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Radio Theatre: the moral play and its mediation of socio-cultural realities in Kenya

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Appendix I

Transcripts of selected *Radio Theatre* plays.

Bottoms Up (2004)

Whatever it Takes (2004)

Bottoms Up

2004

Narrator: 'Radio Theatre', still within the series of "The story of my life", brings you another real life adaptation, with slight changes on character identity and scenario but the story maintains its appeal, its message and its objective to sensitize. The story of my life today is a narration by one Bosco Maele, a University graduate and a Products Manager in a consumer company; who in one month, one long month, experiences life like in the deepest part of a pit called hell; life like in the harshest detention camp, the worst any human can be subjected to, all wrapped up in one…Yes, because that is the only way we can describe Mr. Maele's life after he tests HIV positive. Welcome to *Bottoms Up*

SFX: [Sound of traffic, engines, then]

Bosco: [Monologue] Mmm…Mondays, do I listen to some music? I don't have to anyway…Will I get to work? There's jam, jam, jam, jam, jam.

SFX: [Impatient hooting indicating a traffic jam]

Bosco: [Continues with monologue] Monday, Monday morning … It is the second day of the month, actually, it is the first working day of the month, ah… since the first, the first fell on a Sunday…huh! No wonder there's traffic jam in Nairobi like this. There will forever be traffic jam on this road. Is it easier to own a car in Nairobi? Anyway, the answer to that question is on this road and on the path…look at this, so many Kenyans walking to work and others boarding *matatus,* I have a car of my own, I don't use it, because I have this company car…my wife uses our family car, no wonder there's traffic jam in Nairobi. If every man and every wife drove different cars… [Laughs]. Anyway, traffic jam in Nairobi is a chance to see the latest billboards. [Laughs]. Look at this one, it's very funny [laughs again]. Its says: *Are you a racist, if no, why do you discriminate against people with HIV/AIDs? People with HIV/AIDS need your love, company and a job too.* [Laughs]. I never had AIDS, neither do I discriminate against those people with HIV/AIDs…Of course yeah, the lesson is good but it doesn't concern me

SFX: [Sounds of cars moving]

Bosco: Yeah, finally the jam…

SFX: [More sounds of cars moving] FADE OUT.

Male voice: I thank you all for availing yourselves for this meeting as well as keeping time, eh? [Murmurs of many voices].

One male voice: But sir, we do not know the agenda of the meeting sir.
Boss: As you know we are opening a branch in Uganda in the next three months and everything has been approved by the Board of Directors and everything is underway. The company is not going to set up a manufacturing plant at once… Ah, we will be producing products from here and

taking them to Uganda as finished products and as we put the machines in that country, that which has to be established is the marketing office and that is why I have called you here today. Is that right?

Male voice: Yes sir.

Another male voice: Sir, this means we are moving our office to that country?

Boss: This is not what I said. The directors are of the opinion that one of you should be sent there not as a Products Manager, but as a Marketing Manager to head the marketing office there.

One male voice: Sounds like it has my name on it…

Boss: Do not say so, Kanzi, because both of you are qualified.

Kanzi: But even Mr. Maele here knows that Kanzi is the right man for the job [laughs] Marketing Manager, company Ltd Uganda Branch, c'mon, I have been waiting for this!

Boss: You will know that after the interview.

Both Bosco and Kanzi: Interview?

Boss: Both of you will be presenting yourselves before the Board of Directors for an interview, so may the best man win.

One of the men: When is this interview sir?

Boss: I will let you know in the course of the week. Meanwhile, you are both supposed to see the doctor for a medical examination so as to have them in time for the interview.
[Pause] This week is over; I want the marketing report for the previous week in my office today.

Kanzi: But why do we have to do a medical test…….

SFX: [Music]

Bosco: [Monologue] And so I went for the HIV test, and by the way this was not my first time. And from the previous test that I had had, I had not changed sex partners, so I knew that definitely the results would be negative. Taking it would be just a matter of formality. And then there was counselling, it was beautiful, at least it put us into readiness for anything negative or positive. But my partner, Kanzi. Kanzi looked a little bit worried

SFX: [Music]

[Echo Chamber]

Kanzi: Man I am so scared man, I mean if it turns out that I am positive, then what next?

Bosco: Just take it as it comes.

Kanzi: Man, aren't you scared? You are not feeling anything?

Bosco: It is not that I am not feeling anything, I am… I am just prepared that's all [laughing].

Bosco: [Monologue] I was not worried because I was very sure of my status. The blood samples were taken and we were told to wait for twenty minutes. But Kanzi, Kanzi was so nervous! He was so nervous, my God! He kept asking me questions. A minute passed, followed by another, and another and another, then, this lady opened …the door and called for one of us…Kanzi was the first to go in, then five minutes later, he came out celebrating,

[Echo chamber]

Kanzi: Uuuuuuuwiiii! Yeeee! Maele, I am HIV negative man! I am clean man, yeeee! "Ohhh Lord is Good, Oh Lord is Goo-" Maele, Maele…

FX: [Music]

Bosco: So I left Kanzi celebrating and I went in for my results. I knew that it was definitely going to be negative, otherwise, HIV or AIDs does not travel in the air…like flu…after all I hadn't done anything that would put me in danger of contracting AIDS or HIV. Then, there was this funny look on the face of the lab technician, that look…after taking me round and round and round… that look. Then she finally broke the news to me [sigh] … that I …I was HIV positive. [Pause] I had no words to explain to this lady that the results were not right. So, I went back to that man Kanzi, the only friend that would support me at that point in time. Kanzi had been waiting for me outside.

FX: [Music]

Bosco: No No, there's a mistake somewhere…

Kanzi: w-what mistake, what is wrong?

Bosco: There is a mistake somewhere.

Kanzi: What mistake, Maele?

Bosco: Just imagine these guys are saying that I am HIV positive.

Kanzi: They are?

Bosco: Kanzi…Kanzi, they are wrong aren't they?

Kanzi: No no no…if they are saying that you are HIV positive then you are!

Bosco: What?!

Kanzi: No one is saying that you are HIV positive. You ARE HIV positive.

Bosco: Kanzi [crying] what are you telling me now?

Kanzi: Look, before the test was done, the first thing that the lady said was that the person denies, denies, denies, that they are HIV positive. You are doing the same thing my friend. Just think of the things that you haven't done in this world and then do them now.

Bosco: Wh- you don't know what you are talking about.

Kanzi: B-Buuuut…

FX: [Music]

Bosco: [Monologue] So there I was, HIV positive. Just waiting to develop AIDS with time, then death of course. But, I had to be strong, I told myself, but how how how! But I was later to learn, the problem was not HIV the problem was how to live with it. But even before I could get to the office, Kanzi had reached there.

FX: [Door Banging]

Kanzi: Hallo sir.

Boss: Fine Mr. Kanzi. What brings you to my office?

Kanzi: I wanted to give you this report here [paper shuffling].

Boss: You can bring it tomorrow, no problem. I am on my way out.

Kanzi: B-b-but sir, eh…I have something to tell you.

Boss: What is it?
Kanzi: I-I don't think there will be need for that interview later this week, the one between me and Maele about the new Marketing Manager in Uganda.

Boss: But why are you giving up on the race?
Kanzi: me? Pull out of the race? No chance. I-I believe I am the only one left for the race. See…Maele is now totally crossed out.

Boss: [Shocked] Maele, totally crossed out?

Kanzi; You know the man is… ah [laughs nervously]

Boss: What is happening?

Kanzi: Mael- [laughs] I can't believe this…

Boss: C'mon, hurry up! You are wasting my time young man!

Kanzi: The man…[laughs again] the man is, eh [pauses] HIV positive.

Boss: Oh My God! HIV positive?

Kanzi: Yes sir! The results show that he has a very high load of the thing sir.

Boss: Oh Poor man. Where is he now?

Kanzi: I don't know boss. I tried to help him but he wouldn't take my help.

Boss: Why? Why would such a fine young man go around with women? He's not a man of many women is he?

Kanzi: Well, he used to hide, he used to hide boss, but I knew it! I knew everything myself. Boss, you know…I don't sympathize with people who have AIDS. You know they go out looking for it, so why sympathize. You know what I am saying Boss?

Boss: I am going to discuss the new development with the Board of Directors.

Kanzi: Yes.

Boss: Meanwhile, you just get yourself ready for the post in Uganda because there is no way we can consider a person who has AIDS for the post.

Kanzi: Thank you very much sir, thank you, thank you, thank you…..

SFX: [Music Fade in]

Bosco: As I drove up to work, I kept on asking myself many, many questions. Why? How did I get it? So, what would happen to me the next minute…I had many questions, but not a single answer to any of them. So, when …when I entered the gate at my place of work, there was this funny gesture on the watchman's face. Looking around, I realized that all workers of Kampeni Ltd were looking outside the window at me. As if I was a creature of from the moon. There was no need to be told that the news had reached them already. [Sniffing] Oh my! The atmosphere there was killing me, literally! So I got back into my car and drove away. On my way back, I came across the same billboard that I had read two days ago [sniffing] [pause] *Are you a racist, if no why do you discriminate against people with HIV and AIDS?* Every time I would read those words, they did not mean anything to me. I was not HIV positive then, but now I am. I believe racism has a better face than what I saw on those faces at my place of work. [Sigh] [pause]. So when I went back home, I found my wife. [Sniff] I thought that when I got home I was going to break the news to her. Little did I know that one Mr. Kanzi had already broken the news to her.

His wife: I knew it! I knew it, and now see! I knew you had other women in your life! You have killed me and my child too!

Bosco: What are you talking about?

Wife: You have AIDS, don't you?

Bosco: I am HIV positive.

Wife: What is the difference, Baba John? What is it that you lacked from me, Baba John? [Crying].

Bosco: Would you please listen to me? I swear, I swear Mama John, I have never slept with any other woman!

Wife: Ohhh! You cheat!

Bosco: I am not lying! Remember we took a HIV test before we got married?

Wife: The where the hell did you get this thing from?

Bosco: I don't know!

Wife: [Shouting] You got it from the air and the water we drink? Eh? C'mon Maele. It is useless to deny this now. C'mon Maele…this, this…

Bosco: C'mon…would you please listen to me? I was hoping to get answers from you…did you sleep with any other man?

Wife: Oh please!

Bosco: Did you sleep with any other man for the period that we have been married?

Wife: Listen Maele, eh? You think that because you have been sleeping with other women I have been sleeping with other men? Eh?
Bosco: Maggie…

Maggie: Is that the reason you are putting me at risk and our son? I can't believe you [crying].

Bosco: Maggie? Please…

Wife: Don't touch me! [Sound of glass breaking].

Bosco: Please…

Wife: Do not touch me!

Bosco: so what am I supposed to do then? What do you expect me to do?

FX: [Footsteps thumping away]. Fade out.

Bosco: I was telling the truth [crying] yes. But I was like a pregnant girl, claiming she is still a virgin. Who would believe her? And so it kept on weighing heavily on me. And as I kept on thinking and thinking, wasn't there elsewhere where people contact AIDS? I might have contracted it at the barber shop where I go for a haircut…I don't know. The following week I tried to pretend that nothing was happening, but the more I tried to forget, the more I remembered that I was HIV positive. And that my death could just come at any time, but it was the stigma that was killing me. In one week's time, I had started losing weight, which means that I was developing AIDS. Oh My! At my work place, no one could talk to me. I could see people were gathering in small groups, and then I would come there and all of a sudden they would just keep quiet, and they would pretend that I was not there [sniffing]. That was too much for me. As if that was not enough, my wife left me to stay with her sister. I was just sick and alone in the house. And on top of that, I sensed something was happening at our place of work. Because the waiter had kept a special spoon, a special cup, a special fork, a special plate, a glass of water and a tooth pick. Oh this was just too much for me…and when I demanded an explanation from the head waiter, I was told, that people had threatened not to eat at the canteen if they didn't give in to their demands. Oh… I…ok…[sniff]

As if all was not enough, I …I got this phone call to go and see my Boss.

FX: [Music]

Boss: As you well know Mr. Maele, your health is not good and this is affecting the general output of our company.

Bosco: What? But sir, with all due respect, I am only HIV Positive.

Boss: The difference is the same, Mr. Maele. Okay.
Bosco: But I am still strong sir in doing my work effectively.

Boss: We are not talking about strength here, Mr. Maele. Your other colleagues are uncomfortable working with you, they are unable to give out their best, for fear of contracting the disease.

Bosco: But again sir, with all due respect sir, nobody can contract HIV and AIDS simply by working with me.

Boss: We are not doctors to know that in this company. On top of that, AIDS is a known fact, and we are not ready to take chances.

Bosco: Sir I just don't understand you. With all due respect, sir, I just don't understand this company, I just don't understand!

Boss: For these reasons, Mr. Maele, we have decided that you just have to go on unpaid leave until we find a way to deal with this situation.

Bosco: What?

Boss: On top of that, as the Product Manager, you represent the image of the product, and you have to agree with me, that you are not in the right health to do that, unless you want the product to go under. Eh? Your duties will be carried out by Mr. Kanzi, as we look for a new Products Manager.

Bosco: Ah?

Boss: Kanzi also has been appointed the new Marketing Manager in the post in Uganda, so its goodbye. Am sorry for everything Mr. Maele.

Bosco: Oh? Is that it?

Boss: That's it.

Bosco: Is that it?

Boss: That's it.

B: Okay…thank you to sir. Yes, thank you for nothing sir! May God Bless you, yes, may God bless you all….

FX: [Music]

Bosco: I returned the company car [sniff] and I took a *matatu* home because my wife had left with the family car. Then again I came across the same billboard on HIV/AIDS. *Are you a racists? If not then, why do you discriminate against people with HIV/AIDS? It could be you.* Oh how I wished and wished that everybody reading the billboard would understand the message the way I did. Oh no, it was too much for me. I could not continue staying in that house alone, and so I decided to go upcountry to see my mother. [sniff] to tell her my story. So I decided to call my wife to tell her that I was leaving the city so she could come and look after the house. It was then that she proudly told me that she had had a HIV test and that our son and her were negative. I was so happy, I was so happy. But how was it possible, I asked myself? I was leaving that afternoon [sniff] and I got late and I later decided that I would go the following day. While I was resting in the bedroom, my wife came and guess with who? My workmate Kanzi. [pause] they had no idea I was in the bedroom [sniff].

FX: Echo chamber, [music].

Kanzi: So Maggie, do you want to remain in this house when your husband is gone?

Maggie: Ah! I will have to move and you know that! I don't want the spirit of a man dying of AIDs following me everywhere.

Kanzi: Exactly!

Maggie: He went looking for his death, and he found it. [Sighs] God is great. He did not pass it to me. At least he could have used a condom doing what he was doing out there!

Kanzi: Imagine Maggie, I used to tell him every other time!

Maggie: You used to know?

Kanzi: Ah well…

Maggie: You used to know all this time and you couldn't tell me?

Kanzi: I couldn't tell you Maggie. It would have looked like I was intruding.

Maggie: That is not – ah!

Kanzi: Anyway, he used to tell me that he believed in the philosophy of 'flesh to flesh', ati *Nyama kwa nyama*. Ati a sweet is never enjoyed inside its wrapper, you know what I am saying?

Maggie: He really used to say that?

Kanzi: Just imagine!

Maggie: With his own mouth!

Kanzi: Heeh! [clicks].

Maggie: I can't believe it. I just can't believe it Maele, how can you lie to me like that?

Kanzi: [clicks]

Maggie: I need your advice here.

Kanzi: Eh?

Maggie: Now that-now that Maele is going to die of AIDS, and I am negative, am just wondering, what should I do?

Kanzi: Ah c'mon, Maggie, c'mon. As they say, life has to continue. You know life has to go on. Life has to go on.

Maggie: I know but I don't mean that!

Kanzi : What is it?

Maggie: I mean…I mean…I mean my…sex life?

Kanzi: C'mon, but that has to go on too. You can't stop because Maele has gone, and for fear of AIDS? You are negative; people are negative, people like me [laughs]. Life goes on, life goes on! In fact listen Maggie [laughs nervously] you know I have never told you this Maggie, listen…

Maggie: Mr. Kanzi!

Kanzi: Listen, all this time you have been with Maele, I have always had very strong feelings for you.

Maggie: You don't mean that Mr. Kanzi.

Kanzi: Look, you will be the best thing that ever happened in my life Maggie, the best thing.

Maggie: Mr. Kanzi, please Kanzi.

Kanzi: Listen…

Maggie: I am so confused I don't know what is happening...

Kanzi: listen…

Maggie: I need time…

Kanzi: Look, Maele will be dead soon, any time from now.

Maggie: You don't have to tell me that, I know.

Kanzi: Of Aids, so Maggie, do you know what AIDS is, AIDS is death.

Maggie: Ah… I know.

Kanzi: Look, Listen, Maggie, I am here for you. I will even be a father to your boy. The boy needs a father, Jamie needs a father!

Maggie: I don't know.

Kanzi: He does Maggie, can't you see that?

Maggie: I will never tell the boy anything about his father!

Kanzi: Exactly what I am saying.

Maggie: It is such a shame to die of AIDS. I mean how could he live like that!

Kanzi: Exactly. So.. so what do you say Maggie? Look, I have been promoted and…look, let's just get married!

Maggie: we get-

Kanzi: We'll get married and go to Uganda.

Maggie: Look-

Kanzi: You are HIV negative, and I am HIV negative. I have a good job and I love you, I love you.

Maggie: But you can't do this now.

Kanzi: I love you!

Maggie: Mr. Kanzi…

Kanzi: Just cut the 'Mr Kanzi' part

Maggie: Okay, fine, Eddie.

Kanzi: C'mon c'mon…

Maggie: Please. You know I am so confused, I can't do anything!
Kanzi: No you can [Maggie gasps] c'mon I need you.

Maggie: We can't do this here.

Kanzi: Why not?

Maggie: We just can't.

Kanzi: No, why not?

Maggie: Listen, you don't even have a condom and you?

Kanzi: Condom what for? [Maggie gasps]. What for, you are negative, am negative…look let me touch you here.

Maggie: [Moans].

Kanzi: Just [kisses her] just [Maggie moans].

Kanzi: [Both moaning] I need you right here honey [Maggie moans some more].

Maggie: [Moans while Kanzi kisses her].

FX: [Fade Out. Music]

Bosco: It was unbelievable. [Sniff]. I listened to all that from the bedroom. I couldn't believe it. How could she do this to me? How? How was I supposed to react? Because I didn't even know that she was still my wife [sniff]. I didn't know what to do. [Sniff] I couldn't believe that this was the woman I had lived with for five years. [Crying]. I never knew that I was so strong! [Sniff]. I had to be, or it the choice I had? I don't know, I just don't know [sniff]. It was just too much for me. Then I went to my parents home in the village and I explained everything to my mother and she convinced me that I was bewitched. [Sniff] and so she took action to that effect, I was desperate, yes, and because I was desperate, I could try anything, anything!

FX: [pebbles in a gourd] [voice of a male singing]

Voice: Mmmmmmbrrrrrrrrr! Oh spirits of my forefathers. Come down from the hills of Kyulu. Come down and bring me the power. [Shaking gourd] the power to see into the problems of this young man. Mbbbbbbbbbbbbrrrrrrrrrr! Yes!

Bosco [whispering]: What is happening?

Voice of witchdoctor: We have victory. Weeeee have victory! Yes, our man. Mmmmmmmm heeeeee… a woman with three noses. Young man, do you know a woman with three noses?
Bosco: [Whispers] A woman with three noses?

Witchdoctor: Mmmmbrrrr! She has bewitched you! She just wants to drive you crazy. I can cure you of all this?

Bosco: Really?

Witchdoctor: If you give me ten thousand shillings, a white cow, two she goats and a yellow cock.

Bosco: A yellow cock?

Witchdoctor: Yes, a yellow cock.

Bosco: How do I get a yellow cock?

Witchdoctor: I don't care, just bring me a yellow cock. Yes. I am the only one who can cure you young man. This is not your fate, this is not your fate. It is the fate of the woman with three noses. Mmmmbbbbbbbbbbrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr ya ya ya ya ya ya [shaking gourd].

Bosco: [Monologue] No way, that man did not have a solution to my problems. And so I wasn't going back there. No way. So I went back home for about two weeks, but the village gossips were just getting louder and louder by the day. And I remember I attended this village HIV/AIDS awareness meeting. And I heard, I wanted to speak, but before I could, before I could speak, there was this old man who made me not to, because looking straight at me, he made this useless, or should I say stupid announcement…

Old Man [With a heavy Kamba/Kikuyu accent]: you garrs [girls] and women of this virrage [Village]. Beware of these men who are coming from the cete [city] with cars of theirs. This funny ndisease [disease] then they are coming to sprend it [spread it]. The have ndecinded [decided] to come and ndie [die] here winth [with] you. *Chunga!* [watch out]. You should watch out. I know you ndon't [don't] have money, mbut [but] you will mbe [be] ngiven [given] mane [money] and HIV AIDS. *Mokigo! Ukimwi! Mutakufa nyote!* [You will all die] Haiyaayeee! Look I can even see one of them looking at me, look, and they al [are] plentending [pretending] that they do not know what is ngoing on [going on] look! You, mmmmm, stop looking at me……

Bosco: [Monologue] In short, the man was talking about me. Yes, me Maele. And children in that place were told never to come to my mother's place leave alone to be offered something to eat. [Sniff] Oh, my poor mother had no faith anymore, coz even the church meetings that she used to have in her compound…….. oh it was just too much for me, too much for me. I just [crying] I just don't know how I lived through that! [sniff].
[pause]. After twenty one days, I went back to the city. I assumed that my leave was over and so I went to ask my boss when I was expected back to work. At the gate, I found the watchman with two letters addressed to me. I opened them, one, one, one [crying] I had been sacked. I had been sacked! [Crying] I crrrrriiiiied! [sniff] I just …. And the second, and the second was from the clinic where we had gone to take the HIV test. They wanted to see me. [sniff] what for, I asked myself. Is it for counseling or for free supply of the anti-retroviral drugs? I didn't care any way, I had had enough of that! I had had enough of everything! It was too much! I just had to kill myself! And so I went, and bought poison, to kill myself. And I had to just say goodbye to my people, the people that I cared for…oh my poor son, and my mother [sniff] but I decided to go and see why I was needed at the clinic first.

FX: [Footsteps- echo chamber]

Bosco: Yeah, I am here I don't even know why am here because after all I am going to die so, yes, what? What was it madam?

Clinic person: Hallo, Mr. Maele. Ah, the lab technician of this clinic…I know this test has been of tremendous pain to you, I called back all the patients whose tests were done on the fourth of last month, because there was a mix-up with our machines. Again, I am very sorry for this.

Bosco: What did you say your name was again?

Clinic person: I am sorry about that. My name is Lucy. The thing that happened was that the first person that did that test gave two blood samples, so the machine did two tests.

Bosco: Mmm.

Lucy: The patient took the results of the first one, and the results of the second sample were given to the next one and the third patient's results were given to the one who followed and that went on through the rest of the day.
Bosco: So, wait a minute. You are saying that I got the results of the person who came before me?

Lucy: Ah yes, I am. Ah do you happen to know him?

Bosco: Yeah, I do. In fact, his name is Mr. Kanzi. We work with him.

Lucy: Okay.

Bosco: No wait a minute, madam. Are you saying that it is Kanzi who is HIV positive?

Lucy: Mmm yes, I am afraid it is. So we will have to re-do the tests for you and for Mr Kanzi. But for now we are sure that you seem to be HIV negative, because all the other results that came before you were negative.

Bosco: eh heh!

Lucy: So as the management we are asking you not to sue the clinic.

Bosco: That can wait, we will talk about that later, about the suing, we can talk about that later

Lucy: okay.

Bosco: But for now, I just want you to confirm, are you saying that I am not HIV positive?

Lucy : It may seem so?

Bosco: Yes! Yes! [shouting with joy]. Woooow! Huh! Ah! No no! I just don't know how to…I just don't know how to…yes!

FX: [Fade Out. Music]

Bosco: [Monologue] Mmm, so I went back to my place of work. You know it is so ironic that Kanzi was the one to take my place and that it was him who was HIV positive and not me! Hehe! As for my former wife Maggie, I can only be sorry, I guess that's what I can say…wait a minute, the village witchdoctor might have just been right after all, because he said that this fate might have been another person's, a woman with three noses. In fact, Maggie has a hole in her nose where she put some small nose ring in fact I used to call it her third nose. It was her fate after all. Oh, poor Maggie, she has been living with Kanzi for a month. One has to be HIV positive to understand what it means to live with this virus. I have been there for one month. One long month.

FX: [Music fade in.]

Narrator: *Bottom's Up*, roles and status reversed. Bosco Maele, gone through the worst that anyone can ever go through in life. stigma of the highest order in the workplace right to the boss,

the social scene, right to his very own friends to the domestic scene, his wife, extended to the rural scene, tagging along all effects, the financial laws of a job lost, the physical laws in health accompanied by the psychological trauma, the desperation that comes with it, even to the point of seeking help from the helpless. That was Bosco Maele's fate, until the twist of fortune favoured him, and the bottom's came up.

A big thanks to the entire cast. *Bottoms Up* was written for radio theatre by Michael Kyalo and produced by Nzau Kalulu

Signature tune

The End

Whatever it Takes

2004

Narrator: Another week, another thriller. Today, *Radio Theatre* plunges you into the half hour of balances and imbalances of passion, of wealth, of morality and simplicity all packed as one. Benson Mutia the self-made multi-millionaire, international businessman, is used to acquiring all that he desires. He commands loyalty, he commands respect, he commands recognition. Then in comes Joy Mbote, the simple country schoolteacher who is on a sponsored workshop at a five star hotel. Benson's first sight of her confirms to him that this is the woman of his dreams. Her beauty, her simplicity, her style. Only one obstacle stands between Benson and the woman of his dreams. And that is her husband school teacher, James Mbote. Now, will Benson, the known international conqueror win this bout? Welcome to the story, *Whatever it Takes*… [Fade in drums]

FX: [Glasses and spoons being knocked against each other]

Male voice: Waiter? Waiter?

Waiter: Yes sir?

Male voice: My bill [paper being shuffled]. Look, there is something I want you to do for me

Waiter: What is it?

Male voice: Just move closer…

Waiter: Yes sir, what can I do for you?

Male voice: You see that woman over there?

Waiter: Which one?

Male voice: That woman over there…

Waiter: mmm?

Male voice: I have seen her several times. Would you by any chance know who she is?

Waiter: Which one, you mean the one with the …the one seated at the corner?

Male voice: Yes? The one at the corner with a scarf of her head.

Waiter: Oh. She is staying at a hotel room, number 22. They came four days ago.

Male voice: oh…so she is in the company of a man?

Waiter: Oh I don't know. I have not seen any man with her.

Male voice: But you said 'they'

Waiter: Yeah…they are women. She is in a group of ten women. I don't know from where but they have some kind of conference in this hotel.

Male voice: Oh! I see…well thank you very much [paper-probably tipping the waiter] [footsteps]

Male voice: Oh…hehe..Hallo?

Female voice: Hallo.

Male voice: Yes. May I join you?

Female voice: [Laughing] well, the table is big enough for the two of us, and c'mon I can see enough chairs, so you might as well.

Male voice: [laughs] yes, well…ahh.

Female voice: Go ahead, sit.

Male voice: Eh…thank you thank you very much.

Female voice: You are welcome.

Male voice: Well, I hope I am not intruding.

Female voice: Of course not.

Male voice: Hehe…ah…well my name is Benson Mutia. I was you know having a drink over there and you know I happened to have noticed you and I decided to say hi…look I hope I am not doing anything wrong.

Female voice: So far, you haven't done anything wrong.

Benson: Good. Ah…what is your name?

Female: oh…I am Joy Mbote.

Benson: Oh Joy! Ah that's a beautiful name, just like you.

Joy: [Giggles] if I am not wrong, you must be the man responsible for this drink before me?

[They both laugh]

Benson: Do you like it?

Joy: Uhm …yes I do and thank you for it [Joy laughs].

Benson: Oh no don't bother…it's not a big deal…uhm…well Joy, what are you doing in a five start hotel? I hope I am not a …you are not in a honeymoon or something?

Joy: [Laughs] Oh…no, I am actually on a six day seminar on a rural project management in this hotel.

Benson: Oh! I see. So, you are a manager by profession?

Joy: No actually I am a teacher, I am here representing-

Benson: A teacher?

Joy: Yes, and I am here representing our local women's group. So who are you?

Benson: Well…now now now…I have already told you my name…

Joy: I know, but what do you do and why are you talking to me?

Benson: [Laughs] I will start with the last question. I saw you here and I decided to join you here and come over you know for a chat.

Joy: What you do…

Benson: Well about what I do, let's just say that I am a business man. I am in the motor vehicle business. I import and I buy imported cars.

Joy: Yes?

Benson: Yes, and from Europe and from the- all over the world.

Joy: Good. So the day our women's group will need to buy a vehicle, I should come to you?

Benson: Anytime. Anytime Joy. By the way, ah?

Joy: Yes?

Benson: Let me give you my card.

Joy: Yes.

Benson: Ah here, this is my card.

Joy: Thank you.

Benson: Ah so what projects are your… group involved in?

Joy: Okay, where I come from is a semi-arid area. You know there is no way you can start a coffee growing project in Mombasa or start growing cotton in Limuru. So we had to look for relevant projects for that area. So we came up with poultry keeping, bee keeping and tree planting projects.

Besnon: Yes?

Joy: You know for a better environment.

Benson: But that sounds like a good project.

Joy: You think so?

Benson: yes.

Joy: Well, you know before the projects took off, we had to deal with some basic problems. For example water is a big problem in that area so we put up water tanks in all members' homes and that was before the other projects took off.

Benson: Oh so, how many members are you?

Joy: 740.

Benson: 740 that's a big number. You were able to put up water tanks for each member, seven hundred of them?

Joy: We are only looking for five hundred thousand shillings to complete that project.

Benson: Oh?

Joy: Yes.

Benson: Ok. And how do you go about that?

Joy: About what?

Benson: About getting the money to complete the project and what have you?

Joy: Ah- we depend much on the NGOs and just hope it comes through.

Benson: Oh so you go to them and just literally ask them for a certain amount of money?

Joy: No it does not happen that fast. We actually write a proposal stating details of the proposal and then we give them a budget, if they find it worth funding they provide us with the money. It may take some time but we are always ready to wait.

Benson: So you only get your money from organizations and not from individuals?

Joy: No, anybody willing and ready to help can do that. For example, all our projects are funded by different NGOs, but this seminar, the seminar in this hotel, is funded by an individual.

Benson: Oh?

Joy: Yes! A man from America. That country is blessed with many good men.

Benson: [Laughing] What about our country?

Joy: I can't say anything because I have never come across one.

Benson: [Both laugh, then] Well, Joy, today you might.

Joy: [Pause] Might?

Benson: Yeah…[Paper being shuffled] ah…ah…this …small paper here…I have written some ah…this is yours, eh?

Joy: What is it?

Benson: Just go ahead and have a look at it.

FX: [Paper shuffling].

Joy: Ah- [sharp intake of breath]: A cheque for one million Kenya Shillings? And with my name on it? No no c'mon.

Benson: [Laughing] Oh by the way, have I gotten your name right on the cheque? You are Joy Mbote, aren't you?

Joy: No you are not wrong but I can't take it, not with my name on it actually, I can't.

Benson: Please Joy, I wrote this cheque in your name so that it can be you to decide on what to give to your women.

Joy: No. Please put the name of our women group on it, please.

Benson: You insist?

Joy: Yes I do.

Benson: Okay then, as you like.

Joy: One million…

Benson: You said the name of the group was?

Joy: Aaaaaah…

Benson: Okay then, here you go.

Joy: this is …this is …this is good. Oh God bless you a million times. Now all our pending projects will be completed.

Benson: Thank you.

Joy: Oh thank you! Thank you so so much! God bless you so much.

Benson: Mmm.

Joy: Oh Now yes I believe that there are a few good men in our country Kenya [laughs happily].

Benson: Really, that is just nothing. That is just a good sign of many things to come.

Joy: Oh?

Benson: I believe.

Joy: Yes.

Benson: So tell me, when uh oh when are you free? So that you can come and see my house?

Joy: Uhm, oh …I don't know whether I will be free tomorrow. [Laughing] will you give me your number so that I can call you?

Benson: Oh sure, no problem with that…anyway, I will send a car over to come and pick you up.

Joy: Ah well, thank you very much.

FX: [Music- sounds of Kwaito (South African) music] Fade Out.

FX: [Doorbell]

Benson: Oh…Joy [laughs] come in, come in, just make yourself comfortable.

Joy: Thank you… [Pause] oh my God!

Benson: welcome. Eh…

Joy: Thank you…eh let me ask you something…

Benson: Mmm?

Joy: Is this a one man's house?

Benson: [Modestly] Ah- well, I don't know how many people can comfortably live in it, I own it and I stay alone.

Joy: [Laughs] it's huge.

Benson: Yes. Thank you. Okay, what will you take? Some wine or beer?

Joy: No no no…I don't drink. Just get me some soft drink.

Benson: Pleasure.

FX: [Footsteps, the sound of liquid being poured into a glass. Soft music playing in the background]

Benson: Is that fine

Joy: It's okay. Thanks.

Benson: Okay…let me introduce you to some guys.

Joy: Okay.

Benson: [Claps his hands twice in succession] Guys!

FX: [Sounds of several footsteps running].

Benson: C'mon guys, c'mon. come all of you.

Voice 1: yes sir

Voice 2: yes sir

Voices: [Intermingling voices all saying "yes sir"]

Bensons: Ah…well Joy [laughs].

Joy: [Laughs] well…this looks like those things I only see in movies.

Benson: [Laughs] Anyway, Joy, this is Eboso, my cook.

Eboso: Nice to meet you.

Benson: And this is Peter Mweu.

Joy: Nice to meet you.

Benson: He does the cleaning inside the house.

Joy: Oh, it looks very, very clean.

Benson: And this tall man here, he is the head of security in my house.

Joy: Oh, pleasure.

Benson: And Kazungu here is my shamba boy.

Joy: Oh.

Benson: Last but not least, I hope you have met my driver.

Joy: Oh yes he got me here, it's a pleasure to meet you, it's a pleasure to meet all of you.

Voices: [voices rambling]

Benson: Okay guys, you can go back to your duties now.

Voice: Oh yeah, it's a pleasure madam, eh…[Joy laughs].

Joy: Wow!

Benson: Yes.

Joy: [Laughs].

Benson: Yes.

Joy: This is nice.

Benson: Mmm.

Joy: Yeah…ahm…let me ask you, where is your family? I was hoping to meet your wife, you know.

Benson: My wife? [laughs] let's just say I do not have any, I am not married, okay?

Joy: What? Why would a rich guy who is not very young remain single?

Benson: Now that you ask, I have asked myself that question again and again, and truly speaking, Joy…

Joy: Yes?

Benson: I just don't know. Maybe I have never met the right person.

Joy: Well what I think is, you are very much into business that you have forgotten to get yourself one.

Benson: [Laughs] so…I am sure that …eh ….you will get me out of this situation.

Joy: Uh? Me? [laughs] and how do I do that?

Benson: By becoming my woman.

Joy: Oh [pause].

Benson: Look, Joy. I really really wanted to tell you this the first time I saw you.

Joy: Mmm…

Benson: You are so beautiful, in both mind and soul, in everything.

Joy: Uh?

Benson: Joy? I am very very sure that you are the right one for me. C'mon Joy, you know-

Joy: Ben.

Benson: Uh?

Joy: [Laughs nervously] What you want, I am sorry it cannot happen, it's just too late.

Benson: But why? Why would it be late?

Joy: Uhm…because I am married and I love my husband.

Benson: oh!

Joy: And above that I am a born again Christian. I can't do anything that. It goes against my faith or that will break my wedding vows.

Benson: Mmm. Oh so you are married?

Joy: Yes.

Benson: You never told me.

Joy: You never asked. If you don't believe it, just look…just look at this [paper].

Benson: Mmm…

Joy: Here is a picture of me and my husband. I always carry it with me wherever I go.

Benson: I …let me please have a closer look at it?

Joy: Here you are.

Benson: Mmm…ah so this is your husband?

Joy: Yes, his name is James Mbote.

Benson: Mmm.

Joy: And we teach in the same school. And I love him, I love him very much.

Benson: And you cannot love another one.

Joy: Not when he is still alive no. You know we took our vows together and promised to remain together till death do us part.

Benson: Mmm. That is a fast one on me.

Joy: I am sorry.

Benson: Well, uhm…what can I say?

Joy: Just keep looking, just keep looking. There is a miss right for you out there. Just pray about it and the Lord shall bless you one day, just pray about it.

Benson: I …I will I will.

Joy: I think I should leave now…I can see you are not okay…where can I pick a taxi?

Benson: A taxi...no no, I will have my driver drop you, okay?

Joy: No I can see you are really…I think you need to take the one million cheque back.

Benson: [Protests] no no no just keep it okay?

Joy: From the bottom of your heart?

Benson: Oh yes please just keep it, but Joy, I will only ask for one favour from you? Just give me this photograph so that it can be a reminder that one day I met this beautiful woman?

Joy: Well, you can keep it.

Benson: Good. Thank you.

James: Ok.

FX: [Music]

Voice: Well, well well, somebody has just covered my eyes, and I think I know who it is…well well well, let me see…it must be my darling Joy.

Joy: [Giggling] I thought you had forgotten your wife-

James: C'mon. Okay, just come next to me baby.

Joy: Here I am.

James: Good. Now give me… [Sound of kissing].

Joy: How are the kids?

James: Good. I am sure they will be back from school anytime now.

Joy: Did you miss me darling?

James: C'mon, you can say that again…c'mon. you know the days looked to long not to mention the nights.

Joy: Especially the nights.

James: Especially the nights, you know hey?

James: Mmm.

James: Now tell me everything about the seminar.

James: Well, it was the most wonderful seminar I had ever attended.

James: Really?

Joy: Yes. You know we were in one of those five star hotels in the city where life is a hundred times more expensive.

James: Really? Don't make me feel jealous.

Joy: Compared to the life we live here, oh oh…

James: Oh oh…mmm…

Joy: You know our bills were running into millions after only two days.

James: What? And whoever it was that sponsored you, God bless him.

James: And there is something else I want to tell you.

James: What?

Joy: I met this wonderful man, he was so wonderful, do you know what he did?

James: No…

James: He gave me this…he gave me this cheque.

James: But wha-wha-what do you mean a man gave you this cheque, I don't understand.

Joy: First just read it, read it please. Just read it for yourself.

James: What? A one million Kenya shillings cheque for the local…I mean this is great! Which country is this man from? Is he from Germany?

Joy: No. Kenya.

James: What? Kenya?

Joy: Yes. There are a few good rich men in Kenya.

James: Is he a politician or something?

Joy: Nooooo. He is just a businessman. I told him about our project and right there and then, right there and then he gave me this cheque.

James: Bu---but …if all rich men in Kenya would behave like this I mean, this country would be so far.

Joy: Don't you think so? I couldn't believe it…one million just there.

James: Congratulations darling.

[They kiss]

FX: [Music]

Benson: Finze! Finze over here.

Finze: [Laughs] Well am sorry am late.

Benson: Ah I know its okay. In fact, I have just arrived some three minutes ago.

Finze: Mmm

Benson: Have you booked your ticket?

Finze: Mmm…not yet. I was not sure if this time we were going to Dubai or Japan…you know this time around I want to buy pick-ups only and the best place to get them is Japan, or what do you think?

Benson: Mmm….to tell you the truth Finze, I have not thought much about it.

Finze: Mmm.

Benson: Look I have a problem, Finze…

Finze: A problem?

Benson: Mmm.

Finze: The police again?

Benson: No, not the police…you know since I hired that man to…you know since you hired that man.

Finze: Yes.

Benson: That policeman under the ground, you know I have never really had problems with my cars entering this country, bought or stolen.

[They both laugh]

Finze: Well…what is your problem this time?

Benson: It's a woman Finze. I love her so much but she doesn't love me at all. She claims to be married.

Finze: Ohh, so who is this woman?

Benson: You don't know her, she comes from the village, she is a teacher there.

Finze: Village?

Benson: No Finze, she is something-

Finze: Ben! We have been with you all over the world…America, Japan, Dubai-

Benson: Oh sure sure.

Finze: Germany, Seychelles, and we have seen all sorts of women, black, yellow white well…how comes you are now crazy about a woman from the village?

Benson: I also don't know…all I know is that I want her so badly.

Finze: B-B-But Ben, you are a man who always gets what he wants, so use it.

Benson: But its not working, its not working Finze. I wrote her a cheque of one million shillings.

Finze: One million shillings, and she still said no?

Benson: Yes, in fact her words were 'I cannot love another man while my husband is still alive.' We took our vows, till death do us part…that kind of nonsense.

Finze: That was her talking…so what can happen if death does them part.

Benson: Mmmm?

Finze: Like one of them-

Benson: Come to think of it-

Finze: Mmmm.

Benson: Finze, you know I was also thinking of that.

Finze: You know while we are away in Asia or Europe, Bruto the best hitman can do that job.

Benson: You know what Finze, you are always a fast thinker.

Finze: My imagination works overtime.

Fade out. Drums

FX: Knocking

James: Come in Mr. Maloba from the headquarters just come in. Mr. Maloba. My wife has been expecting you. Just come in and have a seat.

Mr. Maloba: Where has she gone to?

James: To water potatoes at the shamba. You know we have so many projects here. I hope you have not been sent by the NGOs to come and inspect the projects.

Maloba: Y-Yes, how far is that potato shamba from here?

James: Not very far, she should be here in about a few minutes, just sit an relax-

Mr. Maloba: I mean, how far is that Potato shamba from here?

James: About a kilometer.

Mr. Maloba: I see. That is a good distance. Now have a look at this photograph, what do you see?

James: B-but this is my wife and I. Joy and I. I mean what is it for? What?

Mr. Maloba: Are you sure you are the man in the photograph?

James: Of course, this is me, its very clear.

Mr. Maloba: Mmm.

James: Bbbut…

Mr. Maloba: Are you alone in this house?

James: Yes, my kids are away with their grandmother and my wife has gone to water the potatoes.

Mr. Maloba: Mmm Now Mr Mbote. You can say your last prayers.

James: What? What is that you are holding? A gun?

Mr. Maloba: You are right, it is a gun.

James: Who are you? What do you want from me, who are you?

Mr. Maloba: I am Bruno and I want your life!

James: oh nononononooooooooooo! [Gun shot]

FX: [Footsteps of a person running and breathing heavily].

Joy: What is that I heard, oh no nooooo ooohhh nooooooooo!

Bruno: You want to know why? Now you can follow him in hell or wherever you will meet

Joy: What?

FX: [Gun shot].

Bruno: Goodbye dead bodies. Mission accomplished.

FX: [Music]

Benson: Home sweet home [sighing, sound of door banging] Bruno? What are you doing here? I have just arrived from abroad.

Bruno: I know. I followed you from the airport

Benson: But Bruno, I told you, we are never to be seen together.

Benson: I know. We never arranged where to meet. Now give me the other half of my money.

Benson: But was the mission accomplished?

Bruno: Yes, it was even in the papers. You just read for yourself.

Benson: Okay. [Paper] Let me have a look at it. Eh…a teacher and his wife brutally murdered, ehh [pause] wait a minute Bruno, a teacher and his wife?

Benson: Yeees. I killed the man, and then his woman came crying, "my husband, my husband"I could not leave any tracks, she had seen me do it.

Benson: But you killed her?

Bruno: Yes, I don't spare any witnesses.

Benson: Bruno, so you killed her, you confirmed that she is dead?

Bruno: Yes.

Benson: You killed her? [Pause] ok. Do you have the gun?

Benson: Yes.

Benson: I want to se it before I pay you.

Benson: You can't believe me? Here is my gun, you just take it. You think I am going to kill you? Here take it.

Benson: How could you, how could you kill the woman I love?

Benson: But I accomplished my mission.

Benson: How could you Bruno?

Bruno: Don't- [gun shot].

Benson: No way, there is no point in living without you…I can't live without my woman; I can't [gun shot].

The end