Yes. What is it?

**BEATRIZ:** It is very strange. It is like someone is spying on us.

**GARCIA:**  Do you think?

**BEATRIZ:** I do not know. We have to go now. This forest is infected of the rebels and bad spirits.

**GARCIA:** Then, we shall leave. Besides, the night is falling into a moment.

**Scene 9 INT. NE-NSAKU HOUSE**

**FX A KNOCK ON THE DOOR**

**FX DOOR OPENS**

**NE-NSAKU FIRST WIFE:** Hi to you, honourable, my husband.

**NE-NSAKU:** Hi to you too, my first wife

**X NE-NSAKU’S WIFE POURS WATER IN A BIG BOL**

**NE-NSAKU:** Good. A woman must look after her husband in this way.

**NE-NSAKU FIRST WIFE:** I am your wife. I must satisfy all wishes of my dear husband.

**FX NE-NSAKU AND HIS MEN ARE WATCHING THEIR** **HANDS**

**NE-NSAKU:** I am so proud of you. You differ from my other spouses.

**FX NE-SAKU CLAPS HIS HANDS**

**FX FOOTSTEPS OF NE-NSAKU WIFE LEAVING THE AND A MAN ENTERING THE ROOM**

**NE-NSAKU:** Now, my wife is gone, we need to discuss some business.

**NE-NSAKU:** I gave you a mission. Have you accomplished it?

**THE MAN:** Yes, my Lord. I have seen the princess together with Gracia in the forest, but unfortunately, they were just talking.

**NE-NSAKU**: Unfortunately? Are you mad? We need something to incriminate Garcia and you are telling they were just talking. I don’t believe you.

**THE MAN:**  I am telling the truth.

**NE-NSAKU:** Do you think we need the truth? That is simply foolishness. I want you to find something for God sake! I mean something to tell the king.

**THE MAN:** Oh! Yes. I remember. They were doing foolish things.

**NE-NSAKU:**  That is much better.

**Scene 10 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**ALVARO II:** Mother. During our visit in the workshop of arts, Garcia, The artist expressed to me his feeling to marry Beatriz as a reward ofthe work done.

**DONA ZABELA**: What did you answer to him?

**ALVARO II:** Notables’ council has to take a decision. If they say" yes ", he will marry my daughter. If not, I shall not be able to get anything for him.

**DONA ZABELA:** My son. You are the king, the protector of our usages. You can take a decision without consulting the notables. It is about the life of your own daughter.

**ALAVRO II:** Mother. I am of course the guardian of our usages, but a guardian of usages must also listen to his subjects.

**FX A KNOCK ON THE DOOR**

**ALVARO II:** Come in.

**DONA ZABELA:** When you think to take a right decision, come and talk to my son.

**ALVARO II:** Have a seat honourable Ne=Nsaku. So! What brings you at such a late one o'clock? Something of the first importance?

**NE-NSAKU**: It is regarding Gracia and the princess. They were together.

**ALVARO II:** So?

**NE-NSAKU:**  In the forest, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:**  Continue.

**NE-NSAKU:**  …behaving badly.

**ALVARO II:**  How?

**NE-NSAKU:** I mean doing foolish things, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** Like what, notable?

**NE-NSAKU:** What the law prohibits. I mean, the

fornication.

**ALVARO II:** Are you sure of your accusation? They are

very serious.

**NE-NSAKU:** Yes, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** What do you want, Ne-Nsaku?

**NE-NSAKU:** Notables have to delay their decision

about Garcia.

**ALVARO II:** Have you seen it with your own eyes?

**NE-NSAKU:** No, Majesty. I mean....

**ALVARO II:** I want witnesses. Come back to me when

you have one. Good night, notable.

**Scene 11 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**BEATRIZ:** Good afternoon father. Your servant said

you want to see me.

**ALVARO II:**  Yes, indeed.

**BEATRIZ:** It is late. Is it very important?

**ALVARO II:** Yes, my daughter. It is about you and

the artist. People have seen you alone with him in the forest. What were you doing in there?

**BEATRIZ:** *(Disappointed)*Do your men spy on me?

**ALVARO II:** No. I am your father. It is my duty to care of my child.

**BEATRIZ:** Believe me, father. I cannot dishonour you. I am not a foolish girl.

**ALVARO II:** You are the princess. You have to be Careful.

**BEATRIZ:** I am virgin, and I shall remain until the day of my marriage. Listen to your own heart, and not to people speculations. Do not you trust in me?

**ALVARO II:**  I do my daughter.

**BEATRIZ:** I have to go and meet grand’ mother. We shall go to Kenge.

**ALVARO II:** Then hurry up and rush over your Grandmother.

**SCENE 12 INT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**NE-NSAKU:** Notables and wise of the kingdom.Have you ever heard of such a thing? *(Ironic)* An artist wants to marry the princess. Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! In addition, *we* have to give a ruling on this case. Yes. *We* will give it a ruling. How can we mix blood? Sacrilege! Do you really want to accept things like that?

**SOME NOTABLES:** Oh no! We can’t let it happen.

**NE-NSAKU**: We have to fight for the nobility. *W*e must stop this kind of insanity.

**SOME NOTABLES:**  Yes, we have to. This is unacceptable.

**FX SOUNDS OF DRUM ANNONCING THE ARRIVAL OFTHE KING**

**JOAO:** Gentleman, the King, Alvaro.

**ALVARO II:** Notables, elders and wise of the Kingdom.A week ago we had promised the answer to Garcia concerning his request to marry the princess. During this business, our judgement must be just and without prejudice. We must be fair and forget our differences. Open to the audiences, I ask the prince Bernardo to make the statement on the situation. Guards! Enter with Garcia.

**FX INT. GUARDS AND GARCIA STEPS**

**ALVARO II:** Today, we must rule on a case. This case is not really difficult, but it is complex. It is the first time our Kingdom will rule on a case like that. What is it about? As a gift, a subject of different class wants to marry aprincess. I know that during this debate, the opinions will be contradictory. However, I want everyone to be guided by his heart. Whatever the grievance you have against Garcia, I ask you to be objective. Joao, the assembly wants to hear you now. *(He sits)*

**JOAO:** Majesty, your royal highness, notables and constituent members of assembly of the provinces. After having admired the extraordinary beauty of the work of our artist, Garcia, the king decided to ask him to propose the gift he wishes. Garcia expressed to our Majesty his love of the princess Beatriz. However, our wise majesty promised to him to await the assembly of the council. I believe that he deserves to obtain an answer, which is appropriate to him. Be it positive or negative, the reasons will have to be explained to him. By the name of wise and notables, I have spoken.

**BERNARDO:** Ne-Nsaku, the council wants to hear you.

**NE-NSAKU**: Your majesty, your royal highness,Notables. Let us not let this man deride our traditions? As I said before, it is an offence to fall in love with a virgin princess. It is ridiculous, impossible, absurd, incredible and insane. Royal blood cannot be mixed with common blood. And you…

**PEDRO:** *(Interrupting)* Why not? Red is the royal blood.

**NE-NSAKU:** Yes, but it is sacred.

**CHORUS:** Oh! Oh! Oh!

**NE-NSAKU**: Do you want to allow this artist to taint royal blood? We cannot amend the ancestral law.

**PEDRO:** Honourable Ne-Nsaku. You have never accepted the established order. Why now?

**JOAO:** Honourable Ne- Nsaku! May I remind you the origin of Kongo Kingdom? In the beginning, the highest position was occupied by the profession of ironwork. All those who worked with iron and paint, came from the nobility. They are the founders of our Kingdom.

**NE-NSAKU:** Are you giving me…?

**ALVARO II:** Enough! This place is not for disputes. Everyone should express his thoughts. However, as it has been said, the controversy has no place here. We must decide today as I had promised the artist. *(To Joao)* Go ahead.

**JOAO:** Tonight, we are going to answer two questions: namely; does an artist and blacksmith have the right to marry a princess? If yes, should we abolish our tradition relating matter? Do we have the right to condemn someone to death simply because he fell in love with a princess? Notables, wise men of laws of the Kingdom, I appeal to your integrity of judgement. Nobody should be influenced by another. Everyone is free to express thoughts. After this discussion, we shall proceed to a secret vote. Notables and sages of the Kingdom, on behalf of the King, my father, I have spoken.

**NE-NSAKU:** Majesty, Royal Highness, notables and elders. As I said earlier, a man of inferior social class can never marry a princess. This type of union will have a long-term effect and cause misfortune to our Kingdom. Indeed, many elders and sages are in agreement with me on this point.

**JOAO:** Notable, only speak for yourself. Do not talk about what others may think. We will have the patience to listen to everyone.

**NE-NSAKU:** My apologies his Royal Highness. *(To notables)* We should not just say yes because it is expedient. Since saying yes, will lead us not only to abolish our tradition regarding the blood mixture, but the modification of all of our sacred things. This tradition was established from generation to generation. This will take several months and years to replace them. Should we apply clemency for a person who has violated our sacred law and principles? Honourable notables! The marriage between the humble and the sacred is prohibited by our tradition.

**PEDRO:** Tradition is not law, honourable Ne-Nsaku.

**NE-NSAKU**: No, indeed. However, honourable Foreign Affairs civil servant has to know that our tradition remains our absolute sacrosanct. On them are based our whole existence. Do you really…?

**PEDRO:** Are you trying to lecture me?

**NE-NSAKU:** No. Not at all, honourable Pedro. I am trying to give you the true definition of our tradition.

**PEDRO:** Tradition remains the tradition. There is only one definition of tradition, and this differs to law.

**BERNARDO:** *(Interrupts)*Since these discussions began, I never spoke. However, I heard you speak to each other. All of you, you heard what womb of a mother. Can we imagine what a pain this mother would have when she will hear that her son was executed because he loves a woman? A prince or daughter of dignitaries, they first are women. With the maternal instinct, they will have pain. While his father was alive, nobody could think things like that, because he worked hard for this Kingdom. And believe me notables and elders of the Kingdom, none of you will accept that *his* son suffers such a fate. Send this man to death will be a bigger sin that the Kingdom had ever committed. This case is too complex to discuss because any wrong decision would be like a lethal weapon to all young inhabitants of the Kingdom. On behalf of all the king, notables and elders, I have spoken.

**NE-NSAKU:** The question is not whether this man came from the womb of a woman or not. We should not regard him as a victim. The law is for everyone. If we cannot condemn him because he fell in love with the princess, we must condemn him for disrespect to his majesty. Our laws are clear about that. For me, he deserves to be sentenced to death. By the names of notable and elders, I have spoken.

**NOTABLE #1:** We are facing a great dilemma that our Kingdom has never experienced before. If we condemn this man, we will have the young revolting. If we offer clemency, there will be excessed. All young people will take it as example leniency. So what can we do now? Let each of us decide according to his soul and conscience.

**NOTABLE #2:** Execute this man will make him a martyr. Acquit this man is giving a signal that there is leniency in this Kingdom. I believe that life imprisonment would be a better option for everyone.

**NOTABLE #3:** Who is this woman who accepts her son be sacrificed by the name of an outdated law? Think carefully because the life of a human being depends on it. Notables and elders of the Kingdom, this man deserves neither death nor jail. Love comes from the heart.

**NOTABLE #4:** A fault as such deserves punishment. Yes, punishment, but a punishment other than death. The sentencing to life imprisonment would be a good solution, because if we condemn him to death, he is likely to become a martyr.

**NOTABLE #5:** Let us review the matter. We are facing such a dilemma, as our Kingdom had never experienced before. If we condemn this man, we will have the young revolting. If we offer clemency, then all young people will take it as an example. Let each of us decides according to his soul and conscience. Acquit this man is giving a signal that there is impunity in this Kingdom. I believe that imprisonment without a death sentence would be the best solution.

**NE-NSAKU:** Such a fault does deserve punishment. Yes, punishment, no other but death. This man has just walks over our ancestral tradition. He not only expressed his wish to marry our princess, but he did not wait for the decision of the Notables before making things with...

**CHORUS:**  Which thing.

**NE-NSAKU:** He had sexual relations with the princess.

**CHORUS:** Oh! Oh! Oh! It is abominable.

**JOAO:** Have you witnesses Notables?

**NE-NSAKU**: Yes.

**JOAO:**  Good. We have heard each speak on behalf of the king. Before taking any decision, either acquit him, sentence him to life imprisonment or death, we have to hear witnesses. Where are your witnesses Notable?

**NE-NSAKU:**  Yes. I have two witnesses.

**JOAO:**  let's enter the first witness.

**JOAO:** Witness. What exactly have you seen?

**WITNESS #1:** I have seen the artist with the princess in the forest.

**JOAO:** What were you doing in the forest?

**WITNESS #1:**  To check my palm’s wine.

**JOAO:**  What were they doing?

**WITNESS #1:** They were doing bad things.

**JOAO:** let's enter the second witness. What have you seen?

**WITNESS #2:** I saw the same thing as the first witness.

**JOAO:** How do you know what the first witness said?

**CHORU:**  Oh! Oh! Oh!

**JOAO:**  Notable, your witnesses are not credible.

**NE-NSAKU:**  How is that?

**JOAO:** Commander-in Chief Ne-Nsaku, actually we are questioning witnesses. Notables! We had heard both witnesses, but we have some doubt as to their credibility. Reason for which, we have decided to proceed with a vote knowing that neutrality, in this case, will strengthen one camp against the other. Take a moment for reflection. When you return, everyone will express his decision by a vote. That is why we must make a wise decision conscientiously, and regardless of the outcome.

**FX MEN AND WOMEN SINGING AND DANCING UNDER THE RHYTHM OF THE DRUM**

**BERNARDO:** *(Claps his hands to stop the drum)* The session re-starts.

**ALVARO II:** Thank you very much, Bernardo. Dancers, you can go back to your home now.Honourable Joao, we are listening.

**JOAO:** Well! You are now back. Each of you will find four small sticks in front of him. The red one expresses the death. The black symbolizes prison life. The blue is a sign of a total acquittal and the yellow means neutrality. At the signal, everyone will raise the stick of his choice, and this should be done without looking at each other. Let everybody express his vote!

**JOAO:** *(He sights)* Well! Four Reds, one Black, one Yellow and three Blues. Death sentence is adopted.

**CHORUS:** Nonsense! Nonsense!

**ALVARO II:** Silence! The people have spoken. We must respect their will. Garcia will be put to death. *Guards!* Put him in the prison while waiting for the day of his execution. Wait a minute. Garcia, do you want to say something before to go to the prison?

**GARCIA:** Yes, Majesty. Majesty, why have I been brought here as a thief? Majesty said to me, I could ask for whatever, I wanted. Why should I be shackled thus?

**ALVARO II:** Notable and elders have found that your demand was too excessive. The majority has decided artist.

**GARCIA:** This is the notables’ judgement, Majesty. What is really in your heart, Majesty? Is it an offence, falling in love with the princess?

### **ALVARO II:** Garcia! I don't want such an excellent artist as you to die. It's not yet too late. If you agree that, you will never see the princess Beatriz again, your life will be spared. That is what the council wants. If it was only me, I would take a different decision. But, you see, council decisions have to be respected.

**GARCIA:** How can I say that Majesty? How can I say that a firefly is not attracted to moonlight? How can I say that a bee can survive without a flower? I can never give up my heart’s desire. No, Majesty. With all respect due, I can never betray my heart because of the council.

**NE-NSAKU:** Garcia! You have flouted the royal traditions.

**GARCIA:** Commander in chief. Could you send your own son to death because he has publicly expressed his love? You can’t. You can’t because you have done all this to defend your own interests. Buying the voices of others in order to achieve your ends.

**NE-NSAKU:** Blasphemy! How dare you… Can you stop him?

**GARCIA:** Blasphemy? No. Are you hiding something?

**BERNARDO:** We can’t stop him Ne-Nsaku. This man is facing the death sentence. He has the right to express what is in his heart.

**GARCIA:** Your highness! My …

**NE-NSAKU**: (*Interrupting)* Shut up! You are forgetting your status.

**GARCIA**: *(To the king)* Majesty! I have not flouted the traditions. I have not committed any offence. Princess Beatriz overwhelms my mind. I am an ordinary artist who loves the princess. Love does not recognise classes and differences.

**NE-NSAKU:** Shut up impudent man.

**ALVARO II:**  Stop it Ne-Nsaku. Let him express all his thoughts.

**GARCIA:** I admitted in this court that I love the princess. There is no point to be sentenced to death. What kind of justice is this, Majesty? I am being silenced. Should I not speak the truth? My feelings are hushed. Can’t you hear someone’s heart beat?

#### NE-NSAKU: Garcia! You will be punished for your impudence.

**GARCIA:** What difference can it make? Alive or dead, I won’t renounce my conviction. Royal rules have always slain true love! However, love has always been acclaimed! And in spite of all the powers, the royalty has not been able to wipe out love. Notable and elders your power cannot wipe out my love.

**NE-NSAKU:** Notable and elder power can wipe out your existence. Majesty, this man has to be executed before the sunset.

**GARCIA:** Why? Are you worrying about something? Love is a feeling that cannot be explained. Can you understand that?

**NE-NSAKU:** Love? Are you talking about love? Do you…?

**ALVARO II:**  Enough! This man will be executed when I order it. Guards, put him in chains.

**FX SOUNDS OF DRUM TO ANNOUNCE THE END OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**

**NE-NSAKU:** My friends!The King is losing all reasons. His state of mind is not normal.He is becoming very weak, and making compromises with criminals.

**NOTABLES:**  Yes. You are right.

**NE-NSAKU:** Are we going to let it destroy our Kingdom?

**NOTABLES:**  No.

**NE-NSAKU** We have to take things in the hands. We must overthrow him, because one day our Kingdom will fall in the hands of the enemy.

**NOTABLES:** Yes. We have to overthrow him.

**SIMAO:** My friend, if anyone denounces us, we shall go straight for an exile.

**NE-NSAKU:** Exile? Do you know how many provinces are supporting our action? We had the support of more than five provinces. The dukes of this province also pointed out the weakness of the king. If there is somebody who must go into exile, he is definitely the king Alvaro.

**SIMAO:** It is suicidal.

**NE-NSAKU**: Suicidal? All right. Who is with me?

*SILENCE*

**NOTABLES:** We all are with you.

**NE-NSAKU:** As I can see, notable Simao is neither for me nor against me. Never mind. I promise you. You will be all my men of trust. No decision should be taken without your consent.

**A NOTABLE:** What is the plan?

**NE-NSAKU** We need much help from Soyo. We will send one of us to get contact with their Duke. We need a volunteer. Notable Simao, can you carry out this mission?

**SIMAO:** No. I can’t accept. Can you choose another person? I am sure many, here are able to accomplish this mission.

**NE-NSAKU:**  All right. Who wants to be a volunteer?

*SILENCE*

**NE-NSAKU:** Thank you very much for your loyalty. *(Points his hand to one of them.)* Notable. Thank you. You are a loyal person, and I am sure you will carry out successfully the mission. I will tell you about the next meeting, next time.

**Scene 13 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**FX STEPS OF DONA ZABELA**

**DONA ZABELA:** Is something troubling you my son? You are so sad. I've never seen my son so depressed since the queen Barbosa passed away.

**ALVARO II:** I am not depressed, mother.

**DONA ZABELA:** Yes, you are. Do I need to remind you that you were in my womb for nine months? So, I know every movement, every mood of yours more than anyone else. I always knew when you were lying, although your father didn’t. Your father always asked me how I knew you were lying. I told him, it was a woman thing. One day when in the company of other notables children, the king’s musician said you destroyed part of his patio. When I asked you, you said you didn’t. However, you could not look me in the eye. I told you, my son, you are lying to me. You asked me, how did I know? I told you, every mother knows when her children are lying. Now, tell me what is going on? Is it about Garcia’s death sentence?

**Alvaro II:** Yes, mother. Personally, I could not take this kind of decision against Garcia, the artist. The death sentence against someone who has declared publicly his love is unfair and unreasonable.

**DONA ZABELA:** You are the king, my son. You can change this decision.

**ALVARO II:**  Oh mother! I can't. I can't change the decision of the council.

**DONA ZABELA:** The **c**ouncil knows you are the King of Kongo, and you can take a decision you want without their consent. Are you afraid of Ne-Nsaku's reaction?

**ALVARO II:** No mother. Ne-Nsaku wasn't the only one who applied for the death sentence. I have to respect the decision of the council. Garcia is a good and brave young man, but he made a big mistake. Our tradition does not allow behaviour like that.

**DONA ZABELA:** Yes, you are the King, and you can reconsider the notables' decision. Garcia does not deserve a death penalty.

**FX THE PRINCESS BEATRIZ FOOTSTEPS**

**BEATRIZ:** Death penalty? I heard you. So that's why you forbid every woman the right to attend the council? Father! Why did you take this decision? Why did you sentence Garcia to death? Was this your own decision or did Ne-Nsaku influence the decision?

**ALVARO II:** No, my daughter. Remember my daughter our council decisions have not always been unanimous, but a majority decision. Anything that has been done is for your own good.

**BEATRIZ:** How can they know what is good or bad for me? What about you? You are not only the King, but you are also the guardian of Kingdom law and traditions. You know what is right, and what is wrong. How did you accept a decision like that? If you had a son, and you were any other subject in the Kingdom, could you accept your son would be executed because he fell in love?

**BEATRIZ:**  You are a princess, my daughter.

**BEATRIZ:** I know, I am a Kongo’s princess, but I am also a woman. Why do you need notables to take this kind of decision?

**ALVARO II:** I can't take an important decision like this without having the consent of the notables’ council.

**BEATRIZ:** Notables' council? Your court does not even give the opportunity to the defendant to defend himself. I am sure that all witnesses provided by the Notable Ne-Nsaku had been bribed. What sort of justice is this? I warrant your guards brought him to the court just to be an extra.

**ALVARO II:** I did it because I wanted to protect you.

**BEATRIZ:** Protect me? How can you protect me against the innocent man? Father, this man does not deserve death. He only expressed what was in his heart. This is not a sin as I know it. If you want to protect me, you would better protect me from Ne-Nsaku.

**ALVARO II:** I am protecting the people of this Kingdom. I also have the right to protect you?

**BEATRIZ:**  Nonsense.

**DONA ZABELA:**  Don't speak like that to your father.

**BEATRIZ:** Some minutes ago, I thought you were

against the council decision. However, I

**DONA ZABELA:** No. Not, at all. I am on the side of the truth. I can't accept someone's death simply because he's fallen in love with a princess. However, you must speak to your father in a reasonable tone whatever the fault committed.

**BEATRIZ:** Myfatherknows Ne-Nsaku hasa considerable influence among the notables. He can persuade anyone to do what he wants. He became a powerful commander in chief of the army because you gave him all privileges. In conclusion, everyone is afraid of him. Why can’t my father understand he’s able to corrupt everybody?

**ALVARO II:** How do you know that?

**BEATRIZ:**  People talk, you know?

**ALVARO II:**  My beloved daughter, are you in love?

**BEATRIZ:** Will my answer make you change the council decision?

**ALVARO II:** No, my daughter. I have faith in my

notables’ decision.

**BEATRIZ:** I am not talking about notable. I am talking about Ne-Nsaku.

**FX MESSENGER FOOTSTEPS**

**MESSENGER:** Majesty, several persons talks about the existence of a conspiracy to kidnap the princess Beatriz.

**ALVARO II:**  Who want to kidnap my daughter, Beatriz?

**MESSENGER:** Yes, Majesty! Rumours say one of your notables will be the most responsible.

**ALVARO II:**  Do you know the name of this notable?

**MESSENGER:**  No, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:**  Messenger! The king cannot reign with

presumptions. The king needs proof before the court of the notables and elders of the Kingdom give a ruling on a case.

**MESSENGER:**  There is something else, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:**  What is it?

**MESSENGER**: There is another conspiracy aiming to assassinate his Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** *(Laugh)* If it is true, why was I not informed?

**MESSENGER:** I have been sent by some notables to inform his Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** Good. I shall decide later if notables and elders will be able to meet me. But once again, I can’t alert council of notables because of noise.

**FX STEPS OF THE MESSENGER LEAVING**

**BERNARDO:** Majesty, you could perhaps consider what the messenger has just said. There is no smoke without fire.

**ALVARO II:** We will need to reflect before giving an answer. Be wary of chattering, my brother.

**FX FOOT STEPS OF A PRISON GUARD**

**PRISON GUARD:** (*Out of breath)* Majesty!

**ALVARO II:** Guard! What happened?Speak guard.

**PRISON GUARD:** Majesty! It's not me. A group of insurgents wants to kill the artist.

**ALVARO II:** Garcia?

**PRISON GUARD:** Yes, Majesty. Fortunately, some prison guards stopped them.

**ALVARO II:**  How many men died?   
  
**PRISON GUARD:** No one, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:**  Oh my God! What is going on here?

**FX JOAO FOOTSTEPS**

**NE-NSUNDI** *Joao, g*o and tell all notables an urgent council meeting will be held at the royal palace tomorrow before sunset.

**SCENE 14 INT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**ALVARO II:** Notables and elders. Yesterday, a group of people wanted to assassinate Garcia in his cell.

**NE-NSAKU:** Assassinate? Garcia is a convict who is awaiting death. Majesty, his life is no longer important. Whether he's killed today or tomorrow, there is no change.

**ALVARO II:** Fortunately, their plan has failed. The death sentence will only be executed thirty days from the day the decision had been taken. This will give us the opportunity to listen to some testimonies of certain facts that have not been clarified.

**NE-NSAKU:**  Clarified?

**BERNARDO:** Would you never learn to listen to his Majesty?

**ALVARO II:** The assailants who wanted to commit this act have a support. We do not know yet who he is, but we will find out soon.

**NE-NSAKU:**  Support? This is ridiculous.

**ALVARO II:** Guards. Take Ne-Nsaku outside.

**FX A GUARD FOOTSTEPS**

**ALVARO II:**  Guard! What is the problem again?

**PRISON GUARD:**  Majesty, the prisoner escaped.

**NE-NSAKU: Garcia escaped!**

**FX NE-NSAKU FOOTSTEPS AND TURNING AROUND**

**NE-NSAKU:**I knew this would happen. This is the results of your cowardice. Those who wanted to assassinate him, though only accelerate the procedure.

**JOAO:** Incorrigible! We would like to know who is behind all of this. In fact, if he escaped, it can also be your fault.

**NE-NSAKU:** My fault! When the crops fail, it is Ne-Nsaku. When somebody has a problem, it is Ne-Nsaku’s fault. Of course, I’m not Agriculture or Social minister. I am the commander in chief of the army.

**JOAO:** The Council is suspended. We have just learnt the inanimate body of the notable Simao has been found in wood. Emotion and stupor among the notables. Let Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo keeps his soul. We will back in seven days.

**NE-NSAKU:** I have nothing to do here. I have to

**FX NE-NSAKU FOOTSTEPS**

**BERNARDO:** Ne-Nsaku is really strange.

**ALVARO II:** Yes, indeed! Bernardo! It is your responsibility to organise the notable Simaofuneral.

**SIMAO:** Yes, brother.

**ALVARO II:** Notable Joao! Notables’ council has to know what really happened. And keep an eye to Ne-Nsaku.

**JOAO:** Yes, Everything will be done, Majesty.

# **Scene 15 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**FX FOOTSTEPS OF THE PRINCESS BEATRIZ** **ENTERING THE ROYAL PALACE**

**ALVARO II:** Beatriz, my daughter. What is going on?

**BEATRIZ:** I have something to tell you, father. Father, please listen to me. It's of the highest importance for the future of the Kingdom.

**ALVARO II:** If you say so.

**BEATRIZ:** I have heard everything that was said in the elders' council.

**ALVARO II:** I have no doubt my daughter. I know you verywell.

**BEATRIZ:** I spoke with many people who told me that Ne-Nsaku was the instigator of the conspiracy. I also have evidence that he has bribed other notables to obtain the death sentence of Garcia because he was so jealous.

**ALVARO II:** Who are these people?

**BATRIZ:** Villagers. They are some farmers who have had enough of being robbed by Ne-Nsaku's men. Those brave people are suffering. They are paying a lot of taxes.

**ALVARO II:** Will they come to testify council of elders?

**BEATRIZ:** I think they feared reprisals, but some of them would like to speak personally to you.

**ALVARO:** I believe you, my daughter.

**PEDRO:** I always knew Ne-Nsaku was hiding something.It was strange the zeal, he used to obtain Gracia death sentence. We were really fooled.

**ALVARO II:** We have not been fooled, but we did have confidence in one of our notables. I want to see all elders and notables now. We have discussed about this matter. *(To the princess)*Thank you very much my daughter. Go to your grandmother. She has something to explain to you.

**FX SOUNDS OF DRUM CALLING THE ELDERS MEETING**

**NDUNGI:** O king! The dispenser of the wisdom of the ancestors! We are here in order to listen to your advice. You always tell the truth. With you, injustice does not exist.

N**E-NSAKU**: Okay! Okay!

**PEDRO:** *(Stands)* Everyone knows now the way you intimidate people.

**NE-NSAKU:**  I don’t know what you are talking about.

**PEDRO:** About your tricks.

**JOAO:** Today’s meeting is your concern.

**NE-NSAKU:** The person who is supposed to be judged in absentia is Garcia. He escaped from the royal prison.

**ALVARO II:** Joao! Read for us the list of crimes of the accused.

**FX JOAO IS OPENING THE COMPLAIN REGISTER**

**JOAO:** In this date of Marchfifteen hundred Thirty-Nine, the royal court of Nsundi has noted the following abuses committed by the notable Ne-Nsaku, commander in chief of the army. First of all; in order to reinforce his wealth, Ne-Nsaku did charge the farmers excessive taxes.

**NE-NSAKU:** Rubbish.

**JOAO:** Secondly**,** the notable Simao died in mysterious circumstances, and the court thinks that you are the suspect number one.

**NE-NSAKU:** Simple presumption. You have no evidence.

**JOAO:**  Everything in order. Thirdly; to satisfy his selfishness, Ne-Nsaku has bribed certain notables so that they vote for the death of Garcia, and so eliminate his rival.

**NE-NSAKU**: Rival? Who’s a rival?

**JOAO:** Did you not love secretly Princess Beatriz? Four; Ne-Nsaku sent to death our fighters in the front line.

**NE-NSAKU:** Majesty, I protest. This text is completely ridiculous.

**ALVARO II:** Ridiculous? This is the only word you have in your mouth.

**NE-NSAKU:** You don’t have any evidence.

**JOAO:** Enter the first farmer.

**NE-NSAKU**: Farmers! Nonsense.

**JOAO:**  *Farmer, d*o you know this man?

**FARMER #1:** Yes, my Lord.

**JOAO:** The court wants to hear your evidence.

***FARMER* #1:** *(Hesitates) Yes… huh…*

**ALVARO II:** *(Interrupting)* Speak farmer. Do not fear. You are under royal protection.

**FARMER #1:** Ne-Nsaku’s men took more than two thousand Nzimbu shells, which I had saved.

**JOAO:** Second witness, please!

*SILENCE*

Do you know this man?

**FARMER #2:** Yes, my lord.

**JOAO:** Go ahead.

**FARMER #2** His men have killed my daughter fiancé because Lord Ne-Nsaku wanted her.

**NE-NSAKU**: Ridiculous. How dare you farmers say this?

**FARMER #3:** He destroyed all my season’s harvest, because I refused to join the assailants who planned to kill Garcia.

**JOAO:** Garcia, you can enter now.

**NE-NSAKU:** I protest most strongly, Majesty.

**JOAO:** Garcia, the court wants to hear now your explanation.

**GARCIA:** Majesty, your royal highness, notables and court members. I can prove the notable Ne-Nsaku used flawed evidence to obtain my death sentence. As he secretly loved the princess Beatriz, so he wanted me to be killed. It was the only way for him to satisfy his desire.

**NE-NSAKU:** What do you mean? What are you talking about?

**GARCIA:** Notable Mwanza is an eyewitness of his tricks. He refused to be corrupted, so Ne-Nsaku threatened to kill him by fear his plans to be revealed

**JOAO:** Garcia, by the name of the king Ne-Nsundi and the court, accept our apologies.

**ALVARO II:** Approach, Garcia.

*SILENCE*

**ALVARO II:** In a few days, the royal family will set up the day of your engagement to the princess Beatriz.

**NE-NSAKU:** Blasphemy! This Kingdom is really going against traditions.

**NDUNGI:** This is your end, Ne-Nsaku. You are a finished man.

**NE-NSAKU :** Shut up, charlatan.

**ALVARO II:** Guards! Take Ne-Nsaku away. Ne-Nsaku! This is the beginning of exile.

**FX GUARDS FOOTSTEPS**

**ALVARO:**  Pedro! Send somebody to bring new clothes for Garcia. Pedro! There is a lady, who is waiting for you inthe Royal room.

**GARCIA:** Thank you, Majesty.

**ALVARO II:** Servant. Take Garcia to the princess.

**FX MEN AND WOMEN SING AND DANCE**

## FX SOUND OF GUNS FIRE DISTANT

**SCENE 16 INT. ROYAL PALACE**

**FX A MESSENGER FOOTSTEPS AND THEN STOPS**

**ALVARO II:** Messenger! What is about?

**MESSENGER:** *(Kneels)* Majesty! Ne-Nsaku and the rebels from some province attack our Kingdom.

**ALVARO II:** Where are they? Can you be more explicit?

**MESSENGER:** They are on the Kingdom border. Three thousand warriors armed with bows and arrows surrounded. They are naked to the waist and painted with white and various coloured paints. Our spies said, they wore a headdress made of the feathers of parrots and other birds. As for Ne-Nsaku, he wore on his head a kind of nightcap decorated with skilful embroidery representing a snake.

**ALVARO II:**  What else?

**MESSENGER:** They form a group of musicians who carry drums, ivory trumpets and instrument resembling violas. Majesty! Some of our soldiers have been captured.

**ALVARO II:** Go and announce an urgent council meeting.

**MESSENGER:** He’s on his way, Majesty. He knows the situation.

**ALAVARO II:** *(To himself)* Men, women and children of the Kingdom know that, since my accession. I have always been protected against the peculiarities of personality, such as Ne-Nsaku. He used looting, extortion and murder to strike fear in the heart of the populace. And now, he wants to destroy our Kingdom? As long time as Nzambi A Mpungu Tulendo A Mpungu Tulendo will be with us, he won’t be able to do it.

**FX DONA ZABELA FOOTSTEPS**

**DONA ZABELA:** Issomething seriously bothering you, my son?

**ALVARO II:** Ne-Nsaku and his soldiers are attacking the Kingdom.

**DONA ZABELA:** Do you mean they want to invade our Kingdom?

**ALVARO II:**  Yes, mother.

**DONA ZABELA:** Any casualty?

**ALVARO II:** We don’t know yet, but some of our soldiers and farmers have been captured.

## FX THE SOUNDS OF DRUM ANNOUNCING AN URGENT SITUATION

**FX BERNARDO FOOTSTEPS**

**ALVARO II:** Have a seat, my brother. We are in a difficult situation.

**BERNARDO:** What is happening?

**ALVARO II:** Ne-Nsaku and his friends enter the rebellion.

**FX JOAO, PEDRO AND OTHER NOTABLES FOOTSTEPS**

**ALVARO II:** The reason for your presence here is the attack of our Kingdom, by Mani Soyo, led by Ne-Nsaku. A hundred of our men have been killed.

**JOAO:** Soldiers are on route. I will join them soon.

**ALVARO II:** Ne-Nsaku! Who could imagine that? If I knew his intention, I couldn’t spare his life. What a shame?

**NDUNGI** What a shame**?** Man is ordered by wisdom in order to examine his attitude. It was so difficult to understand how a man like Ne-Nsaku wanted to conquer the Kingdom. The best thing his Majesty has done does not sentence him to death. This shows your great wisdom, Majesty. Sentencing him to death could make him a martyr. And some of our citizens could venerate him as a god.

**ALVARO II:** I really approve your wise words, Ndungi. Facing this treason, we are learning to determine how to conquer our invaders and push them back. The superiority of our army will annihilate Ne-Nsaku and his allies.

**JOAO:** Majesty! I am sending the second group of soldiers if the situation becomes worse. But the first group can push back Ne-Nsaku out of Nsundi. We will capture him.

**ALVARO II:** Good. I have confidence in you.

**FX BERNARDO FOOTSTEPS**

**BERNARDO:** Majesty, I will join the army to push back Ne-Nsaku.

**ALVARO II:** No, my brother. I need you here and want to be kept informed about the development of the operation. Everything will be all right. In this troubled time, we must reinforce our relations with Portugal, because we need some weapon to fight our enemies, and especially guns.

**BERNARDO:** Honourable Joao can’t forget that

Portugal will not do this without

concession price.

**SCENE 16 EXT. ROYAL PALACE**

**FX DONA ZABELA CLAPS HER HANDS AND SLAVES LEAVE**

**DONA ZABELA:** Beatriz!I am the grandmother of the Nkumba-nkumba line of descent. When we left Kinlaza, we had only five caravans, five men of royal blood. To help them to exercise their duties with peace and dignity, they were anointed with bone of our dead ancestors. The way was clear. There was no hating, except the family of Ne-Nsaku who created disturbances. I am your grandmother. A woman, a clan mother cannot refuse the marriage of her granddaughter whatever the origin of the pretender.

**BEATRIZ:** Iknow grandmother. You are the wise one. I’m really sorry for accusing you and father being on Ne-Nsaku’s side. I understand that you never realised what this notable was doing.

**DONA ZABELA:** We all have the same blood. In the past, the highest position in the Kingdom was occupied by the profession of iron and paint work.

The myths presented the foundation of our Kingdom in the guise of a blacksmith king, and the art of the blacksmith and artist were created by the nobility. Now, I am satisfied that your father understands malevolent Ne-Nsaku’s ambition which blind him to the truth.

**BEATRIZ:** Yes, Grandmother. However, now everything has worked out well. Grandmother, tell me about the boys and the girls’ condition at your time.

**DONA ZABELA:** From early infancy to the age of five or six, boys and girls were subject to the dominant influence of the mother. They lived in her intimacy; from her they learned the fundamental restrictions; to her, they owed their apprenticeship in the language and their knowledge of family history. Their discovery of the legendary fabulous world celebrated in its songs; they also learnt to imitate her gestures, to recognise foods in their natural state, to observe the boundaries that delineated places and actions that were prohibited.

**BEATRIZ:** My marriage is going to be celebrated soon. It is necessary for me to learn to be a mother.

**DONA ZABELA:** Yes, indeed! Next would be the period of separation. The girl had to go to sleep in the house of women, the boys in the house of the men. The dividing line between the sexes destroyed the integrity of the family unit formed by the mother and her young children. Very quickly, the boy discovered the superiority and advantages of the masculine condition; apprenticeship, hunting, fishing, handling, agriculture equipment, being initiated in the recognition of plants and their use and assist the notables councils. All the rights we women can’t have.

**BEATRIZ:** And the girl?

**DONA ZABELA:** The girl has to pursue her education at her mother’s side. She had to prepare herself to become skilful in domestic tasks and the work of the fields; she had gradually to learn the role of the wife. She has to give very early proof of those talents, which would attract the attention of young men. Garcia saw all kinds of those qualities in you. That's why he wants to marry you. However, before they marry, girls are subject to a…

**FX A GUARD FOOTSTEPS**

**DONA ZABELA:** What is the problem?What brings you here?

**A GUARD**: Did you hear the distant sounds of the drum, you Highness?

**DONA ZABELA:** Yes.

**A GUARD:** The King wants you to be somewhere secure. The king asked me to hide you somewhere until the end of the rebels’ action.

**DONA ZABELA:** What?

**A GUARD:** I have to take you somewhere safe. It’s the matter of Kingdom security.

**DONA ZABELA:** I am the Queen Mother. Messenger, tell me

what is going on?

**FX DISTANT CROWD’S SHOUTING, CHEERNG AND SOUND OF** **DRUMS**

**PEOPLE:** Ne-Nsaku is dead. Long life of King Alvaro II.

**DONA ZABELA:** Guard! It seems like we don’t need your protection anymore. You go to your occupation now.

**Scene 17 INT. PALACE COURTYARD**

**ALVARO II:** Ne-Nsaku died, the rebels dispelled. Everything is in order now. We did not have difficulties to annex Mpangu, Nkusu and Wandu. The governors of this province came willingly, and without resistance. In spite of their earlier resistance, the provinces of Nsundi and Mbamba and all rebel provinces have been annexed. That's why, from today, the royal office must be subjected to a modification. Prince Bernardo becomes the representative for foreign and social affairs, while Joao takes the load off the commander-in - chief of the army, because you coped well the interim role during the war against rebels. Joao, we want to hear your view.

**JOAO:** After the war and the death of Ne-Nsaku, our army has to be restructured. We must eradicate all corruption such as was introduced by Ne-Nsaku and his men. Every recruit will be trained before going to fight.

**FX People continue to crow.**

**PEOPLE:** Ne-Nsaku is dead. Long life of King Alvaro II.

**FX MEN AND WOMAN DANCE**

**EPILOGUE**

**STORYTELLER:** Have you heard that? Long life of the royal family! Long Life of the artist! It is sure that Ne-Nsaku died. However, Ne-Nsaku has many descendants. Will they easily forget the death of their father or are they are going to take revenge? To follow... Nobody knows. The next part of Kongo Kingdom life will tell us what will happen.

**FX THE DANCE CONTINUES**

**END**