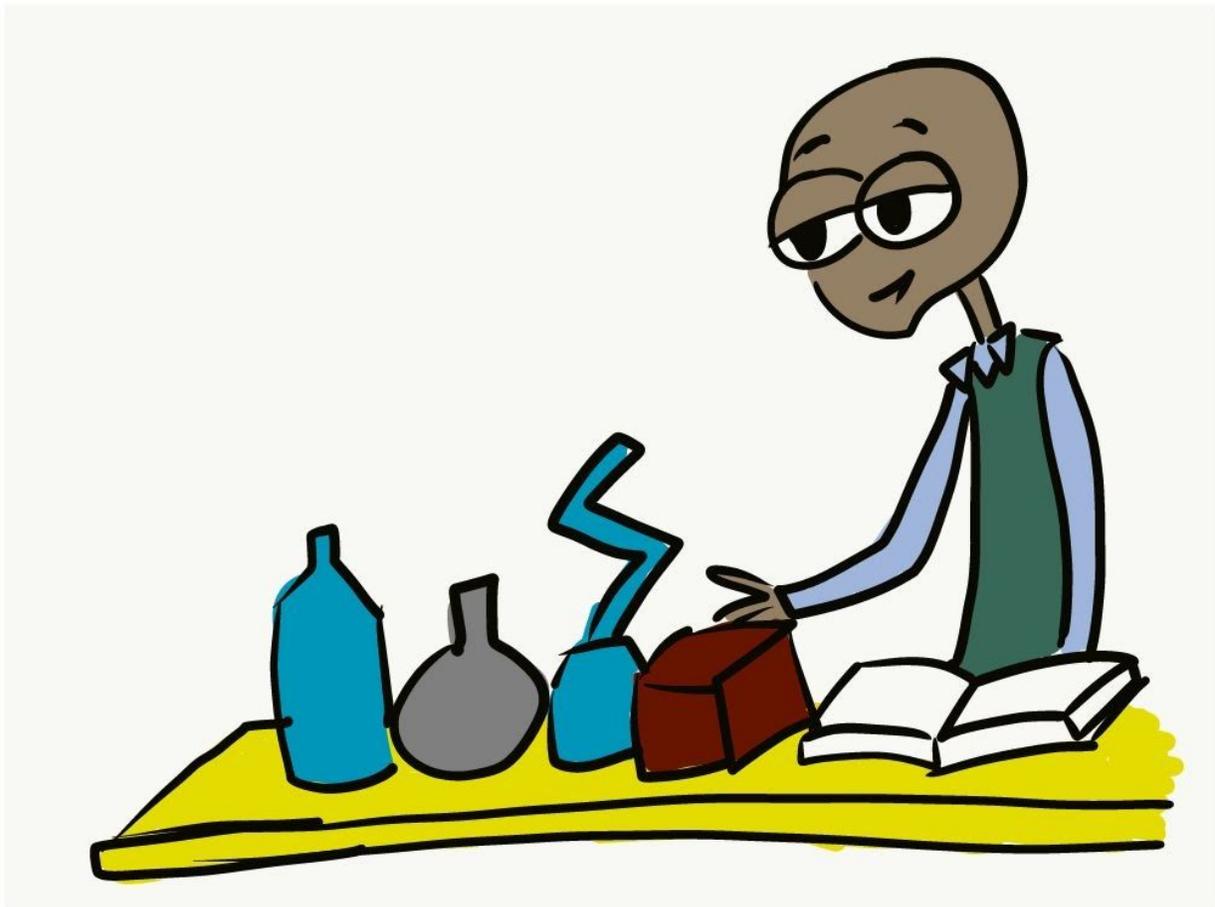


WAKAYIMA OF TROPICAL ACADEMY Episode 5

WAKAYIMA SOLVES OBLONG'S PROBLEM

By Ernest Bazanye



The next day Mr Kafuddu was teaching Physics as the first lesson after lunch. Now, Mr Kafuddu always tried his best, because he knew that the first lesson after lunch was the most difficult one of the day. He tried to always make it as lively and exciting as he could. He saved the formulas and theorems for before lunch and kept the good stuff for right after. For the most part it worked, and the

kids managed to pay attention. But he never seemed to keep that Kironde boy awake.

Today he was feeling confident. He had a special experiment. And not just any special experiment: this one involved a balloon. In fact, just to make sure, he carried several balloons, and five pins, so that if anyone tried to sleep in the class, well, that's where the pins came in.

He marched into the room and said, "Afternoon, class! Everybody up! You know ja jrill by now!"

The class shuffled to their feet. They knew the drill. If it was Mr Kafuddu's class first period after lunch, he was going to make them stand up and sit down and stand up and sit down every ten minutes. He even had a timer on his phone to make sure he didn't miss a minute.

"Hello, Kwezi. It yooks like you had a very oily yunch! It is jripping all over your shirt!" That was Mr Kafuddu's way of greeting Kwezi.

"Oily but delicious, Mr Kafuddu, sah!" said Kwezi.

"And who among you had ja fish? I can smell some fish in the room. Is it you Akello?" Mr Kafuddu asked.

"Noooo! I even brushed my teeth right after I ate it. I keep telling my dad not to pack fish because it smells. Mr Kafuddu, can you write a note to my dad and tell him that fish is not the best thing to pack for his lovely daughter's lunch?"

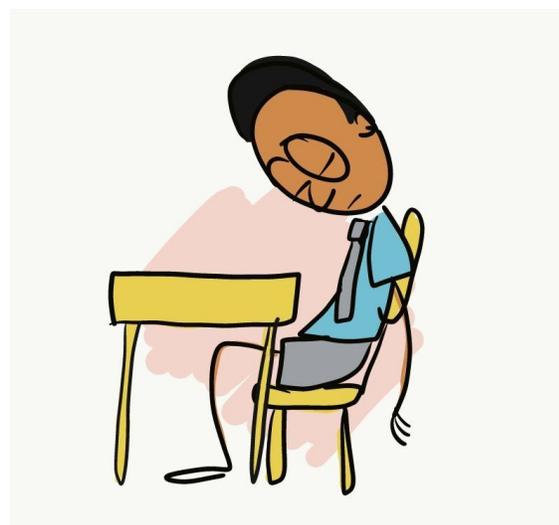
Mr Kafuddu smiled. "Akello, you are one of my best schujents in class. But I cannot help you. You and your fajer, that is your problem. Jeal with it on your own. Now, everyone can sit back down. Except you, Rukia. Rukia, come in fwont. I have a prejent for you."

Mr Kafuddu produced a bottle of juice from his bag and asked Rukia to drink it. When she saw that everyone was watching, she decided to take it in one long gulp. The whole class cheered her on. “Go! Go! Go! Go!” until she was finally finished then they all applauded and cheered and whistled as if she was The Nigerian Super Eagles scoring an equalizer in the FIFA World Cup finals.

But while everyone was clapping and shouting, Mr Kafuddu looked at the corner to where Oblong usually sat. And sure enough, his head was already nodding. Mr Kafuddu knew he would have to work hard this lesson. He drew out his balloons.

It was going to be a very interesting experiment. I could tell you how it worked but I think you should, perhaps, I don't know, pay attention in class yourself and let your teacher tell you these things? I don't know, like, maybe try that sometime? Like, pay attention in class, or something? I'm just saying. Hello?

But this is what happened. Mr Kafuddu put some stuff in the empty juice bottles, and then put a balloon over each bottle and somehow, I don't know how, the stuff in the bottles started bubbling and fizzing and the balloons got filled up. It was really cool. A lot of the kids were having fun because he would choose someone to make the mix and then get another person to put on the balloon and then get someone else to burst the balloon.



And he looked into the corner where Oblong was, and yes. Oblong was asleep.

The first three times balloons burst woke him up temporarily, but after that he just seemed to stay asleep.

Mr Kafuddu sighed. The rest of the class seemed to be enjoying themselves, but this Kironde was missing the whole lesson.

At least, at first.

The fun part of the lesson ended and now it was time for the blackboard when Mr Kafuddu would explain chemical reactions and how yeast reacts with sugar to create carbon dioxide which fills the balloons. He began to write on the board.

“Carbon Mono— carbon monoshide. Everybojy say Carbon Monoshide!”

The class replied, “Carbon monoshide!”

“Don’t be silly schujents. Say it properly. Stop making fun of my akchent,” Mr Kafuddu warned. The class replied, “Carbon Monoxide!”

“Carbon Monoshide is projushed by chemical what?”

“Carbon Monoxide is produced by chemical reaction!” replied the class.

At this point, he turned around and looked at the left corner of the class. His plan was to toss a piece of chalk at Kironde to wake him up. Mr Kafuddu was ready to say the words, “Can you wake up and tell us what a chemical reaction is, schujent?” but to his shock, Oblong was staring right at him, wide awake, eyes as wide open as church windows.

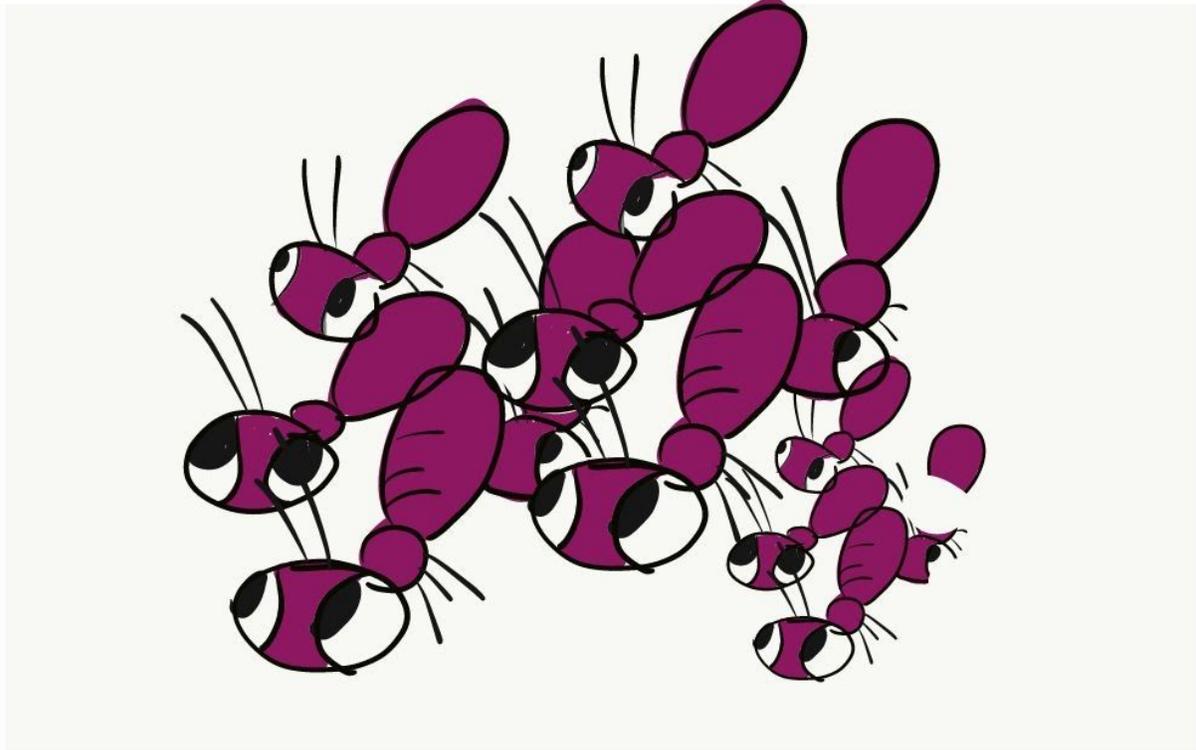
Oblong saw that the teacher was looking at him and just repeated the words, “Carbon Monoxide is produced by chemical reaction, sah!”

Mr Kafuddu was quite bewildered. All throughout the rest of the lesson he kept looking at Kironde to see if he could catch him sleeping, but every time he looked, the boy was wide awake, eyes open and blazing like two TV screens. By the time



the class ended, Mr Kafuddu was feeling very proud of himself. He had finally gotten through to the young man. His balloons had worked!

Except that, well, it was not really the balloons.



If he had looked he would have seen that, while he was having fun with the balloons and the bottles (for yes, he was also having fun. It isn't only students who like to play. Even teachers like to have fun) Wakayima opened his bag and took a little box out of it. If Mr Kafuddu had not been joyously popping balloons, he would have seen Wakayima open the box and a small swarm of ants spill out to begin to form a line, a line of ants that would march all the way to Oblong's chair. The line went up the chair and to the seat. Then the captain ordered the Nsanafu Squad (of course it was them) to halt.

"One by one, attack!" ordered the captain.

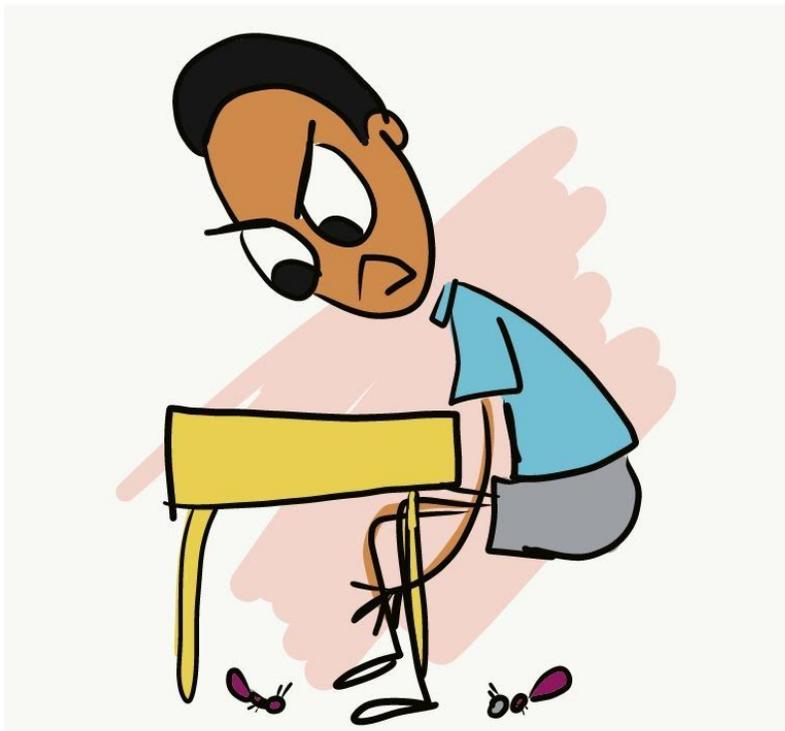
And one by one the ants crept down Oblong's shorts to his legs. And each one, once they reached the knee, would take a bite.

It wasn't long before Oblong felt like he was going crazy. His legs seemed to be covered in ants. Every three seconds, he felt a bite. But every time he reached down to see the ant there was nothing.

You know how that happens? Have you noticed it with insects? You feel one bite you, and then you quickly slap the place where the bite was. But when you check your hand to see if you got the insect —ant or mosquito or whatever it was— you see nothing. It escaped.

Now you have not only a bite, but you also slapped yourself as well, and you cannot even see the insect that started it.

Of course, sometimes you get the insect, but sometimes you don't. In the case of Oblong he did not get the insect any time at all.



It is something Nsanafu Squad members were very good at because they had the training. They called it Camouflage Protocol G.I. Joe Nine Delta. That is when they bite you and hide before the slap reaches. Every time Oblong tried to slap or scratch he found nothing but more pain. Oblong did not sleep a single blink the rest of that school day, thanks to the efforts of the ants. When it

was time to go home, the captain rounded up the squadron. “Sojas! Retreat to Box! Ten Four! Haraka!” shouted the captain.

“Wait. You are not the captain who ordered us out of the box,” another ant noticed. “What’s going on?”

The ant who had made the order had to explain. “The first captain lost the line when she slipped and fell into the human’s sock, sorry.”

“So you took over?” asked the ant.

“No, Nsanafu Squad Seargent Muloodi took over. But then when the slap came it almost got her. She had to jump sideways and ended up out of the line. Then I took over.”

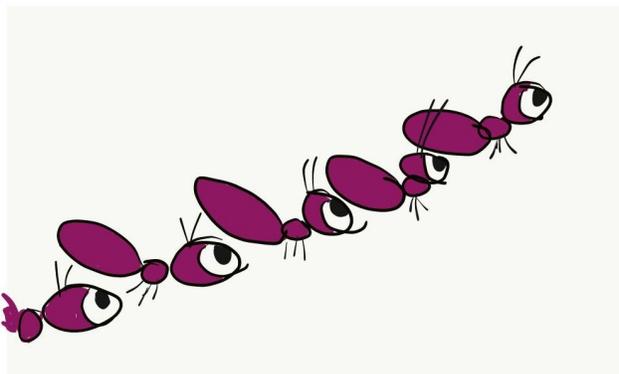
“Oh. Are the previous captains okay?” asked another ant.

“Are you going to retreat or are you going to just keep asking questions?” snapped the new captain. “This is a line. The rest of us can’t move until you stop flapping your mandibles asking questions and get moving.”

“We’re okay, guys,” a voice came out of Oblong’s socks and two ants crawled out. “Phew! That was close. He almost squashed us.”

“Oh, Muloodi, I was so worried!” said one ant from the line.

“I’m okay, sis, don’t worry,” said former captain Muloodi.



“Hey, what’s the hold up? March forth! The hare promised us plenty of sweet simsim and it’s waiting for us. Muloodi and his friend, can you save

your loving reunion for later? Let's go."

"Oh, yes. The simsim!" the ants remembered. And they instantly fell in line and marched away from Oblong's legs and back to Wakayima's bag.

Mr Kafuddu was writing a few formulas on the blackboard. I am afraid I can't tell you what they are, but don't worry, when you do Chemistry you will find out. They are about carbon monoxide and chemical reactions.

Mr Kafuddu was also writing down the pages for homework and getting ready to end the class. He was very happy that day, and not just because of all the balloons and how bursting balloons always makes a person happy, but also because he had finally managed to keep the whole class awake.

Mr Kafuddu was a good teacher and he hated it when any of his students were not doing well. It really bothered him when any of them fell asleep. But today he was happy because even that Kironde who always fell dead asleep had stayed awake.

Mr Kafuddu finally wrote down the last formula and then turned to the class.

"Okay, now your homework. I want everbojji to do the eshershise on page fatty nine, section free! Okay? Everybojji!"

And he looked up to the class. He looked out to Oblong Kironde's desk and his heart sank.

Now that the ants were gone, Oblong was fast asleep again.



Oblong had better learn that if you want to stay awake in class, don't touch the PSP. If you, like Wakayima, don't know, it is a video game machine and it can keep you up all night. Better keep away from them on school nights!

The adventures of the cheeky, cunning hare that sneaks into the human school continue with a fresh story each week. Thanks to the Kuonyesha Art Fund for supporting this!