



JONTE

FOR A COMMUNITY TO RISE, A HERO MUST FALL

Two former bitter enemies team up to fight a cartel and bring order and sanity to their neighborhood.

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Jonte Graphic Novel



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YETU

Jonte Briefing



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Of Superheroes and More

Two significant things happened to me in the past week. I was introduced to Jonte, a Kenyan superhero, and in the process I got challenged. And I mean a real superhero, complete with powers and story captured in a glossy graphic novel. Just without a cape, mask, or underpants worn over a skintight bodysuit.

I had a very long write-up about this encounter but I'll be brief.

What comes to mind when you think Superhero? Superman? Batman? Wakanda Forever? Whatever character it is, you most probably relate it with childhood and fantasies. Not real life. Especially not your life as a Kenyan.

But Superheroes are a product of real life. We create superheroes to give us hope that an adversity or crisis we are facing can be surmounted.

My sister for example had her own imaginary friend and superhero she called 'Kipeklech'. It was a soda bottle cap. But Kipeklech had a superpower which was passive aggressiveness. Growing up among three brothers, she needed it. When she spoke through Kipeklech you listened. And that's how she got me to be the sister she never had, playing kati and all. You didn't want her sad because Kipeklech would come out to guilt trip you.

Superman was an indestructible hero created in the 1930's during the Great Depression to offer hope to millions of Americans facing difficult times.

The X-Men were created in 1963 during the Civil Rights movement to offer an alternative view on the rights of different men and women. Professor X would be fashioned after the pacifist and hopeful Martin Luther King Jr. while Magneto took on Malcolm X's radical persona

Superheroes are revered for their deeds but more importantly, if the layers are peeled back, they reveal the times we live in as well as the hopes and aspirations of the the people.

Enter Jonte.

Jonte is Kenyan through and through. A man who has been failed by the system over and over. A man looking for recourse in a time where everything he holds dear has been taken away from him and the leadership has become detached from his suffering. He is me. He is you.

In a ten series graphic novel. Jonte rises to the challenge and struggles to champion the cause for a better society. His superpowers are will and ideals.

The thing is, reading the first issue of Jonte. My whole family could relate and pick different heroes and villains. Jonte is not just an entertaining comic, it is a whole conversation. It's a challenge having to define what your ideals are as a person and how far you are willing to go and do to live up to them.

It is a move from general blame to personal introspection.

The first issue is out and the second is due in two weeks I will not tell the story. I want you to go out, get a copy and let's define the story together. I will be pulling my upshots every week and we can engage. Let's talk about who your heroes are and why.

There ends my brief write-up. For today.