



**ONCE UPON A TIME ...**

**IN THE CONGO BASIN FORESTS,**

A lă cə gho a nə...  
Nthum məbin bassin congo ,

**A group of indigenous people called the pygmies,**



**Searching for a place to live.**

mo pœ mænonj (nthum nshom), pæ nto' wop ngæ mæ pygmées wop bhæ ndö ndzú'ú  
nə ncwæ.

**They found a very rich area, the Dja fauna Reserve,**



**And decided to settle in.**

Wop læ ɲak ne mo mma mpap tsú'ú, pə nto ɲgə "mbin mənna Dja", ɲgwonj ɲjo  
ɲgə wop ghǒ ncwə tso'o.

**Then, they cleared the undergrowth,**



**Built their huts,**



A bhə bhà'á, wop  
ɲkwo məghə, ɲkút  
mə ndə mop, ɲgwon  
ndə nə ɲwáne ncwə  
nthum.

**And could happily stay in.**

**While women were cooking in the camp, men were hunting in the bushes.**



**However, with the complicity of foreign poachers,**

Pənjwi bhə ndè'é ndzo'ò ndə llă tsúndzo, pə mbàjà bhə mbin zhwonj vó.



**Natural resources  
Were threatened!**

Nda ngə mbo mə ghanj fa' ngomna pe pə ffə' ntsú' ndè'é a nit wop ni tə pə bhə zhwonj vó. Mbi' ngə ngomna lhú njkie nə ncwonj vó nthum mbin cə honcə i.

**The forest rangers of the Reserve,**



**Could not keep quiet!**

**Məghaŋ fá' ngomna mpi nthum mbin Dja lá cə fit nə chǔ a bhà'á bhə !**

**They had to protect these resources.  
During their patrols, they seized pygmies' firearms and bush meats.**



Wop læ mbə ntso'ó mbə ngo mpácə ngwoŋ poe pe pə ntso'ó à waŋà.

**There were constant conflicts  
between rangers and local  
populations...**

**Please, we are hungry  
and you are taking  
away all what we have  
as food! Give us  
something else to eat  
then!**

A læ mbə ndoŋ məchum  
ncəŋ bhə ŋkwe chəchit mə  
sodjà pə pə mbe...  
“ səssú nji sə zhaŋ wek, pú  
pi mbo khwo’o ntso ntse pə  
sə mpfet a! mpú nhá mo’  
zho mbo pək llo’ !



**In order to satisfy their needs, the rangers trained them in agricultural practices as alternatives,**



**And provided them with young plants**

Wop læ gha bhú, pə məssəŋgə wɔŋə zhècə wop nə ndzú' mə nna,  
mbi nhá mə ŋgwét ntso mbə mpo.

**The villagers started growing crops but,**



Pə pygmées wit gho ntsit fá', nji ghwé yúttso, nda ngə

**the production was seasonal, and there were no way to sell some, because the area is not easily accessible by road.**



mənsɬyə nə llə mo' nə gho se zhak.

**Consequently, they turned back to the bush ...**



**And kept on hunting!**

A cha bhà'á pə mbe mpi nthum mbin...mbi to'ó nə zhwonj vó!

**As a result,**



A bhə  
mbhà'á mə  
sœ pe a la  
mbo pə  
pa'nə wop  
nthum ŋkà'á  
mænna a llə  
njo ŋgə a  
poŋ ŋgə wop  
gho ndenə  
mo' zhú' nə  
lœmə, ŋgwa'  
ŋkú sà'ácə  
məkà' pa mə  
ndə !

**Elephants threatened by poachers in the core zones of the Reserve were forced to find new homes away; by so doing, they damaged people crops and habitats !**

**Resources became scarce and the village started facing disturbances: Diminishing of rainfall, rivers drying up!**



Ntso llə to'ó nə zhak, yeyo pak ngwoŋ nto'ó nə pa'nə : ndoŋ mbəŋ ncwecə, məpap shyə shúm!

**Everybody, even rangers like Nestor, had to fetch water far from the river.**

**On his way to the river one day, Nestor heard and was fascinated by a beautiful voice coming from the river side...**

**...Who might be singing over there?**

ngwoŋ pœ wan'  
mbă pə officier bha'  
Nestor a bhə ŋgo  
ta'a ŋká səssa tə tú'  
shyə ! A læ gho  
mənsyə shyə mo'o  
lè, Nestor zhú' mo'  
pə poŋ ŋgi a kwe  
ffə mbe shyə.



**...You can't imagine how pleasant are the pygmies girls voices...**



Pú'ú lè'é  
fit nə  
nshyə  
ŋkwa'  
bha' ŋgi  
penjwi  
pygmées  
kè'é ghi  
a mba...  
mbo pú'ú  
gho  
nshyə  
bha me  
ŋgwœ  
we wo  
là'á  
zhwop  
bha.

**She was singing While fetching water...**

**Hello pretty girl,  
what's your  
name?**

**... hmm, Mary...**



**Your name  
sounds as nice,  
as your voice!  
Would you help  
me to lift my  
bucket up to my  
head?**

Nestor wonə  
cà'ácə -i, mbi  
honə-i ngə :  
-netsú ntso  
wo?  
- ...hm Maria  
- netsú ntso  
ponə bha ngi-  
o ! mbe o  
ŋkwochà'á nə  
tú'shyə-a ma  
tə chə thwo  
mə a ?

**... o o ok!**



**Thanks my dear,  
I shall look for  
you tomorrow,  
OK?**

**OK...**

ngə nha chamba mbo wo mba moh nna, mo ncwo yo mpi lenə ɲo'ó.  
- ho...

**Nestor and Mary regularly met in the bush,  
and 3 months later...**

**I want to get  
married with you  
darling!**



**What? Really?  
Oh my God!  
let me bring the  
good news to  
my parents!**

**Nestor pa Marie bhə njocə. A lè'é cha ηwo tet wop-i sanə nno  
landə.**

**My dear parents,  
it's a long story  
but I just want to  
inform you that  
Nestor, the  
Forest ranger you  
all know, wants  
me as his wife!**



**Who? Nonsense!  
Somebody who prefer  
animals to human beings?  
Impossible!!**

A pa'nə mətət pa məmma  
Marie. Wop honə-i ɲgə : wo  
le ? ɲe no we kě ɲkwonə  
mənna tə cha pœ mənnon  
le ? mbe a læ mpum !

## Trouble!...



**My parents are against our projects, they consider you as an enemy! what are we going to do?**

**Don't worry, honey. I shall win their trust!**

Nestor zhu ngwoṅə necə  
net-i, saṅə bha i gho nə  
chà'á tə pə mpi i a.



**Together with his colleagues, Nestor set up a vast road project and involved the villagers for its construction.**



Wop a mo  
məhanj fá'  
wonə ncà'á  
nno nə  
nthonə  
mənsɬyə

**Thanks to that road,**



**Crops could be taken right to the market,**

e gho bhə ŋkwocə lla' nə gho se ffi'i pœntso a



**Tourism could be promoted,**

...

**And the village gradually developed...**



...

**My daughter, how is Nestor doing? could you ask him to give us a visit?**



A cha bhu,  
nno ponə  
pə tɛ'ɛ.  
Mətet pa  
məmma  
Marie wonə  
mbi nno  
landə yop  
bha Nestor.

**Of course Dad...**



**Good morning  
Dad,**

**Good morning Mum**

**Welcome my son**

...



**The wedding could be celebrated...**



Wop wonə nda ndə ...



**That union was a symbol of reconciliation  
between all the stakeholders of the Dja  
Fauna Reserve management, important for  
the bright future of that World Heritage  
Site!**

Landə yop læ nha tamcə chəchit pœ  
mənnoŋ nthum mbin məmma Dja a  
waŋa.



## Dja Faunal Reserve will live forever ...

A bhə bhà'á mbə ɲkwà'á nno pəpɔŋə ne mənno ɲgwɔŋ. Ye ya pap cəcà'á : mbin mənna Dja gho la' chinə a thin thin i.

**SCENARIO: Josiane KAKEU GAKOU**

**PLAYERS: Somalomo Theatrical Association for the forest safeguarding**