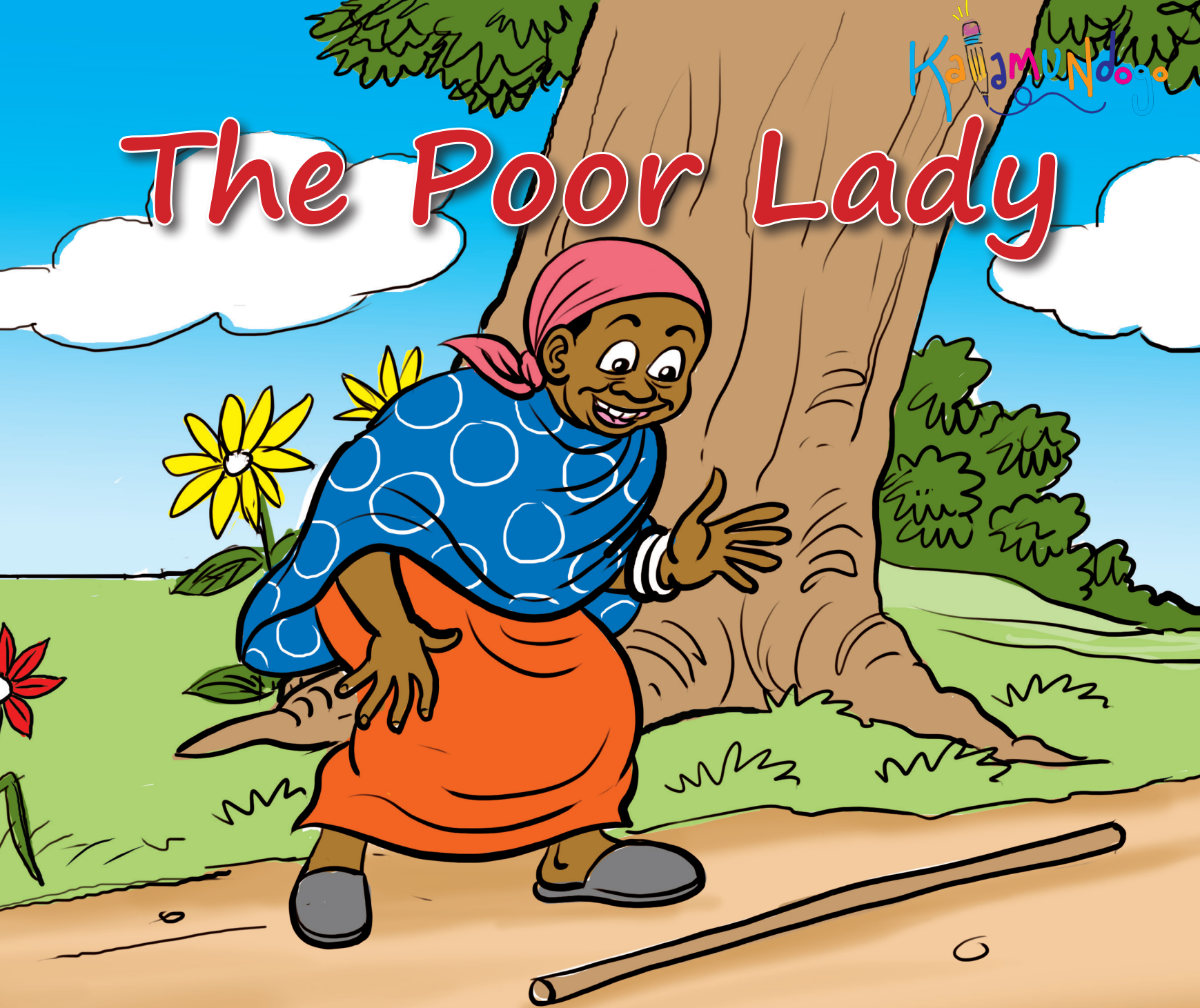


The Poor Lady



Larry Semiono

The Poor Lady



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The first edition of this book is published in English by Readership for Learning and Development—**Soma** in its debut Kalamu Ndogo series.

Authored by Larry Semiono in a Watoto na Vitabu facilitated research and writing project funded by Neil Butcher & Associates

Illustrated and designed by Marco Tibasima

Edited by Demere Kitunga with Godfrey Mishomari and Latifa Miraji



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Editor's Note

The Poor Lady is the third in **Soma's** newly launched 'Kalamu Ndogo' (little scribes) series of children's books authored by children. The first four books in this series were generated in a research and writing intervention; implemented with a grant from Neil Butcher & Associates (NBA) as part of Watoto na Vitabu Multimedia Storytelling Hub integral to **Soma Book Café**. The Hub engages children age 6 to 13.

The intervention is part of William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's efforts to support 'sustainable early reading ecosystems...'; through 'Successful experimentation with and documentation of projects on content creation, use, and quality of open licensed storybooks in Africa, to develop and test innovative content creation and usage models in early literacy.' It is therefore, one of those experiments.

Soma Book Café, a co-creation literary space for leisure, culture and learning operational since 2008 in Dar Es Salaam is the face of **Soma**; a Tanzanian NGO officially known as E&D Readership and Development Agency until 2019; and Readership for Learning and Development since. Its vision is to see '*A vibrant culture of reading, storytelling and enterprise among young people in Tanzania.*'

Kalamu Ndogo focused on children's agency and creative potential. With facilitation of children writers, teachers, editors, illustrators and designers, children took the lead in researching, writing, reviewing, editing, revising and sketching contemporary stories rooted in Tanzanian folkloric traditions, but drawing inspiration from their lived experiences and teasing out their creative imagination beyond the 'here and now'. We owe immense gratitude to this community of literati for grounding us; to Lisbeth Levey (fondly Liz) for trusting; to NBA for committing resources to actualise it and for connecting us with the Early Literacy Resource pool; to Liz, Kirsty von Gogh and Ken Harley for continuous support and encouragement.

We thank participating children, parents, teachers from HK Learning Centre, Sanje Academic Centre and Watoto na Vitabu for their resourcefulness and tenacity; facilitators and resource people: Godfrey E. Mishomari, lead research and writing facilitator, Gonsalves Mpili, Maria Mrindoko, Latifa Miraji, Patrick Gondwe and Alphonse Mapunda (co-facilitators); Nadir Tharani (children author, illustrator and book designer) who co-facilitated with us the editorial process; Mohamed Ismail the documentalist; Paulina George and Inviolata Mwakiwone who assisted with ideas, logistics, image taking and sharing; Mugisha Andrew Bassasingohe for IT support; and Ubongo Kids for sharing insights. Ultimately, a slice of this experience is available on our website www.somabookcafe.com.

The Poor Lady ranked the third out of 40 entries. Marco Tibasima the Illustrator respected the author's original sketches and subsequent feedback and our editing was interactive and minimalist to retain the child's authentic voice. Informed consent was sought and obtained.

If any, proceedings will contribute to sustainability of this initiative. This was a labour of love. We hope it is equally loved by its audience and educators; lest it remains a 'once upon a time, a beautiful dream'.

Demere Kitunga,

February 2020, Dar es Salaam.

Once upon a time, there was a poor lady.
She was living in a little village with her
four children.





She had a dream of flying.
She did not have money to buy an aeroplane.







She wanted to see the clouds, the moon and stars up close. Every day she sat under the tree and looked up the sky.



One day as she was walking under the tree,
she saw a stick.



She picked up the stick and went home with it.



At home, the stick started to talk.
I know you want to fly, I will help you.



The lady was happy.
“When will I fly?” She asked.
“Tomorrow, at night.”
“Really?”



She told her children about flying with the stick.

“Mum! Are you sick or just tired?”



“Tomorrow night, look through the window. You shall see me flying.”

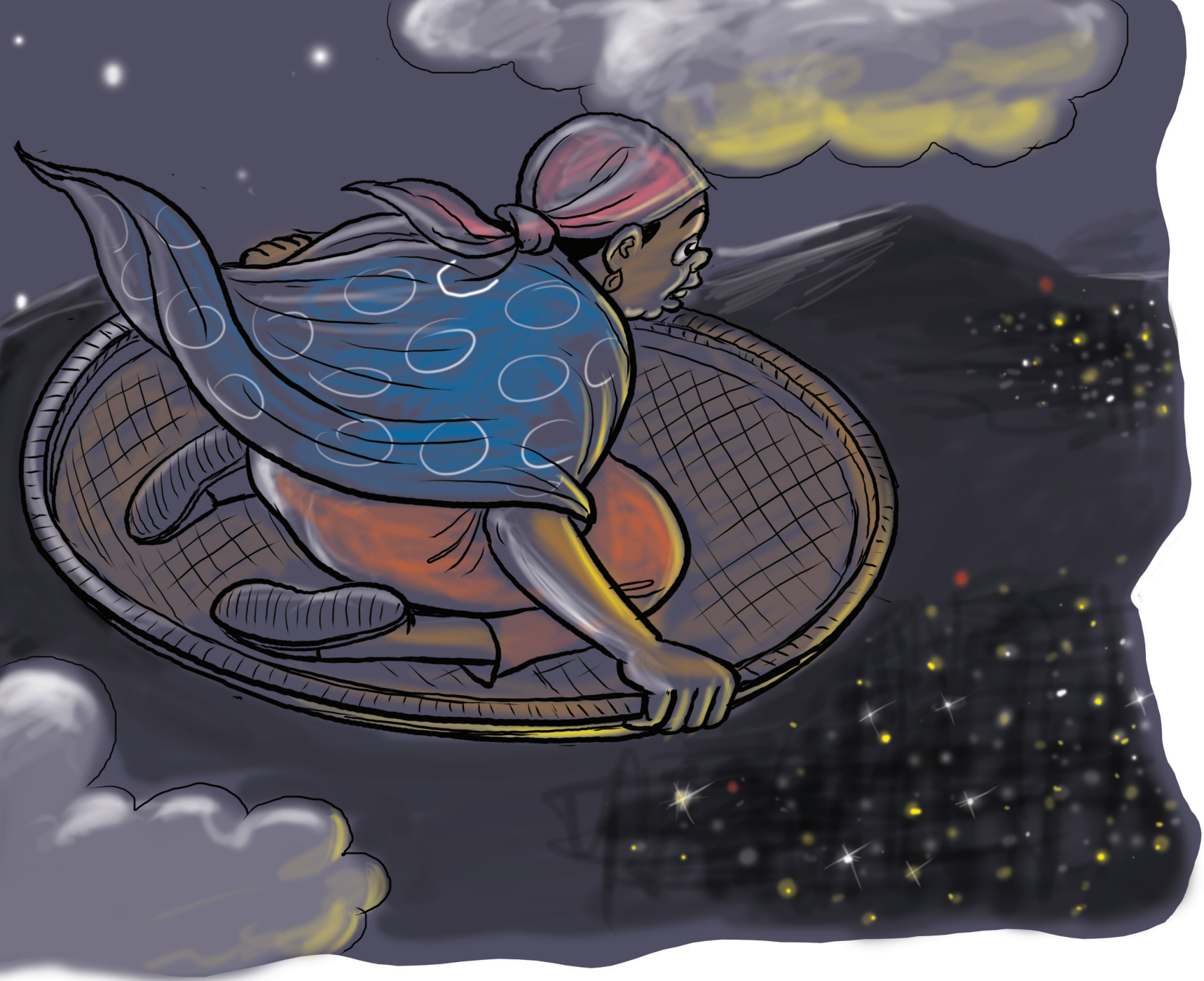


The stick turned into a wooden plate.
And made her fly.



She saw the moon, the hills and the clouds.

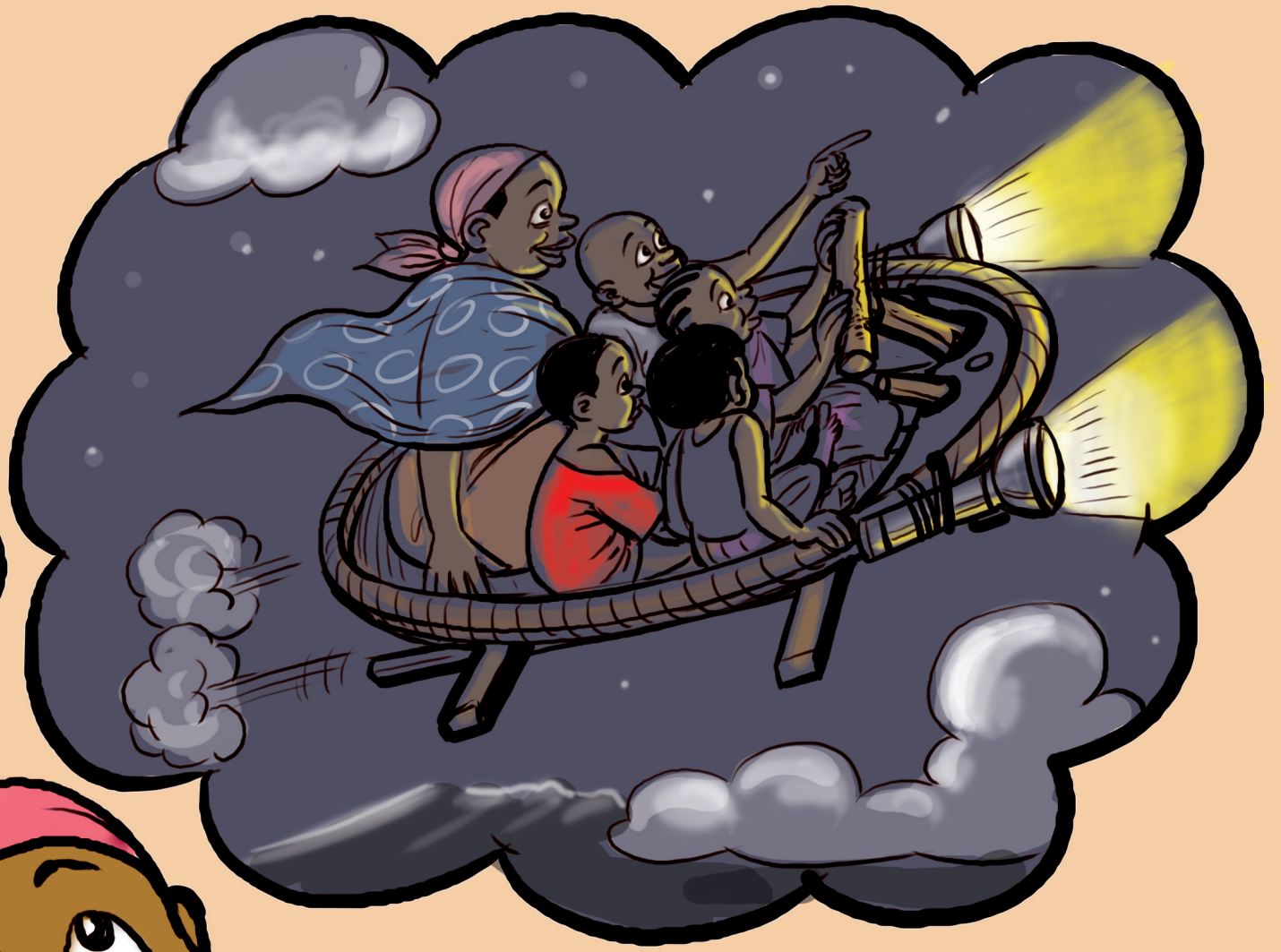




Then, she saw the lights.



After a half an hour, she came back home.



Next time I will fly with my children.



The Poor Lady

The lady is poor and old, but she wishes for an adventure. She wants to fly up in the sky. She wants to see the moon and stars up close. What a dream for one so poor and so old? Will her dream come true? How? Journey along with her and find out.

The Poor Lady is the third in **Soma's** 'Kalamu Ndogo' (little scribes) children books series. The first four books in this series are products of **Soma's** Watoto na Vitabu (Children and Books) Research and Writing with children experiment implemented in 2019 with a grant from Neil Butcher & Associates.

Larry Semiono, author of *The Poor Lady* is an 8 year old boy in Grade Four. Larry loves to read, tell stories and draw. *The Poor Lady* is his first published book.

Other books in the Kalamu Ndogo series are:

The Lonely Frog

Chura Mpweke

Chungu cha Ajabu

Mbuguma and Nasiru



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