



A Carrion Death

By Michael Stanley
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Introduction

When Kalahari game rangers stumble on a human corpse, it turns out enough evidence is left to suggest foul play. Detective David 'Kubu' Bengu of the Botswana Criminal Investigation Department is assigned to the case. His nickname is Setswana for hippopotamus—a seemingly docile creature, but one of the deadliest on the continent. Beneath Kubu's pleasant surface lies the same unwavering resolve that makes the hippopotamus so deceptively dangerous. But Kubu is a resourceful, wily policeman determined to rid Botswana of crime and corruption, no matter what gets in his way. One death leads to another until finally Detective Kubu uncovers a chain of crimes linked to the most powerful people in the country.

Questions for Discussion

1. One of the themes of *A Carrion Death* is the tension between traditional values—the witchdoctor, for example—and western values. How does this best show up in the book? Are there similar tensions in your own country? If so, how do they manifest themselves?
2. Would you like to have Joy and Kubu as friends? Why?
3. How successful would Kubu be if transplanted to a police force in the USA?
4. What do you think are Kubu's views of South Africa?
5. How do you think Minnesota-trained academic, Bongani, fits into Botswana life?
6. How does the authors' love of Africa come through in the book?
7. Are you able to tell which of the authors wrote which parts of the book? How do you think two people write fiction together?
8. What are your reactions to the relationships that Kubu has with his wife and parents?
9. What is your impression of Botswana? How would you describe it to a friend?
10. Why do you think Botswana is such a successful and stable democracy?
11. Joy and Kubu cannot have kids. How do you think that knowledge will affect their sex life?
12. Do you think that Kubu should stick to his diet? Why?

About the Author

Michael Stanley is the pen name of Michael Sears and Stanley Trollip, both born in South Africa. Their love of the African bush spawned numerous trips to Botswana and Zimbabwe, frequently in a single-engine plane rented by Stanley, who has flown since 1969.