



HE HEARS THEM.

THEY ARE COMING.

*THEIR MUFFLED FOOTFALLS
ARE LIKE THE LABORED
TREAD OF MASTODONS
TO HIM.*

*THEIR MUTED BREATHING
IS LIKE A RISING
WINDSTORM IN
HIS EARS.*

TWO, PROBABLY.

*IT WOULD NOT DO TO
UNDERESTIMATE THEM.*

YES.

TWO, ONLY.

MATAMBAS, DOUBTLESS.

*SURELY NO MORE
THAN THREE.*

*THE MAN WHO DOES NOT
GIVE HIS FOES THEIR DUE
RESPECT...*

*...IS A MAN WHO IS
SOON DEAD.*

*THEY ARE SKILLED
HUNTERS, TO HAVE
PICKED UP HIS
TRAIL IN THE DARK.*

*THIS FAR SOUTH OF THE
ZARKHEBA, WHICH SOME
CALL THE POISON RIVER, ONLY
THEY WOULD ROAM THE
RAINFOREST IN MERE PAIRS,
AND NOT FEAR AMBUSH.*

*OTHER CLANS
DO NOT LIGHTLY
WAYLAY SPEAR-
MEN OF THE
MATAMBA.*





... IS NOT A QUILLPIG, TO BE CHUCKED FULL OF MATAMBA SPEARS.

THE WORDS, SNARLED IN HIS NORTHERN TONGUE ACHIEVE THE DESIRED EFFECT:



A MOMENT'S HESITATION.

AN INSTANT'S DELAY.



IT IS ENOUGH.



THE WATAMBA ARE MIGHTY WARRIORS--



BUT HE IS--



-- CONAN THE CIMMERIAN



**MORE
MATAMBAS!**

**THEY MUST
HAVE CROUCHED,
WAITING, SOME
DISTANCE
BEHIND THE
TWO HE HEARD.**



**TOO MANY TO
FIGHT, SWORD
AGAINST SPEAR,
SINEW AGAINST
SINEW.**



**LET ARROWS
CARRY HIS
MESSAGE.**



**LET THE MATAMBI
HURL THEIR ASSEGAI
AND SHRED THE WEBS
OF NIGHT.**


**LET THEM
FOLLOW
HIM, IF
THEY DARE.**



**THEY ARE
MEN OF
THE
JUNGLE,
TRUE...**



**... BUT HE
IS AMRA,
WHICH MEANS
THE LION.**



Elsewhen...

SOLOMON KANE REINS HIS STEED TO A HALT.

NO SOUND BREAKS THE DEATH-LIKE STILLNESS OF THE FOREST WHICH REARS STARKLY AROUND HIM.

YET HE SENSES THAT SOMETHING IS COMING DOWN THE SHADOWY TRAIL TOWARD HIM.

AND HE THINKS OF A BALLAD SUNG BY A MINSTREL IN THE TOWN HE LEFT BEHIND HIM LONG BEFORE THE FULL MOON ROSE...

*"The hangman asked of the carrion crow,
But the raven made reply:*