

# THE MFOUMBA

**SECRETS OF THE  
AFRICAN MEDICINE MAN**



By

William Van

and

Kate Richardson

# **MFUMU!**

## **Secrets of the African Medicine Man**

**Kate Richardson & William Van**

To Mhuto the Teacher and to Kimaani our faithful guide,  
without whom we would have lost our way many times,  
We remember them, wherever they may be now

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### NOTE

The talismans mentioned on various pages can be made of any material, e.g. metal, wood, paper, etc. They can be drawn, painted, engraved or made by any other method. They can be worn or kept in your pocket.

## FOR THE SAKE OF PRECISION

William was in Africa for some time and lived through the upheaval at the end of the colonial period; this was not a pleasant experience. Kate has never been there. However, as we work together all the time we also wrote this book together. We found that writing in one place 'William was told...', in another place 'We can see that this...', and somewhere else 'Kate thinks...' is not conducive to easy reading. Those who object against us using 'we', especially when we relate some of the things which happened over there, are free to rewrite this book.

We also find it difficult to remain clear and logical in this new and idiotic part of the British legal system where there are no longer two different sexes and where we are all supposed to be hermaphrodites. Nothing sounds more ridiculous than the words bar-person, tea-person, usher-person (formerly usherette) or person-Friday, whatever the latter may mean. Hardened feminists are entitled to replace *he* or *him* by *he/she* or *him/her* if they wish to do so. They should keep in mind that this may well add a few pages to most books.

There are many languages in central Africa. The language spoken by the mfumu mentioned in this book was Ki-Rundi. At times the mfumu used Swahili, either when communicating with whites or with a mfumu from a different region where another language was spoken. Also English and French were used. African magic does not depend so much on linguistical precision than other forms of magic. We have therefore translated everything because it is more important to understand what you are saying than to ape something which does not make sense to you.

Kate Richardson  
William Van

### IF YOU NEED HELP

If you need any help contact the authors at FINBARR'S address.  
They have agreed, within reason, to help readers who have difficulty in  
finding or making the implements they need.  
They are also prepared to advise when necessary.



## THE MFUMU

Africa is a very large continent and customs vary from place to place. One can write accurately about one region and find that many will dispute what has been written. In a way they are right, but they make the mistake of only taking into account what they know about the area they once lived in. A hundred miles or five hundred miles is nothing in Africa. However, if there is a natural barrier between two regions then twenty miles can make all the difference. What is correct about one region does not necessarily apply to another, even if it is only a few miles further on. Apart from that there are differences in tribal customs, differences which cannot be ignored. At times these are such that one could easily believe to be on another continent altogether. Those who have lived in Africa during the colonial period, and who are now getting a day older, will confirm this.

The African medicine-man, the mfumu, has been depicted and described in many ways, most of which are wrong. It is often forgotten that there existed a hierarchy amongst the mfumus, a hierarchy which can be compared with the churches, who have their curates, ministers, bishops etc. Every community had its own mfumu, of course, but there were others who stood above the community and in a way were superior to the village-mfumu, although they themselves still acted for the village too, in some kind of dual role. This is very much like the bishop being superior to the minister or priest. The local mfumus often went for advice to these regional mfumus. These in turn were subordinated to a 'big' mfumu who was, so to speak, in charge of a very large area. The latter were people who did not live in a community anymore, they were very solitary. Many people who lived in Africa during the colonial period have heard of these 'big' mfumus but never actually seen one. The latter were feared by everybody. They lived on gifts from those in the area and they were never short of anything. Nothing could be worse than being cursed by them.

The customs and the rituals performed by the mfumus are subject to the same regional variations. There is a common trend underlying the rituals, but the variations can be such that one needs to look twice before concluding that one is witnessing a similar ritual with the same aim as one which has been seen elsewhere. The way the mfumu dresses for a particular ritual and the implements he uses are subject to the same variations. It is therefore impossible to describe these customs and rituals in such a way that this would be valid all over this vast continent.

The mfumu about whom we are talking was one of those incredible combinations of European and African culture and knowledge. Mbuto had become mfumu first whilst at the same time completing his secondary education. At the age of twenty nine he became a 'big' mfumu, after which he went to Europe to study medicine and qualified. On his return he reverted to the old ways, not as a fanatic, but carefully combining the best of both cultures. He clearly distinguished between what was essential and what

was not, in medicine as well as in magic and sorcery. Above all, he was humane. He ran a small hospital which stood in a clearing, well away from the surrounding villages. He himself lived about half a mile away from there in a hut. Every day he spent some time in the hospital and the remainder in his hut. It was a peculiar sight to see this man in the morning, wearing a white coat and with a stethoscope hanging around his neck, and then to meet him some time later dressed like a local. Some diseases were dealt with in the Western fashion, others in his own traditional way. To those who feel that he had reverted to 'barbarism' we would like to say that they are wrong. There are many illnesses for which modern medicine has no cure; he often had. The modern mental disorders like depression and stress-related illness did not exist in his area. Also, the Chinese do the same thing: a patient can be seen by an Western-style doctor, a doctor of Chinese medicine, a herbalist and an acupuncturist, all at the same time. They work together, not against one another.

To become a mfumu takes a long time. The apprentices are chosen, they do not decide for themselves to become a mfumu. During their training, which can take many years, they have to make everything they need. Nothing can be bought or acquired in any other way. In that part of Africa the tools of the deceased mfumu were burned. One of the reasons for this is that they believe that the 'spirit' of the late mfumu lives on in his tools. By burning them they send the spirit on his way. These tools are very personal and should not be used by anybody else. Every mfumu will protect any tool he has made by placing a curse on those who use it. All this may be considered by some to be superstition and mumbo-jumbo. Speak to those who have been in Africa and who have witnessed the result of some of these curses, and you may well change your mind. The curators of some African museums are very well aware of the fact that some of the objects in their keeping are better left alone. Those who touch them go through an unending series of mishaps and suffer more bad luck than can normally be expected. It is not only some large diamonds which carry a curse!

As a race we are impatient. Nowadays we want things immediately, we cannot wait. If you do not have the patience to make and to collect what you need then you are reading the wrong book. Just remember what happened in the old days, the days of long apprenticeships; in many trades the apprentices had to make their own tools. What can the mfumu do? Quite a lot. There is nothing which can be done with our traditional forms of magic, which does not have an equivalent in its African counterpart. We feel that the latter is perhaps either faster or more efficient in dealing with mental disorders than its equivalent over here. Mfumus also do things which are rarely, if at all, done over here.

Let us give an example of such an event which happened in front of thousands of witnesses:

A few years ago there was a big music festival in Fyfe in Scotland. It had been raining for the first three days of the festival. Then it was the turn of an African group. They involved the thousands of spectators in a ritualistic rain dance. The rain subsided, the clouds broke and the sun appeared. As soon as the group had finished the clouds closed



in and it started to rain again. Coincidence? Talk to those who have seen this many times in Africa.

The mfumu also foretells the future and decides upon the days and times which are suitable for events which are important in people's lives. We have included a few of the methods which they use. We have also included a ritual to call up the spirits of the departed. We find that this works much better than all the mumbo-jumbo used by some of the worst so-called mediums, the money-minded charlatans.

Mbuto taught us how to adapt rituals and how to replace real sacrifices by symbolic ones. So don't be afraid, you will not have to kill anything. We have followed his guide-lines in our adaptations of the ritual proper and we have also followed his suggestions, made over thirty years ago, where the spoken parts of the ritual are concerned.

Finally we like to say this: it is impossible to cover the complete spectrum of mfumu magic in a small treatise like this. We have selected those rituals which are in demand over here, omitting many other fascinating ones. Amongst these are many rituals dealing with curses, attack, defense and revenge, although we have described some of them in this book. The remainder will be part of a possible future work on the subject of mfumu magic.

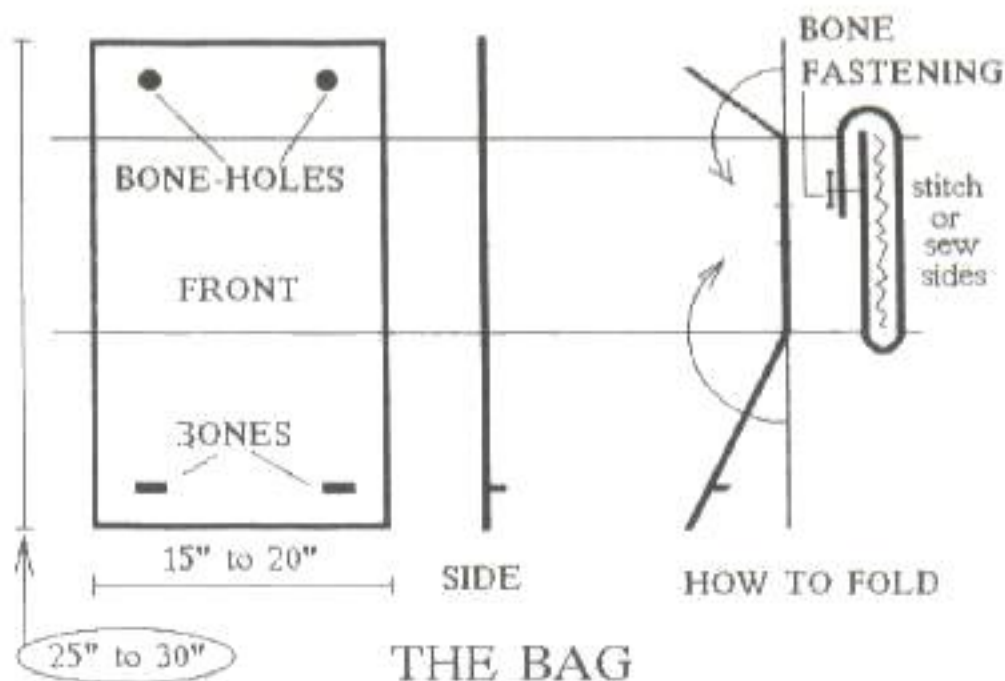
# MAKING AND COLLECTING

To make or to collect what you need is fun; it is also a very valuable exercise in many other ways and an exercise in patience, that much needed attribute of every magician and sorcerer. If you buy something then you start using it immediately and you don't think about its use, something you would do whilst you are making it. If you use something which you have made with your own hands or for which you have made a trip to collect it, then the whole aspect of the object changes. It contains something of yourself: your handiwork, your effort and all the memories which go with it.

You will not be making masks and drums, you can rest assured of that. ALL YOU NEED IS EASILY AVAILABLE. Most of it can be found locally or during short excursions. For the rituals described in this book you will need nothing more than what the mfumu carries with him in his bag, so let us start with this.

## THE BAG

You need a bag which should be of sufficient size to contain everything you need. It is not a small bag in which you put only what you need for the occasion; it must always contain all your tools. These tools live in the bag and they are never kept elsewhere. Wherever you go, you must always have everything you might need with you. That is the rule.





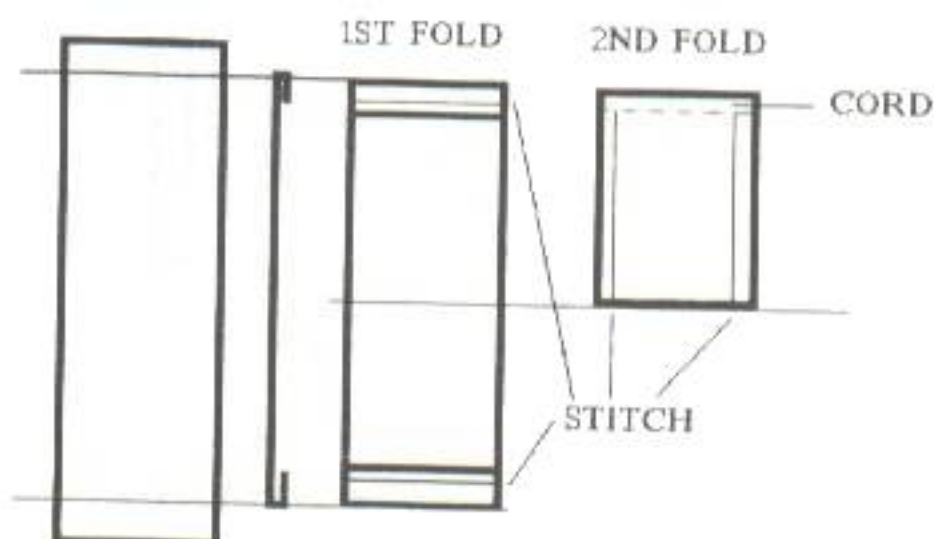
The bag of the mfumu is flat, like an envelope, so it is very easy to make. Shape and size are given in the drawings on the previous page. The flap of the bag is fastened with two small bones which are used like buttons. These are bones coming from a bird. The thigh-bone (femur) of a quail is just about the right size, although this is not very important.

We would like to insist that you make this bag yourself. If you go out and buy something then it may not be suitable or there will be a culture-clash. One of our acquaintances bought a chammy-leather bag which looks quite nice, but the finish reminds one of North-American Indians, not of Africa. It looks like the shoulder-bag of Davy Crockett! You can use any material you like, leather, chammy-leather, strong cloth, canvas or whatever else you like.

The bag should be painted. The designs used in Africa vary from place to place and from area to area. It is not difficult to find a book on African art in the library and to copy whatever you like, or to adapt it to your own taste. The painting on the bag is very personal to the mfumu. Use very bright colours.

## POUCHES

You will also need a set of pouches of different sizes to carry the many things which you will use. If you cannot design these yourself then look at the illustrations. You should paint these pouches too. They are used to carry all the various collections. Your bag should not be like some women's handbag which has to be turned upside down to find what is needed. A mfumu can take anything he needs out of his bag with his eyes



POUCHES

closed. Most of the time he does so, as part of the ritual. Do not make the pouches before your collection is complete; this is a question of getting the size right.

## THINGS TO COLLECT

### TWIGS

You need some twigs. They should be about a quarter of an inch in diameter. Six of these should be approximately two inches long, the other six should be about four inches long. They must be smooth and without any knots or any other unevenness. The bark should stay on the twigs, so choose the appropriate kind of tree or bush. Twigs are carried in a pouch.

### SHELLS

You need one pouch with six smallish conical shells of approximately the same size. The shells from whelks are definitely too big. You also need a pouch with twelve flattish shells (bivalvia) of the kind you find at the seaside. Also these should be of approximately the same size. In central Africa these shells are very difficult to find, in England they are not. If you cannot possibly collect these then use the shells of mussels or cockles. If everything else fails then go and buy some in a shop selling minerals and the like. You will need one pouch for each type of shell.

### STONES

You need one smooth pebble of approximately three by two by one inches. You also need twelve smaller pebbles, measuring at the most one by one and a half by half an inch. They can be smaller if you wish, so that they are lighter and easier to carry. All these should be painted with a different design. The large pebble should have all the designs of the small pebbles on it. If you don't want the paint to flake off easily then varnish the stones, let the varnish harden and varnish the stones again two or three times. Mfumus use wax for this. You need a pouch for the large stone and one for the small stones.

### KNIFE

Any small knife will do. You cannot possibly make that yourself; neither does the mfumu. However, to become a 'big' mfumu the apprentice goes to the village and joins the blacksmith in order to learn how to make a blade for a knife. This is reminiscent of the Japanese samurai-sword which was made by the samurai himself. You yourself will not have to do this. Paint the handle to give it some personality. Protect the blade so that you do not cut yourself accidentally, or use a knife which can be opened and

closed like an old-fashioned penknife. Any knife with a scabbard will be good enough for the purpose. Do not make it too big. **NEVER CUT ANYTHING WITH IT!** This is similar to the rule for a western athame: also this is never used to cut.

## **BONES**

You need a set of chicken-bones:

- a. The three main bones from each wing.
- b. The three main bones from each leg.  
(Ask your butcher not to cut the feet in half. Discard the very thin bone (fibula) which is at the back of the thigh bone.)
- c. Six vertebrae from the neck.

To avoid any unpleasant smells - and to get rid of the grease - first boil the bones, then clean them. Finally place them in some acetone for a few days after which you let them dry. After that they should be clean. Take your time to polish the bones with a rough strong cloth until they start to shine. If you wish to use the bones from another bird then you can do so. Remember that sparrows have very small bones and that large turkeys have very big ones! The bones are carried in a pouch.

## **ARM-BANDS AND ANKLE-BANDS**

If you are not able to make these yourself then buy some with an African style design. Take them apart and string them again with elastic. Work some feathers in the ankle-bands. You can also buy some beads and make your own. When they are not worn these arm-bands are kept in the bag wrapped in a cloth. Paint this cloth with vivid colours.

## **CONSUMABLES**

### **WATER**

A small bottle of water is also part of your tools. Paint the bottle. In the old days the mfumus used clay bottles made by the local potter. Nowadays they often use glass bottles which are easily available, even in central Africa.

### **CHARCOAL**

You need some pieces of pure charcoal, not the self-igniting one. Mfumus make that themselves but you can buy this from shops selling barbecue materials. This is not carried in a pouch but in a small box. Find a suitable and strong box and paint it. Make



sure it closes properly, otherwise the contents of your bag will need washing all the time.

### **SAND**

You need some proper and very fine sand of three different colours. One as white as possible, the other as red as possible and one as vivid a yellow as you can find. This is also carried in little painted boxes which close very well. This is a consumable product, so collect enough. You will be using about a heaped teaspoonful per ritual to make body paint. If you dislike the idea of using sand and grease to paint some markings on your body then get three sticks of grease paint (used in the theatre) instead.

### **GREASE**

This is used to mix with the coloured sand to make body-paint. Some vaseline will do. Paint the container. If you are using grease paint then you do not need this.

### **WISHBONES**

Collect as many wishbones as you can. You will need one from time to time; once it has been used it is broken and cannot be used again. Put them all in a pouch.

### **BEANS**

You should always carry about fifty red or brown beans, not green ones. They are used in various rituals to break a spell or to remove a jinx from a place. Carry them in a pouch.

### **DRIED GRASS**

Cut some grass in lengths of about two to three inches and carry it in a small painted box so that the stalks do neither bend nor break.

### **MUSIC**

It helps to have some African ethnic music, although this is not strictly necessary. Collect it when the opportunity arises and make some tapes of a suitable length. This will help you to chant the words which are used in each ritual. Choose what you like. Nigerian music, for example, is as far apart from Zulu-music as barok music from modern pop.

## HOW TO PERFORM A RITUAL

The mfumu is usually dressed in a loin-cloth. He has painted lines and other markings on his body and on his face. If you want to be as authentic as possible then wear a loin-cloth. In many cases the mfumu does not wear anything except a cord around his loins. This parallel with Western magic has never been explained satisfactorily. You should also wear two arm-bands and two ankle-bands. The latter always have small feathers worked in them.

Most movies show the markings in white. Mbuto used three colours: yellow, red and white. In each ritual we have indicated which colour to use. Note that there is only one colour per ritual.

The markings on the body are very simple: one line from the top of the breast-bone (sternum) to be navel, and one line from each shoulder through the nipples joining the first line. The facial markings are illustrated below: one ring around each eye and two lines on each cheek. These are the markings needed for magic. All the other lines you may see from time to time are tribal markings and are not necessary.



FACE MARKINGS

Normally the paint is made by mixing sand of the right colour with grease. As we said before, if you do not like this then buy some grease-paint as used on the stage.

When you start a ritual you must sit down with enough space in front of you. Keep quiet for a few moments and reflect on what you are about to do. Then place your bag in front of you and quietly take out what you need. You should try and take these things out of the bag without looking. This is not difficult and can easily be achieved with a little bit of practice. During the rituals you should take out of your bag what you need, nothing else, without looking at all. You must try and achieve this, it is important.

Some rituals contain a chant (something akin to a mantra) which has not been translated. We can't translate it, because they were never translated for us. We understand that only 'big' mfumus know what these chants mean. However, they are used by all the mfumu's regardless of their rank and they work. These chants contain one single sentence and this should be chanted at least fifty times. The attentive reader may notice that all the words in the rituals have a specific rhythm. This has been done to adapt to African chant, because all the words are chanted. If you have any problems finding the right chant then go to the video-library and borrow ZULU. The chant used in the beginning of the film during the marriage ceremony will just about fit the words. We cannot print the music because we would be infringing copyright. Obviously, it would be better if you found a chant which suits you personally.



What you should always carry with you are some matches and a fire-proof bowl of a kind to burn things in. These things are NEVER put in your bag!

After each ritual you must make a sacrifice. Take a pound coin or a bank-note, the value of which should reflect the importance of your ritual. Throw it away inobtrusively. If you yourself find it back then do not touch it!

## CONSECRATING AND CURSING YOUR TOOLS

Once you have finished your bag and completed its contents you should put it away in a quiet place and wait for a day and a night. Make sure that nobody touches it and that nobody can see it.

When that period of time has elapsed then find yourself a quiet place. Whether this is in your home or out of doors is irrelevant. What you must make sure of is that you will not be disturbed. Disconnect the doorbell and if you have a telephone take the receiver off the hook. Play some African music.

Take everything out of your bag and place the empty bag in front of you. Arrange all the pouches in a nice display with the contents of each pouch on top of it, so that you can see all your tools in front of you.

You should try and find some African music. The few words which are used during the rituals are chanted, not spoken, and the actual melody is not important. What is important is the typical African rhythm, which you should try and achieve.

Chant the following:

*I ask the spirits of my forefathers to join me  
I ask for the protection of the spirits  
I ask the spirits to live in my tools  
So that they are always there to help me*

Now you should dance or walk in a circle around your tools. Then you sit down again and chant:

*These tools are mine to use and nobody else can do so  
The spirits will curse everybody who touches these  
I curse everybody who touches these  
Those who touch my tools shall suffer  
Only I can remove this curse from the afflicted.*

Dance or walk once again around your tools. Then sit down, meditate for a few moments about what you have achieved, and put your tools away. They should be kept in a place where nobody can see them, let alone touch them. If somebody accidentally touches them then you must remove the curse: it is sufficient to say aloud that you are doing so. You should now wait for another day and night before you start working with the tools.



***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO FIND MANY FRIENDS**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

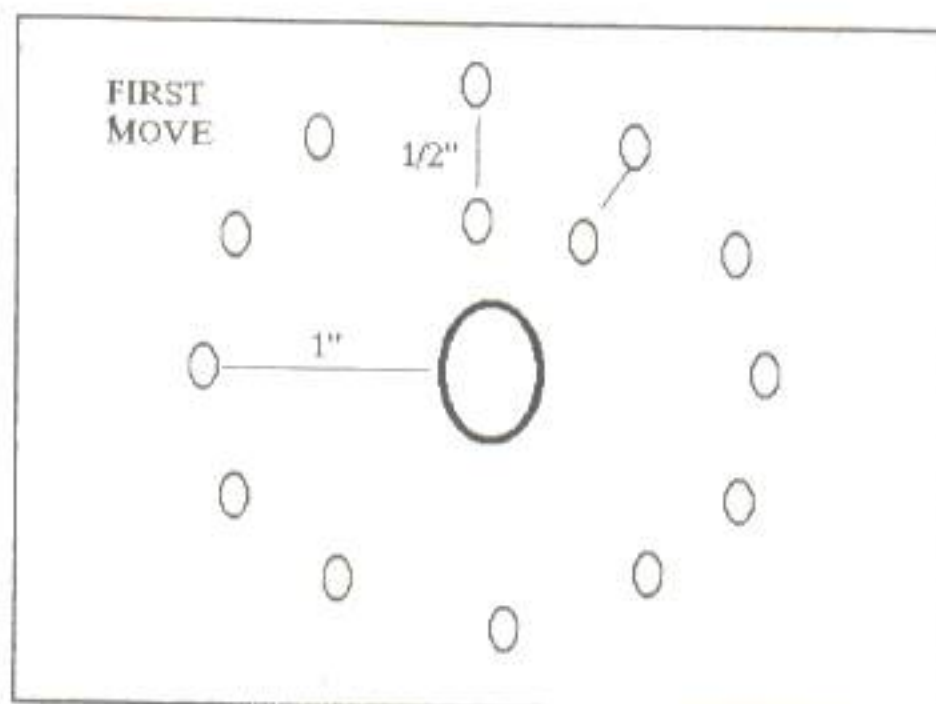
The term 'friends' has to be taken in its widest possible meaning. This ritual makes you find friends to socialize with, but it was also used to find fellow hunters, to form a group for a raid on another village and for many other purposes. Be precise in your aim and make sure that you have this very clear in your mind. If, for example, you need friends to go on a fishing-trip, to come to a party, to go on an outing, etc. then you can use this ritual for that particular purpose.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

The large pebble  
All the small pebbles  
White body paint

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

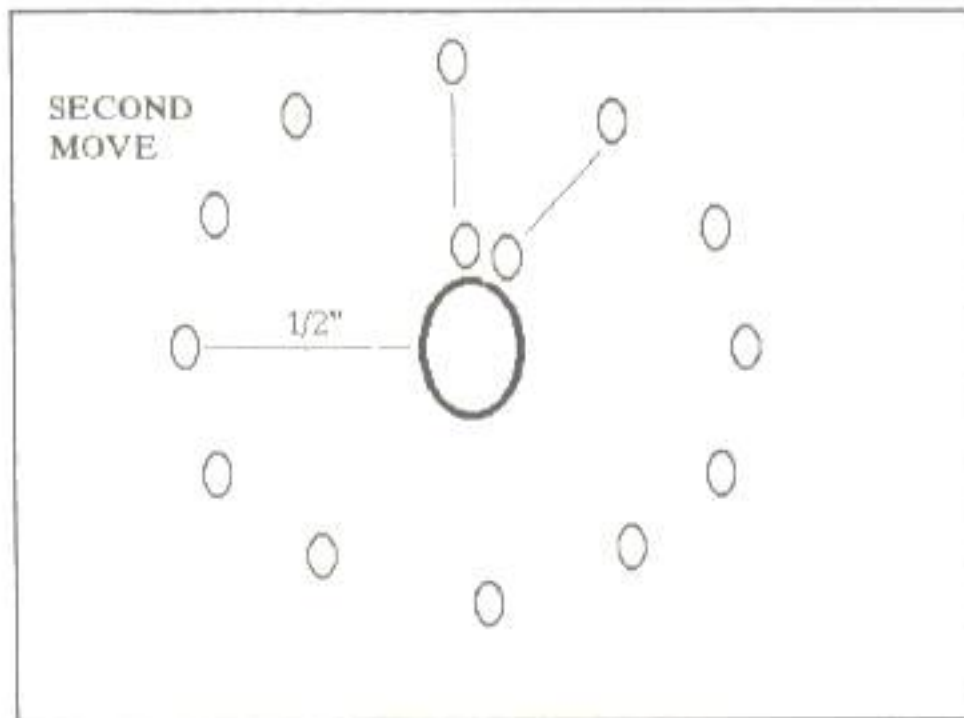
1. Place the large pebble in front of you.



2. Arrange the small pebbles in a circle around them as shown.
3. Move one small pebble closer to the large one and chant:

*I want many friends  
They will come to me  
I will welcome them  
They will join me*

Do this for every small pebble. See the illustrations.



4. Repeat this process and place the pebbles next to the large one.
5. Now chant:

*I have many friends  
They have come to me  
I have welcomed them  
They have joined me*

#### **COMMENTS:**

Before you use this ritual you should reflect upon what we said before: this ritual attracts all kinds of friends and does not take into account whether you yourself will like them or not. What it does, however, is attract those people who either like you or who want something. If you want friends for a quiet party then keep this in mind, otherwise you might attract those who prefer something a bit wilder.

### ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

## **TO MAKE AN ENEMY INTO A FRIEND**

### ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

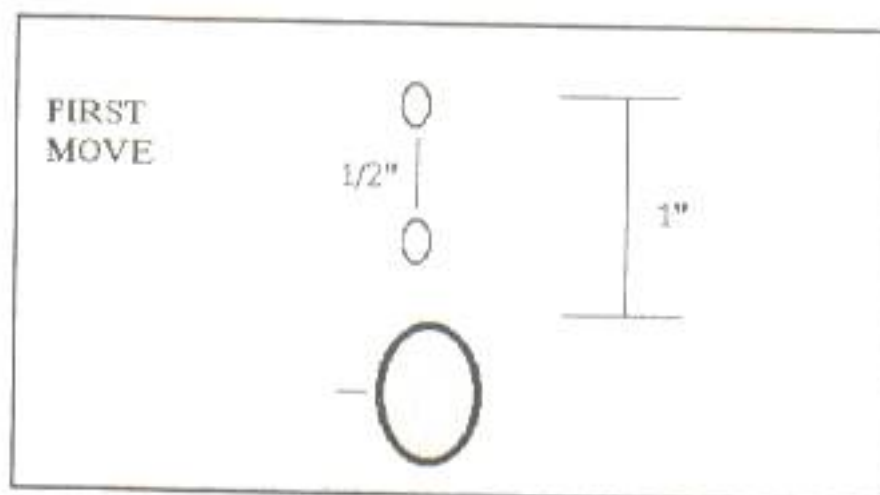
In the small communities of central Africa there is very little room for petty disputes. They do happen, however, and the mfumus always try to remedy these matters. They visualize themselves as being one of the parties involved and then perform this ritual to turn an enemy into a friend.

### ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

The large pebble  
One small pebble  
A bowl with some grass  
Matches  
White body paint

### ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

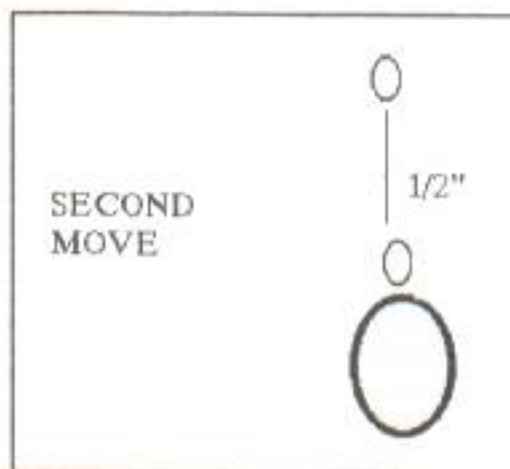
1. Place the large pebble in front of you
2. Mark the small pebble with a smudge of body-paint
3. Place the small pebble as shown.



4. Move the small pebble closer to the large one and chant:



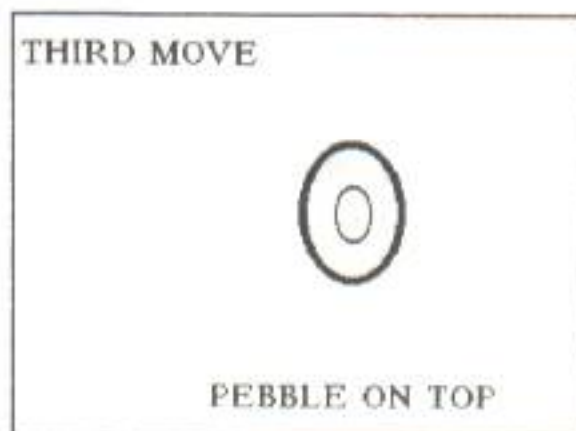
*Listen enemy  
I am saying  
Let's be friends from now  
Let us talk now*



5. Repeat this process and place the pebble next to the large one.
6. Now chant:

*Listen friend of me  
I am saying  
Let's palaver now  
And drink pombe*

7. Burn the grass in the bowl and chant:  
*The bad spirit goes  
Far away now  
And will not come back  
To disturb us*



## ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

### **TO FIND A NEW LOVER**

## ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

In the older days there was no such thing as adultery in the tribal villages, a misdemeanour for which the penalty was death or banishment from the community. Living together (in sin, as we call it) did not exist either. This ritual was used to make a man find the right bride or to make a woman find the right man. The underlying idea remains the same, however, i.e. to find a lover.

## ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

The large pebble  
One small pebble  
A bowl with some grass  
A small piece of charcoal  
Matches  
Red body paint

## ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Mark the small pebble with a smudge of body-paint
2. Place the small pebble as shown below.
3. Move the small pebble closer to the large one and chant:  
*Let this pebble now  
Be a lover  
Moving close to me (him/her)  
And remain there*
4. Repeat this process and place the pebble next to the large one.
4. Now chant:  
*You're my (his/her) lover now  
And forever  
Let us (them) love each other  
And find passion*
4. Put the small pebble on top of the big one and repeat the chant.
7. Burn the grass in the bowl, use it to ignite the charcoal and chant:

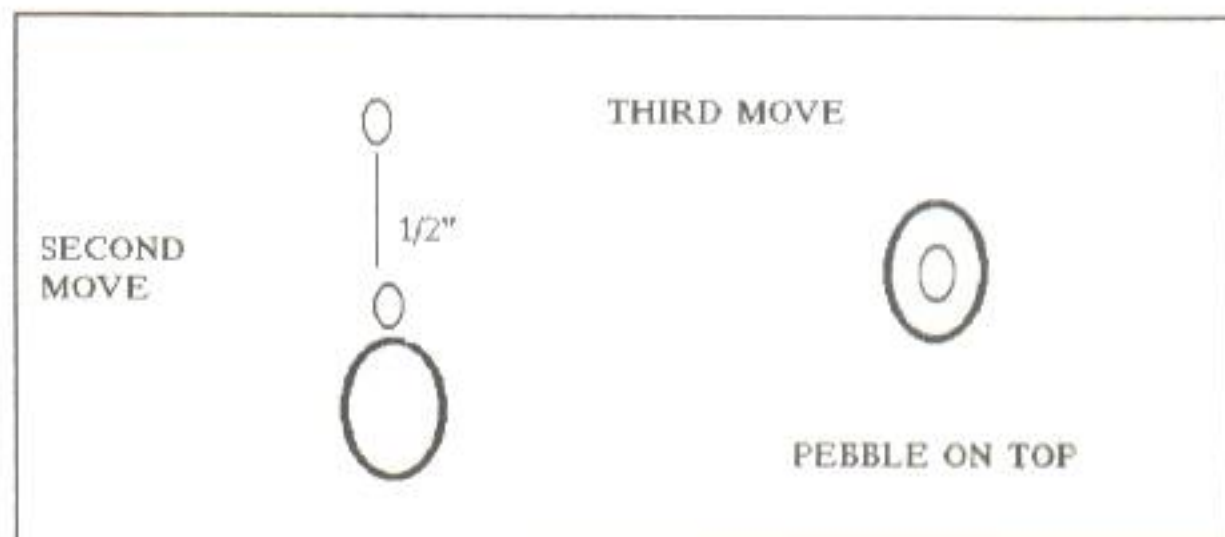
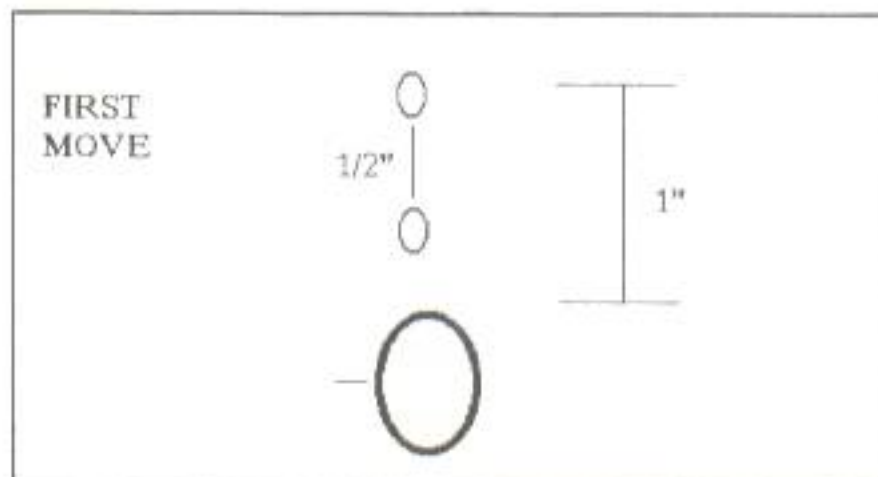
*Love will stay with us (them)*  
*Stay forever*  
*Let the burning coal*  
*Be its symbol*

8. Let the coal burn itself out.

The ashes should be put in a small pouch and carried all the time. They will act as a talisman and keep the relationship alive.

#### COMMENTS:

You can perform this ritual for another person. In that case the person should be with you and sit opposite you. That person should be naked and wear one line of body paint from the top of the breast bone to just above the pubic hairs. This person does not take part in the ritual and at first sight it seems that this person is totally ignored. Make sure that this person does not touch any of your tools.





***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO FIND MANY LOVERS**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

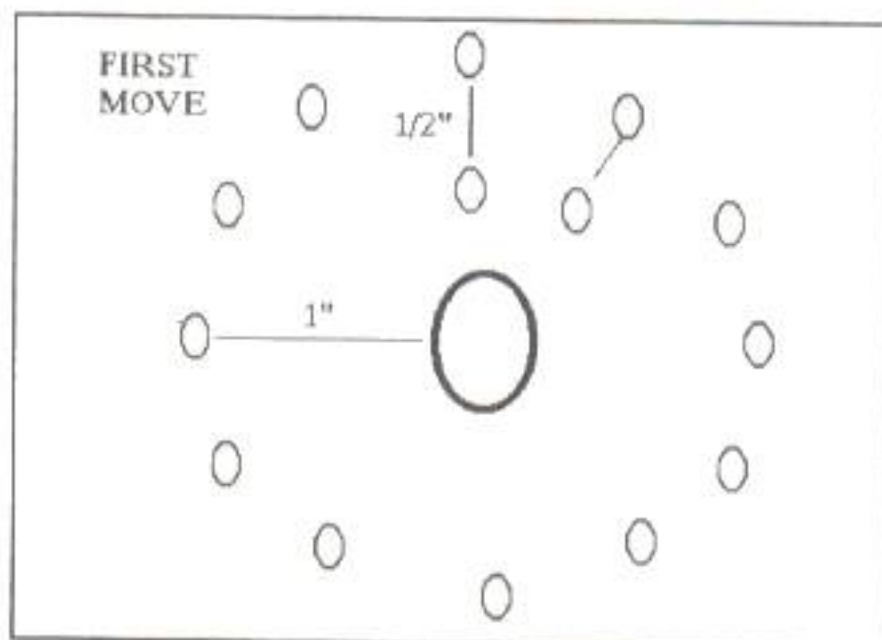
When men went away to work in the mines or the factories, often as a kind of forced labour, they asked the mfumu for many women, so that they could relax and forget their sorrows. This ritual can also be used for those who do need more than one sexual relationship and who are not yet prepared to settle down.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

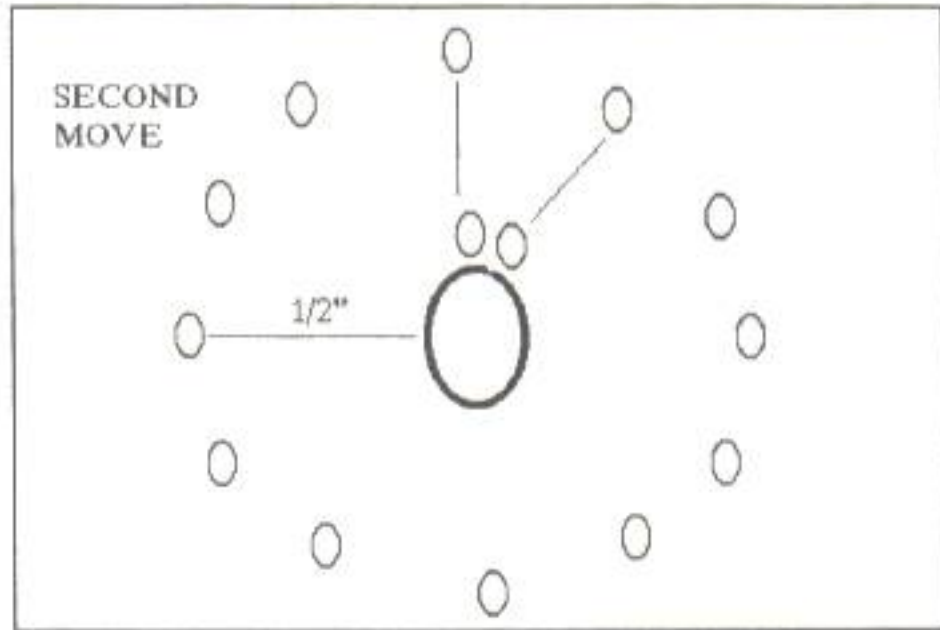
The large pebble  
All the small pebbles  
A bowl with some grass  
A small piece of charcoal  
Matches  
Red body paint

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Mark the small pebbles with a smudge of body-paint
2. Place the small pebbles as shown.



3. Move the small pebbles closer to the large one and chant:  
*Let these pebble now  
 Be some lovers  
 Moving close to me (him/her)  
 And remain there*
4. Repeat this process and place the pebbles next to the large one.



5. Now chant:  
*They're my (his/her) lovers now  
 And forever  
 Let us (them) love each other  
 And find passion*
6. Put the small pebble on top of the big one and repeat the chant.
7. Burn the grass in the bowl, use it to ignite the charcoal and chant:  
*Love will stay with us (them)  
 Not forever  
 Let the burning coal  
 Be its symbol*
8. Let the coal burn itself out.

The ashes should be put in a small pouch and carried all the time. They will act as a talisman and keep the relationship alive. If you perform for a group of people then everybody receives a small part of the ashes.

#### **COMMENTS:**

The person for whom you perform this ritual should sit opposite you, naked, and wear one line of body paint from the top of the breast bone to just above the pubic hairs.

***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO MAKE SOMEBODY LOVE YOU**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

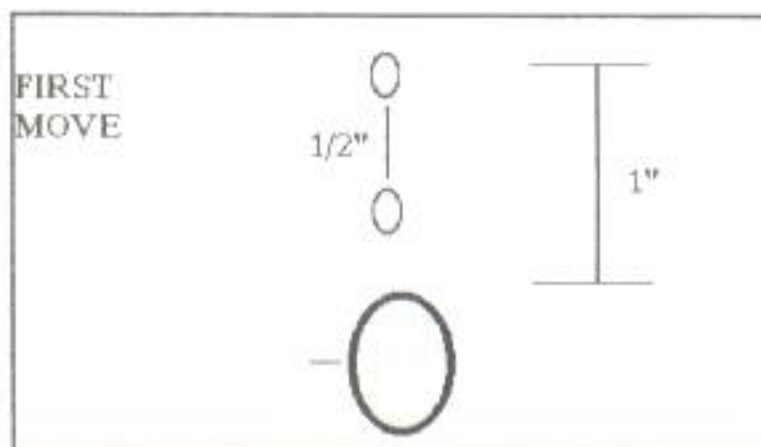
This ritual was used to make a man get the woman he wanted or to make a woman get the man she wanted. It was usually performed for those who did not want to be chosen during the big marriage ceremonies of mass-weddings. The mfumu could arrange this and usually charged a heavy fee for this service.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

The large pebble  
One small pebble  
A bowl with some grass  
A small piece of charcoal  
Matches  
Red body paint

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Mark the small pebble with a smudge of body-paint
2. Place the small pebble as shown.

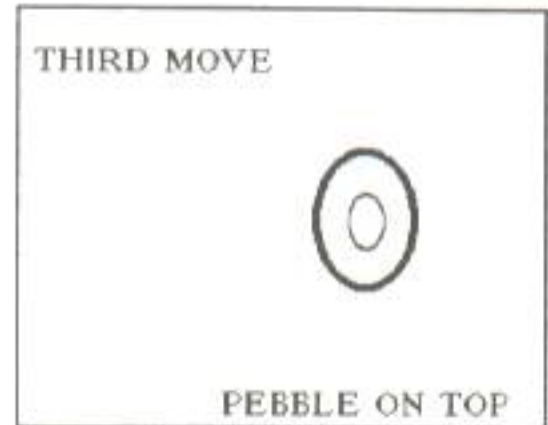
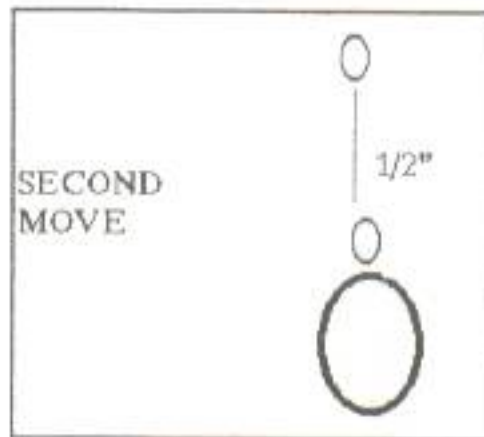


3. Move the small pebble closer to the large one and chant:  
*Let this pebble now  
Be Manaya*



*Moving close to me (him/her)*  
*And remain there*

4. Repeat this process and place the pebble next to the large one.



5. Now chant:

*You're my (his/her) lover now*  
*And forever*  
*Let us (them) love each other*  
*And find passion*

6. Put the small pebble on top of the big one and repeat the chant.  
7. Burn the grass in the bowl, use it to ignite the charcoal and chant:

*Love will stay with us (them)*  
*Stay forever*  
*Let the burning coal*  
*Be its symbol*

8. Let the coal burn itself out.

The ashes should be put in a small pouch and carried all the time. They will act as a talisman and keep the relationship alive.

#### **COMMENTS:**

The name Manaya is used as the name of the prospective lover, regardless of his or her own name.

Be careful when performing this ritual because you may be getting more than what you bargain for. The ties between people bound together by this ritual can be very strong. Much of this depends on the intentions of the performer, of course, but you should keep in mind at all times that you may end up in a permanent relationship. There is no mfumu ritual to end a relationship.

***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO MAKE A LOVER COME BACK**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

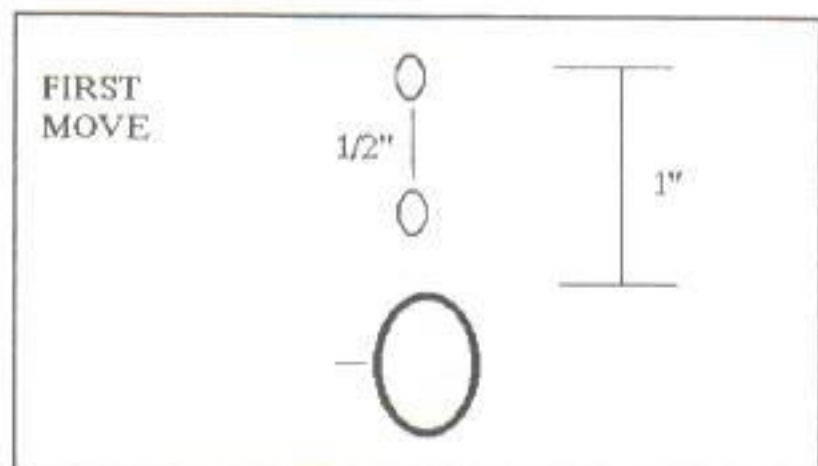
This ritual does exactly what it says, it makes a lover come back. Originally it was intended to find back the brides which had been abducted during a raid by a neighbouring tribe.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

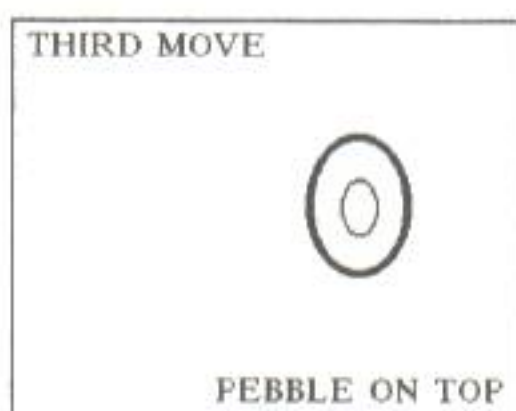
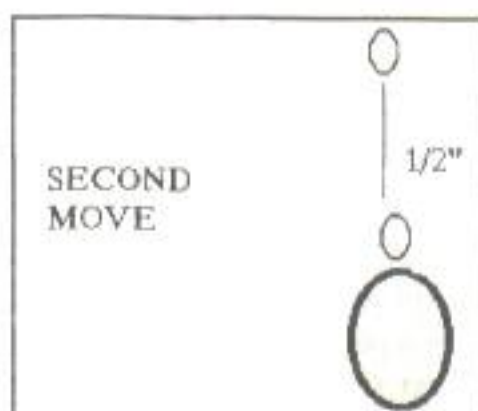
The large pebble  
One small pebble  
A bowl with some grass  
A small piece of charcoal  
Matches  
Red body paint

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Mark the small pebble with a smudge of body-paint
2. Place the small pebble as shown.



3. Move the small pebble closer to the large one and chant:



*Let this pebble now  
Be Manaya  
Coming back to me (him/her)  
And stay with me*

4. Repeat this process and place the pebble next to the large one.

5. Now chant:

*You're my (his/her) lover now  
And stay with me  
Let us (them) try again  
Now forever*

6. Put the small pebble on top of the big one and repeat the chant.

7. Burn the grass in the bowl, use it to ignite the charcoal and chant:

*Love will stay with us (them)  
Stay forever  
Let the burning coal  
Be its symbol*

8. Let the coal burn itself out.

The ashes should be put in a small pouch and carried all the time. They will act as a talisman and keep the relationship alive.

### COMMENTS:

The name Manaya is used as the name of the prospective lover, regardless of his or her own name.

Think very carefully before performing this ritual because you may be getting more than what you bargain for. The ties between people bound together by this ritual can be very strong. If you are not certain whether you want to get back into the old relationship, or if you just want to give it another try to see what happens, then keep in mind at all times that you may end up in a permanent relationship. There is no mfumu ritual to end a relationship.



**PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:**

**TO OBTAIN POSSESSIONS**

**EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:**

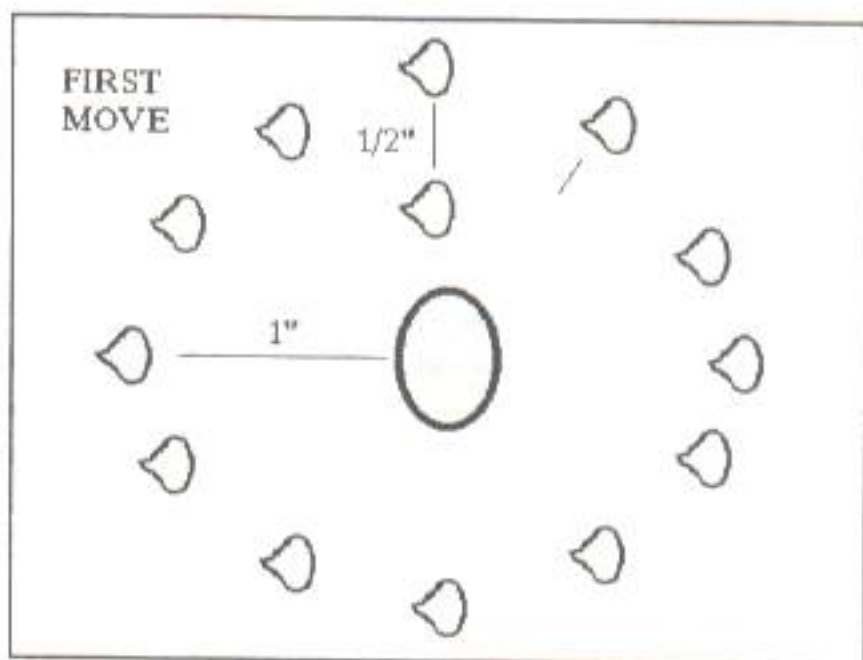
In the days of old, money was not important because the economy was based on barter. However, money is a possession now, but if it is only money you want then use the next ritual on page 28. The ritual described on this page works more effectively for possessions.

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

The bones  
All the flat shells  
All the conical shells  
The large pebble  
The knife  
Yellow body paint

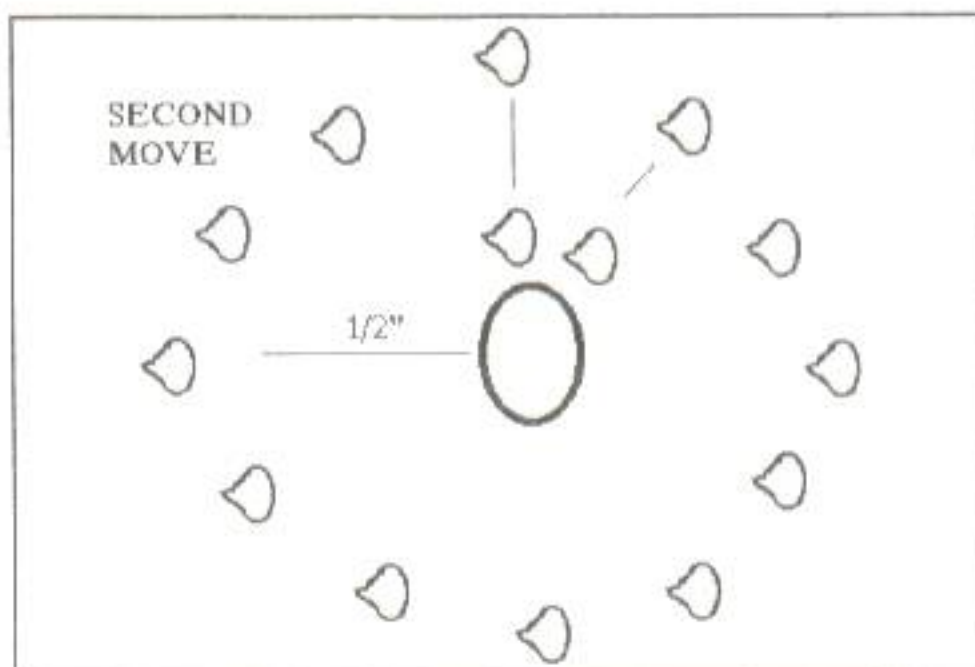
**THE RITUAL PROPER:**

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.
3. If any bones cross do not perform this ritual. Try another day.



4. Place the large pebble in front of you.
5. Place the shells around it as shown, about a foot away.
6. Using the knife move each shell six inches closer to the pebble.
7. Chant every time:

*Let this be for me  
What I want now  
Let it make me rich  
More than ever*



8. Repeat this, placing the shells touching the stone.
9. Place each of the conical shells on top of the stone, chanting.  
You should now sit back for a few moments and concentrate on what you want. Possessions will come to you within a few months and you will find that they materialize unexpectedly from all directions. You must repeat this ritual for seven consecutive days.

#### **COMMENTS:**

Ask yourself one very specific question: what kind of possessions do you want? If you live in the middle of a large city and your aunt, who lived in the Lancashire countryside, bequeathes you all her chickens then you have gained possessions, but they are not of much use in that environment, are they? Be very specific and in this instance do not bite off more than you can chew.

***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO OBTAIN MONEY**

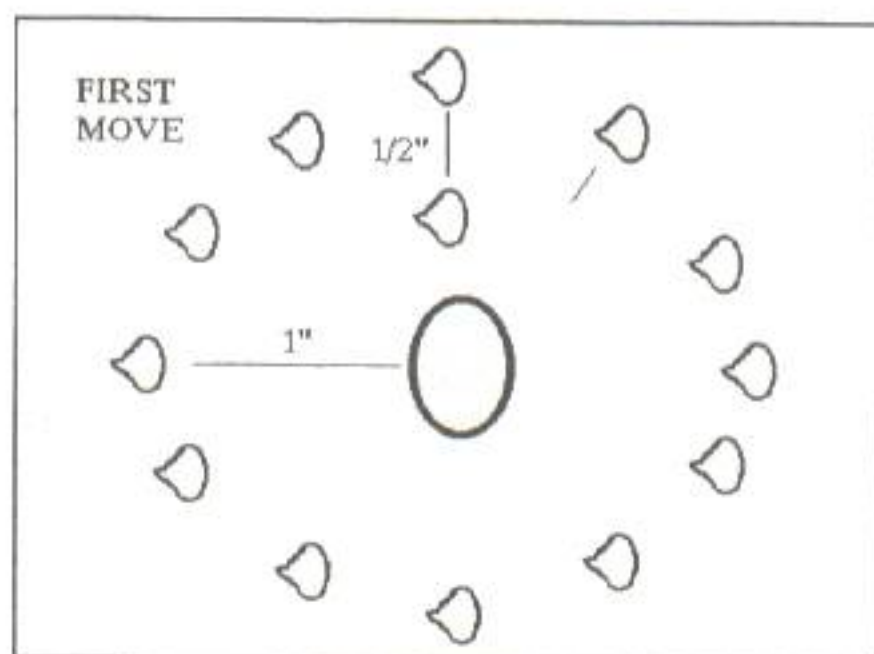
***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

This is to obtain money. Keep in mind the amount you would like to have and be realistic. However, it has happened that those who wanted millions did get them using this ritual. Whether they are happier than before is a big question-mark. Money is not everything. Happiness is amongst the many things like time and love which money cannot possibly buy.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

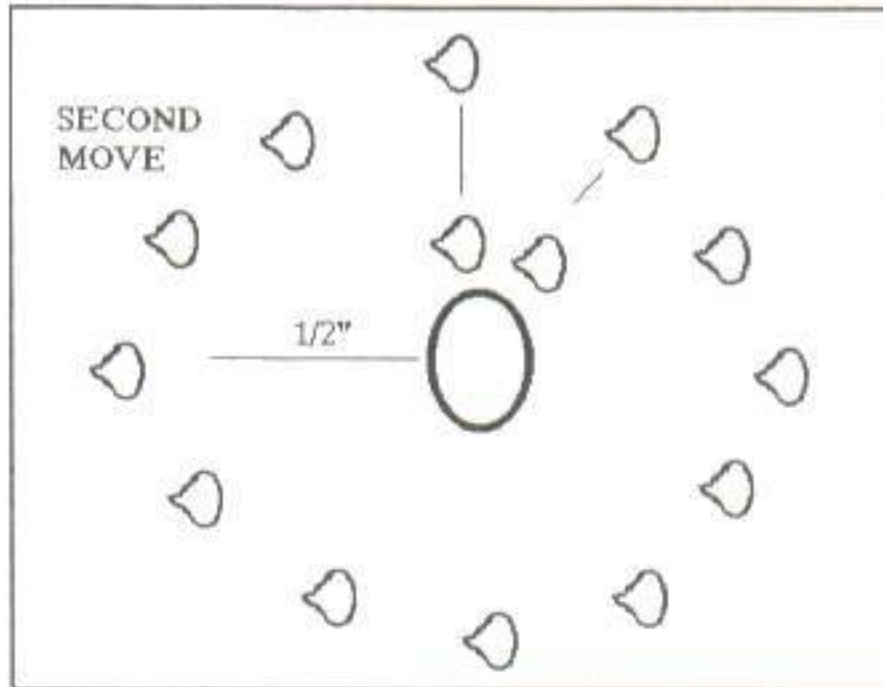
The bones  
All the flat shells  
All the conical shells  
The large pebble  
The knife  
Yellow body paint

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***





1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.
3. If any bones cross do not perform this ritual. Try another day.
4. Place the large pebble in front of you.
5. Place the shells around it as shown, about a foot away.
6. Using the knife move each shell six inches closer to the pebble.
7. Chant every time:



*Let this be for me  
 Much, much money  
 Let it make me rich  
 More than any*

8. Repeat this, placing the shells touching the stone.
9. Place each of the conical shells on top of the stone, chanting.  
 You should now sit back for a few moments and concentrate on what you want. Now chant:

*I'll have money soon  
 More than ever  
 It will stay with me  
 Stay forever*

Money will come to you within a few months and you will find that it materializes unexpectedly from all directions. You must repeat this ritual for nine consecutive days.

**PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:**

**TO GAIN MATERIAL ADVANTAGE**

**EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:**

To gain advantage over somebody else in a matter of a material kind. This can be a job, a property which you are both after or anything else of this kind. You can also use this ritual for promotion.

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

The large pebble  
One conical shell  
One flat shell  
One small pebble  
All the bones  
Yellow body paint  
Your bowl  
Some grass  
Matches

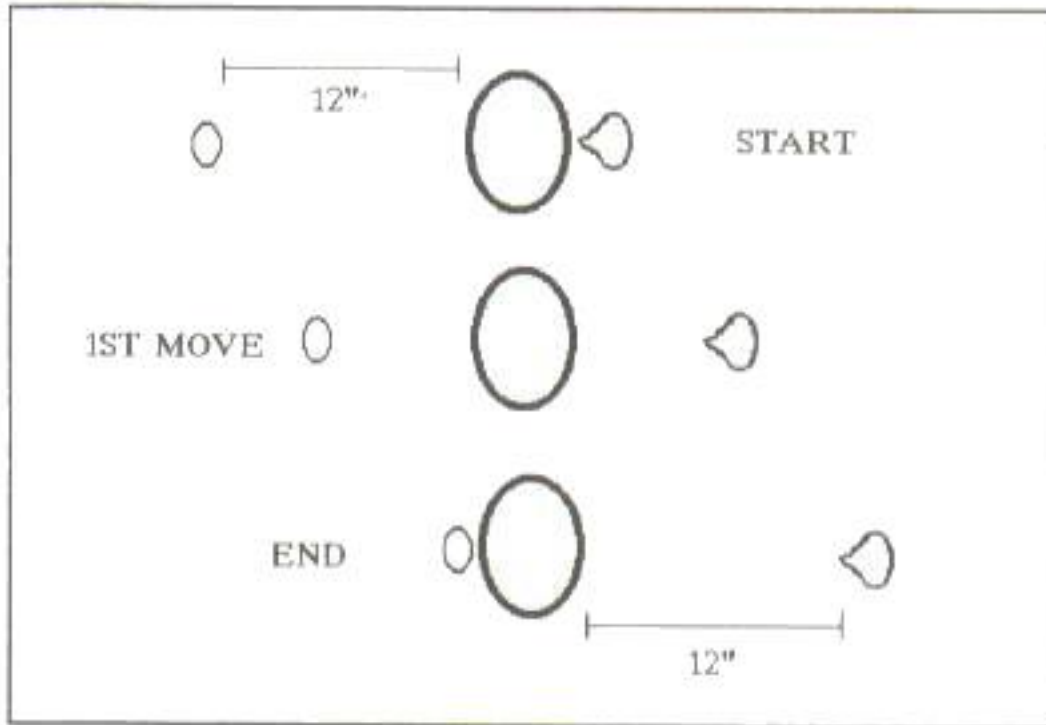
**THE RITUAL PROPER:**

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.
3. If any bones cross do not perform this ritual.  
This means that you should let matters take their course. In the end it will all work out to your advantage; it may even prove to be a blessing in disguise. If you persist in performing the ritual you will find that you have attracted bad luck to yourself. You have violated the rules!
4. Place the large pebble in front of you, the small pebble against it.
5. Place the shell about a foot away.
6. Move the pebble six inches away; the shell six inches closer.
7. Chant:  
*Let him(her) go away  
Far away now  
Let it come to me  
Not to him (her)*
8. Move both another six inches, as shown, and repeat the chant.
9. Place the conical shell on top of the stone and chant:

*It is mine to have  
I will have it  
He (she) will go away  
Away forever*

10. Burn the grass and chant:

*I will have it now  
It is mine now  
He (she) can't have it now  
Never ever*



**COMMENTS:**

One of our acquaintances persisted in performing this ritual against a bad omen. In the end he obtained the house which he had been trying to purchase. What he did not bargain for was that the house was haunted. The news of this haunting spread mysteriously and he has not been able to sell this property since he purchased it twenty years ago. Make sure that you are competing with someone, because if you use this ritual when there is no competition it will work against you rather than in your favour. Mfumus sometimes refuse to perform this ritual. They want to be sure in their own minds that the person in question can competently handle what he is getting.



## ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

### **TO REMOVE A CURSE**

## ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

African curses are amongst the most powerful in the world. The mfumus do not show mercy if they curse someone. Neither do they show mercy when they lift a curse: it is returned to the person who placed it, without pity. There is no ritual to remove a curse only, it is always returned. If you omit to do so then you will carry the curse yourself.

## ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones  
All the twigs  
Some grass  
Matches  
A piece of charcoal  
Water

## ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

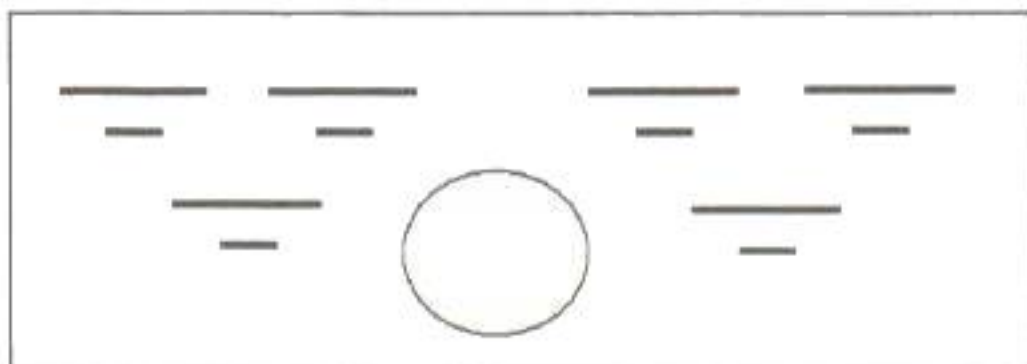
The person who has been cursed should preferably be present at this ritual. This person must undress completely and sit naked in front of the mfumu. Curses are serious matters and there is no room for false modesty. If the person cannot possibly be present then use a symbol like a photograph or a name on a piece of paper. In that case you must agree a precise time for the ritual and the cursed person should be sitting naked at that time. Do not give people an opportunity to use this as an excuse for not being present, because this does not work as well as the proper method.

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
  2. Drop all the bones together.
  3. If any bones cross do not start the ritual and try again.
  4. If you have tried five times without success then stop.
- You should now put everything away and wait for at least an hour.

Omens change rapidly and you will surely find a favourable omen later. Once the omen is right, continue.

5. Burn sufficient grass to ignite the carcoal.

6. Place the twigs around the burner as shown.



7. Chant the following:

*I remove this curse  
From your body  
I return this curse  
To its maker  
Let him suffer this  
Like no other  
Let him be in pain  
Let him suffer*

8. Dance around the burner and the victim in a big circle chanting:

*Hoo Haa Hoo Haa Hoo Haa ...*

Chant in a strong rhythm.

9. Extinguish the coal with water and sprinkle the victim chanting:

*I removed this curse  
From your body  
I returned this curse  
To its maker  
He will suffer this  
Like no other  
He will be in pain  
He will suffer*

10. Walk around the victim and throw some beans over your left shoulder. Also break a wishbone.

You should leave the beans where they fall, for an hour at least. The broken wishbone is thrown away in the most unpleasant environment you can imagine. The beans are disposed of in a similar way, but they should never be thrown away in the same place as the wishbone.

***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO CURSE SOMEBODY**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

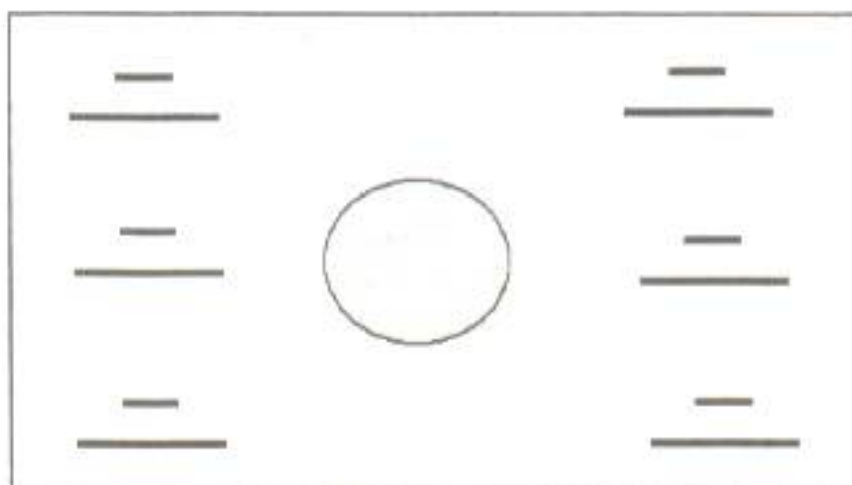
To achieve precisely what it says, i.e to curse someone.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones  
All the twigs  
Grass  
Matches  
The knife

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.
3. If any bones cross do not start the ritual and try again another day.
4. Place the twigs around the burner as shown



5. Using the knife, flick each twig far away and chant:  
*I am cursing you  
With an illness  
I am cursing you  
Be a cripple*

*I am cursing you*  
*Be unhappy*  
*I am cursing you*  
*Be avoided*  
*I am cursing you*  
*Lose your lover*  
*I am cursing you*  
*Be the cursed one*

6. Now place the bones in crosses where the twigs were. This should be done using equivalent bones, e.g. thigh bone over thigh bone, wing bone over wing bone, etc.
7. Place a vertebra near each set of crossed bones.
8. Flick the bones apart with the knife, repeating the chant.
9. Burn some grass and chant:

*I am burning you*  
*Burn forever*  
*Be reduced to smoke*  
*Go forever*

10. Break a wishbone, chanting three times:

*I am breaking you*  
*Like this wishbone*  
*I am cursing you*  
*You will suffer*

### **COMMENTS:**

Be careful and think before you start. After this ritual you should perform the ritual for psychic protection. Protecting yourself is all very well and it is absolutely necessary, but you can never know for sure whether there is anybody around who might be capable of lifting the curse you placed and return it to you.

You may honestly believe that African magic is very strong - AND IT IS - and that nobody you know can do anything against it. Are you absolutely sure that nobody you know, or who knows the person you are cursing, knows about African magic and could use it against you? Amongst those who can recognize a curse are some who will immediately know that they are dealing with an African curse. They may not be able to do something themselves, but they can go to others who can. We ourselves have lifted and returned several African curses recently, all of which originated in this country. We use a very strong ritual for that, a ritual which is too complex to describe in a book like this. What we can say is that it is unassailable. Think before you act!



***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**RITUAL FOR REVENGE**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

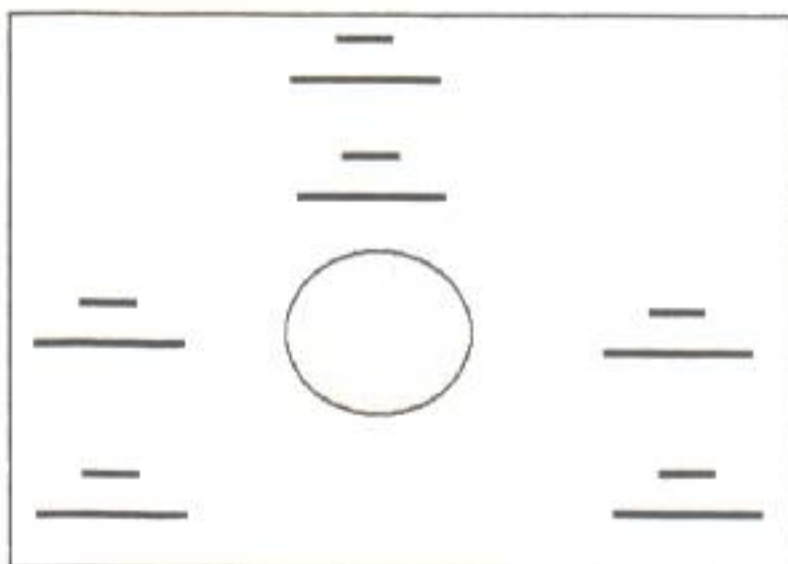
To get revenge. You must keep in mind that the revenge has to be directed against a specific person. If you choose the wrong one then the curse will come to you because it has got nowhere else to go.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

An effigy or another symbol of your enemy.  
Grass  
All the bones  
All the twigs  
Matches

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.
3. If any bones cross do not start the ritual and try again another day.
4. Place the twigs around the burner as shown.



5. Place the effigy on top of the grass in the burner.
5. Using the knife, flick each twig far away and chant:

*I am cursing you  
With your own curse  
What you did to me  
Comes to you now  
I am cursing you  
Without pity  
I am cursing you  
Without mercy  
I return to you  
What you sent me*

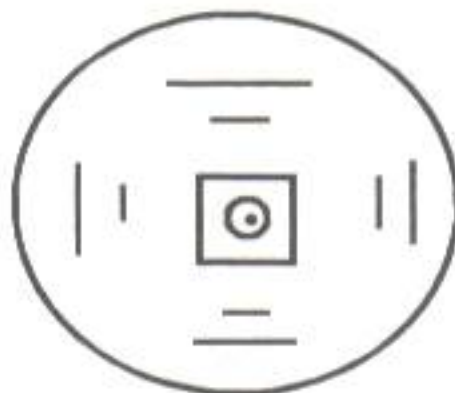
6. Now place the bones in crosses where the twigs were  
This should be done using equivalent bones, e.g. thigh bone over thigh bone, wing bone over wing bone, etc.
7. Place a vertebra near each set of crossed bones.
8. Flick the bones apart with the knife, repeating the chant.
9. Burn the effigy in some grass and chant:

*I am burning you  
Burn forever  
Be reduced to smoke  
Go and suffer*

10. Break a wishbone.  
Dispose of this wishbone in the most unpleasant environment you can think of.

#### COMMENTS:

You should make the following talisman and carry it with you for three complete lunar cycles.



### ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

## **TO ATTACK AN ENEMY**

### ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

This ritual attacks an enemy. You should be justified in doing so, otherwise things may work out in the opposite direction, i.e. against you yourself.

### ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones

The knife

White body paint

You need to make yourself an effigy of your enemy. Do not use a wax doll, make something yourself out of clay or plasticine.

### ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Put the effigy in front of you and place the knife next to it.

2. Dance around the effigy in a big circle chanting:

*Ho Wa Namba Ho Wa Namba ...*

Use a very strong and staccato rhythm.

3. Sit in front of the effigy and continue to chant.

You should continue to chant until you feel that you have saved up so much aggression and hatred that you can no longer wait to attack.

4. Stab the effigy in as many places and as often as you like.

5. Carry on chanting.

6. Spit three times on the mutilated effigy.

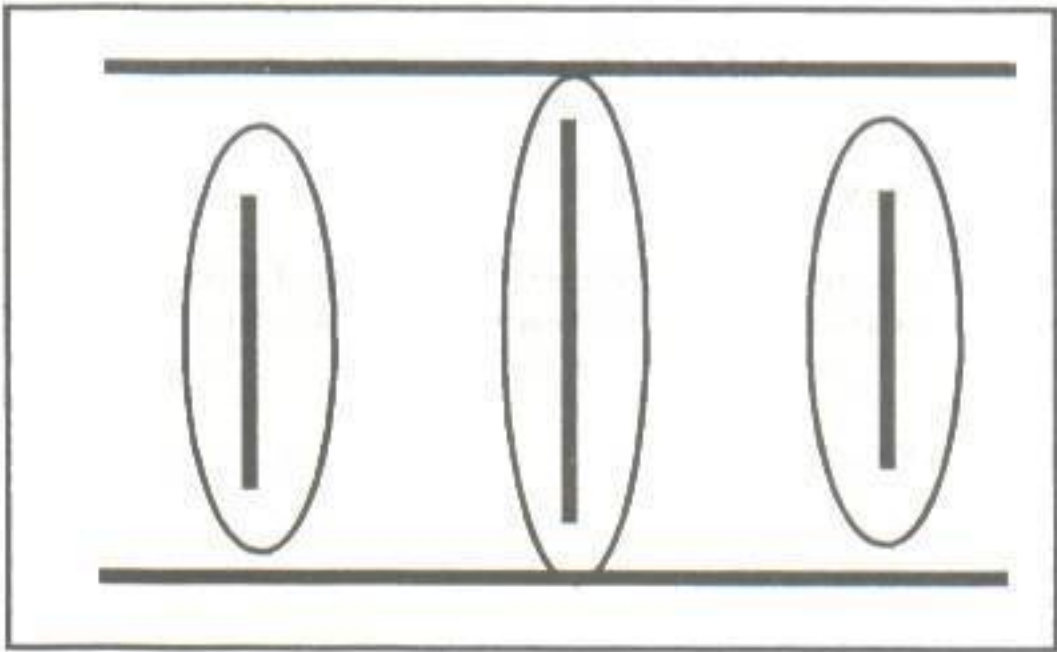
7. Carry on chanting until you are exhausted.

8. Break a wishbone.

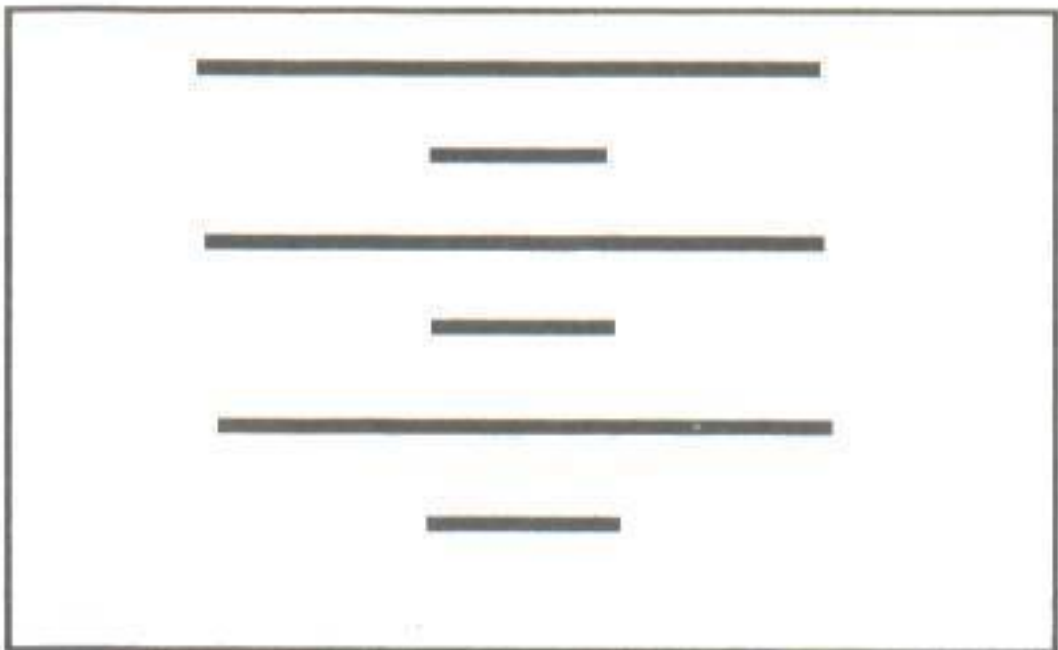
Dispose of the wishbone in a very unpleasant environment.

### ***COMMENTS:***

You must make the talismans shown on the opposite page. The first one you send to your enemy, the other one you carry on your own person for a complete lunar cycle.



Send this to your enemy



Carry this on your person for a full lunar cycle



***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO PROTECT YOURSELF**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

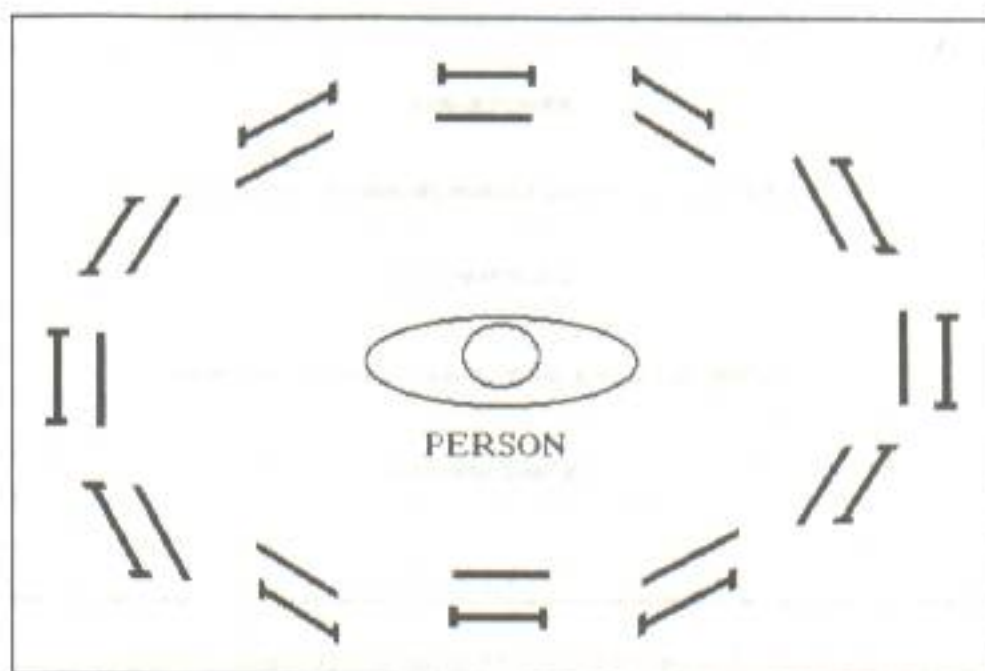
This ritual protects you against all kinds of enemies. It is also for psychic protection. You can use this ritual for anybody you like.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones  
All the twigs  
The knife  
Some grass  
Matches

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

1. Place all the bones in a big circle.



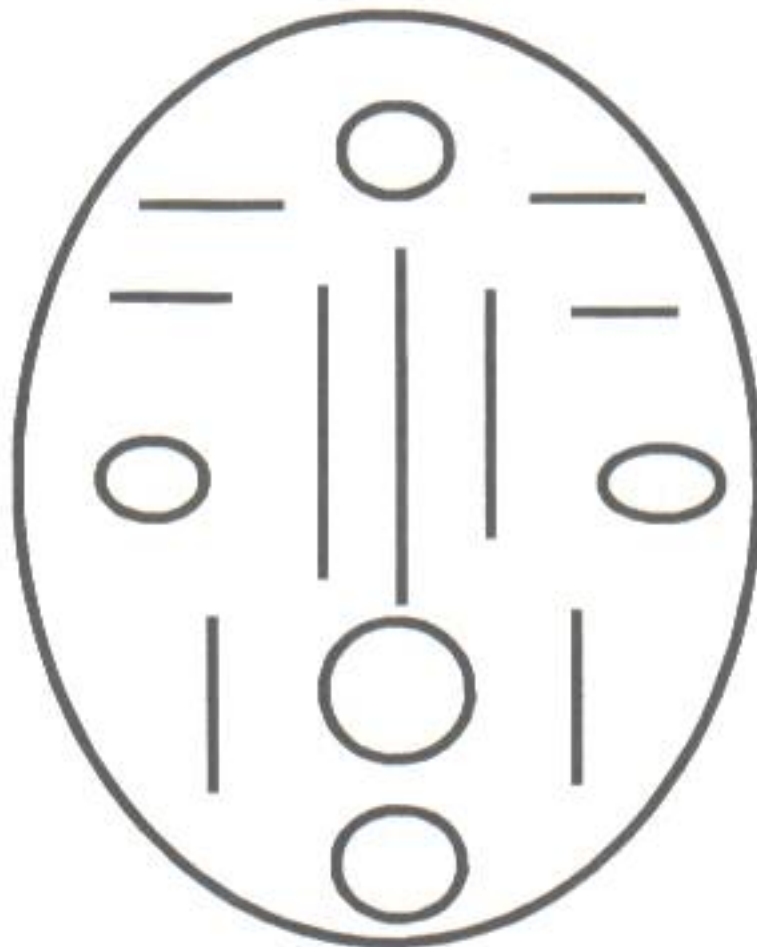
2. Place all the twigs in the same circle, nearer to you than the bones.

3. Sit in the middle of the circle.
4. Chant continuously, with strong rhythm:  
*Abayo Ngamado Abay Ngamado...*
5. Continue chanting until you reach a trance.
6. Throw some grass in the air, chanting all the time.
7. Collect the fallen grass and place it in the burner, still chanting.
8. Burn the grass and continue to chant.
9. Carry on chanting until exhausted.
10. Throw some beans over your left shoulder.
11. Break a wishbone.

Dispose of the wishbone in a very unpleasant environment. The beans are disposed of in the same manner, but they should not be in the same place as the wishbone.

#### **COMMENTS:**

You need to carry the following talisman at all times:



### ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

## **TO INVOKE A SPIRIT**

### ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

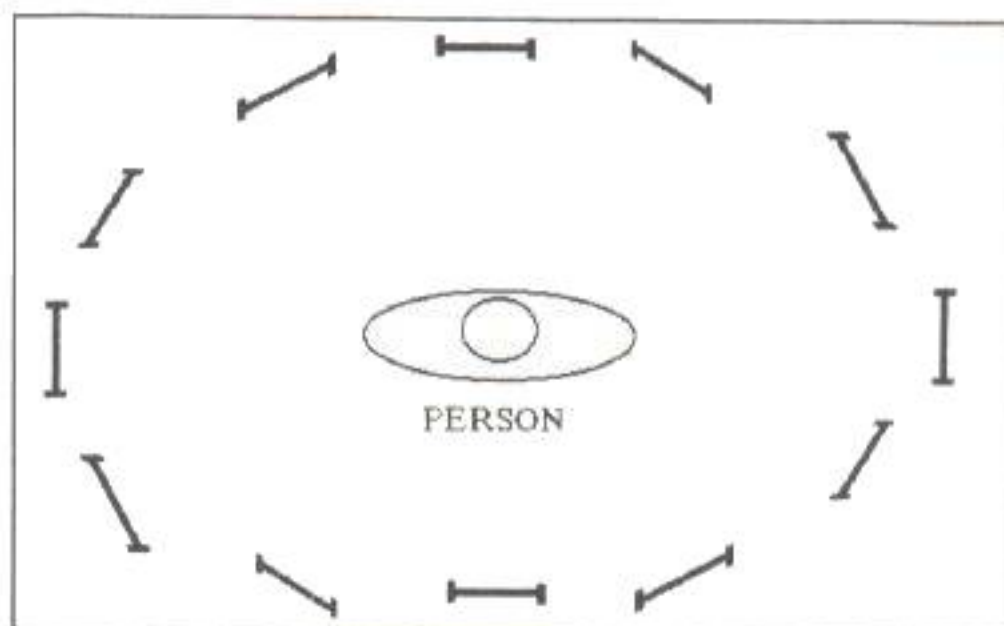
Mfumus use this ritual to invoke the spirits of their ancestors. It works, and it seems to work better than the methods used by what we would call the 'bottom of the barrel' fake mediums in this country.

### ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones  
Charcoal (plenty)  
Some grass (plenty)  
Matches  
Aromatic plant (any dried kitchen herb will do)

### ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

You should mix some grass with an aromatic plant. The idea is to burn lots of charcoal and to make smoke with the grass and the aromatic plant. Light the coal before starting the ritual.



1. Place all the bones in a circle around you as shown.
2. Sit down and put some grass on the glowing coal.
3. Chant rhythmically with loud voice:

*Huma Nahma (name) Huma Nahma (name) ...*

Use the name of the spirit you wish to call up.

4. Repeat all the time, burning more grass and plant.

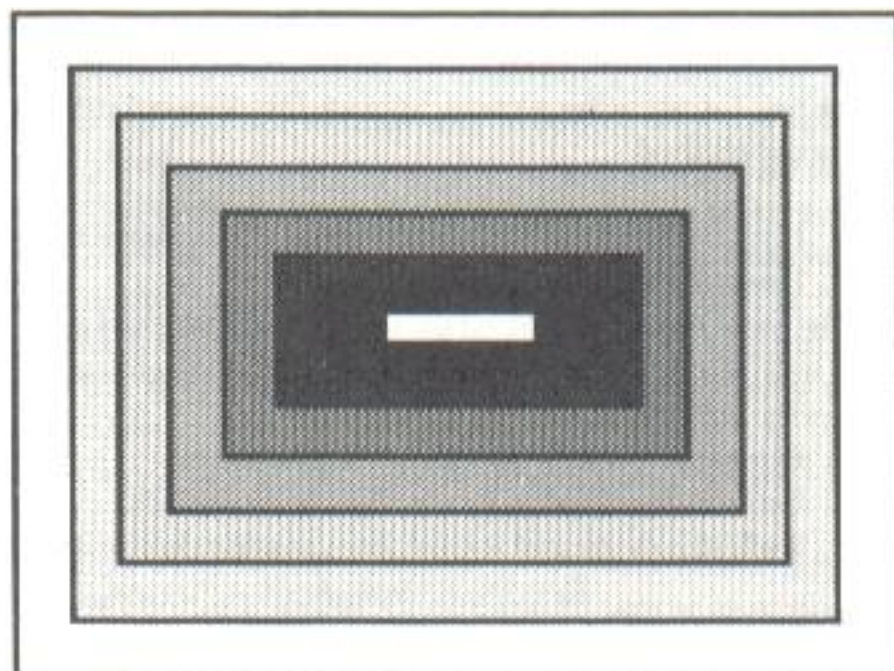
You will reach a stage where the embers glow with a greenish colour. Then look into the smoke and wait until you see whom you wish to see. Concentration is of the utmost importance.

### COMMENTS:

This is a matter of achieving an altered state of consciousness. When you concentrate on the glowing embers and chant in the appropriate way then you will see that the red of the flames becomes blue at first and then changes to green. At that moment in time you are starting to achieve an altered state of consciousness which is sufficient for the purpose.

What you must NEVER FORGET is to thank the spirits for appearing, for becoming visible to you. If you do forget then you may well find that nothing turns up for a while.

If you have difficulty then concentrate on the drawing below. Do not forget that these matters have to be learned and that this takes time.





### ***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

## **TO HEAL SOMEBODY**

### ***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

This ritual does what spiritual healing does in this country.

### ***WHAT YOU NEED:***

The knife  
Some grass  
Matches  
All the twigs  
All the bones

### ***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

The person who has to be healed should preferably be present at this ritual. This person must undress completely and sit naked in front of the mfumu. Healing is a serious matter and there is no room for false modesty. If the person cannot possibly be present then use a symbol like a photograph or a name on a piece of paper. In that case you must agree a precise time for the ritual and the sick person should be sitting naked at that time. Do not give people an opportunity to use this as an excuse for not being present, because this does not work as well as the proper method.

1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.
2. Drop all the bones together.

The more bones are crossed the longer it will take and the more difficult it will be to heal the person. If all the bones are crossed then it will be nearly impossible.

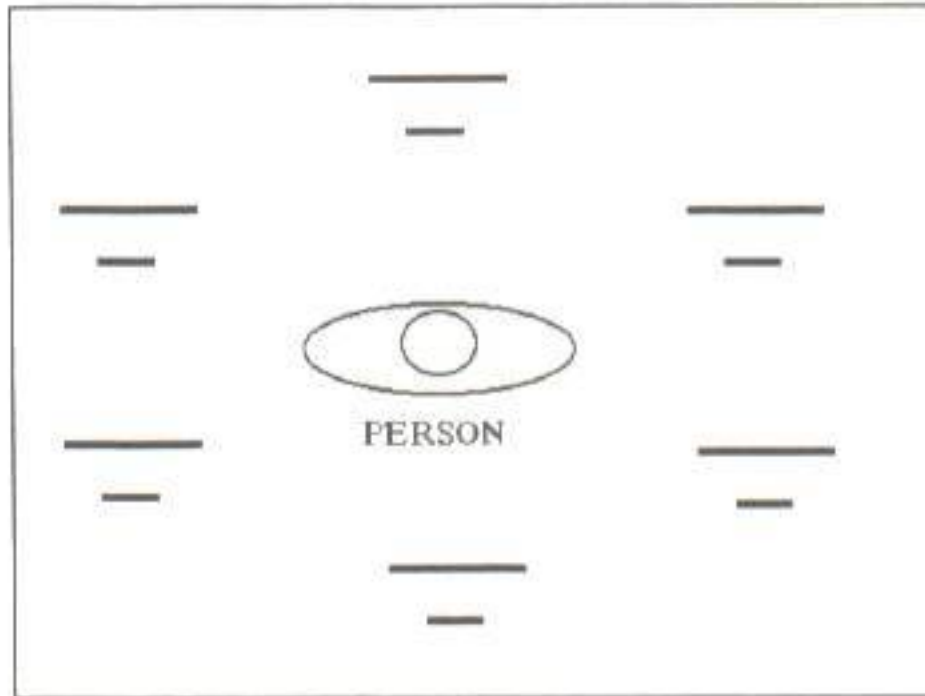
3. Place the twigs around the person as shown.
4. Perform the ritual to invoke the healing spirits.
5. Walk slowly around the person, chanting rhythmically:

*Heyana, heyana, heyana, heyana...*

6. Continue this for at least fifteen minutes.
7. Sit in front of the person and burn some grass, chanting:

*Illness go away*  
*Go away*  
*Let the spirits come*  
*Let them take you*

8. Gently touch the person on the affected places.
9. Throw some beans over your right shoulder.



10. Break a wishbone.

Dispose of this bone in a very pleasant environment. This should be out of doors. Preferably bury the bone in a forest or in a similar place where it will not be disturbed for a full week.

Take some beans with you and when you have disposed of the bone you throw some over your left shoulder. Leave them be where they fall.

**COMMENTS:**

Give your patient the following talisman to carry until he gets better:



***PURPOSE OF THE RITUAL:***

**TO GAIN MAGICAL POWERS**

***EXPLANATION OF THE AIM:***

If you find that your powers are not what they should be then use this ritual.

***WHAT YOU NEED:***

All the bones  
Some grass  
Matches

***THE RITUAL PROPER:***

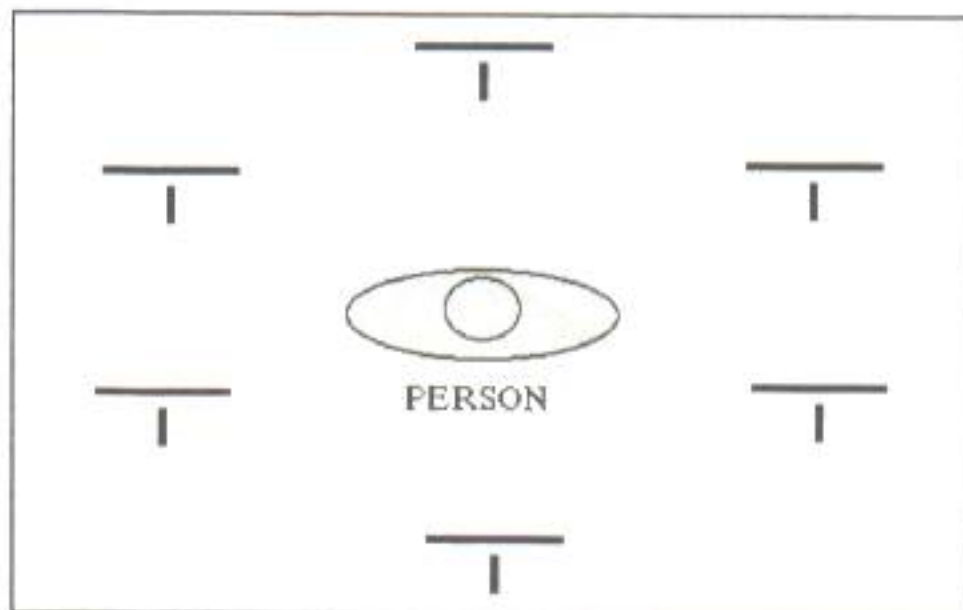
1. Hold the bones in both hands about a foot above the ground.

2. Drop all the bones together.

If any of the bones are crossed then you wait and try another day.

3. Perform the ritual for invoking the spirits.

You should invoke those spirits which are familiar to you, preferably your ancestors. If there was a person with magical powers amongst them then invoke that person.



4. Place the twigs around you as shown.
5. Burn some grass in front of you.
6. Sit down and chant:

*I am ready now  
For the powers  
Let the spirits come  
Let them join me  
Let the power come  
When they give it*

Repeat steps 5 and 6 until you feel a change coming over you.

You usually find that all of a sudden you get a vision of something which is happening elsewhere. That is when your powers are back with you. If that does not happen then you have done something wrong and the spirits are withholding their favours.

7. Break a wishbone.

Carry the pieces in a pouch around your neck for at least a full lunar cycle. Once your powers are back you dispose of it in a fire.

#### **COMMENTS:**

You should carry the talisman below for as long as you carry the wishbone.





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