

LEGEND OF THE KAMAJ TREE

by

Lindsey Brinkman

HONORS THESIS

Submitted to Texas State University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
graduation in the Honors College
December 2020

Thesis Supervisor:

Jordan Morille

COPYRIGHT

by

Lindsey Brinkman

2020

FAIR USE AND AUTHOR'S PERMISSION STATEMENT

Fair Use

This work is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Public Law 94-553, section 107). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of this material for financial gain without the author's express written permission is not allowed.

Duplication Permission

As the copyright holder of this work I, Lindsey Brinkman, refuse permission to copy in excess of the "Fair Use" exemption without my written permission

ABSTRACT

I will start by saying that I have lived in an amazing time for television. My parents did not have any streaming services like Hulu, Netflix, etc. while I lived at home, and then when I moved out on my own, I had only streaming services, and no cable television. Television is becoming more creatively free because it is no longer built around intermittent advertisements. All shows are available all the time, instead of having the most popular shows scheduled at peak viewing hours (like 8pm). This gives shows the ability to serve more niche audiences instead of having to be palatable for everyone. Things like limited series are becoming much more popular, and strict episode length is falling away, as was seen in the very popular Disney+ show, *The Mandalorian*. That has influenced the way I thought about structuring this script and has also made it a very exciting time to begin writing television scripts.

Similar to shows like *Game of Thrones*, *She-Ra*, and *The Dark Crystal*, my show, *Legend of the Kamaji Tree* does not take place on Earth. It takes place on the fantastic planet Aeire, and the heart of the story takes place in the Dupan Jungle - home to winged, fairy-like creatures called, Kamaji. Kamaji are born from trees, so, technically, they are walking, talking, sentient fruit, and that is why their wings resemble flower petals. There are only six Kamaji trees, and they are the source of the Kamaji's life, and their magic.

The jungle setting is at the heart of this story, and it is where the inspiration for this story began. I lived on the Indonesian island of Sumatra in my early childhood years. Sumatra is known for its palm oil, coffee, and unique species of tiger. My family lived across the street from the jungle. Jungles are so lush, beautiful, and booming with life, but also dark, chaotic, and very dangerous, which is what makes it the perfect setting for a show of the fantasy genre. However, most fantasy stories do not take place in the jungle, most likely because the creatures associated with fantasy - like fairies - were created in Scotland and believed like myths, religion, superstitions, etc.. After living in Indonesia, my family moved to Scotland. When I think of traditional fairies, I think of wet Scottish forests, moss, and mushrooms. It is most definitely a magical place, but it does not compare to the jungle. In Indonesia, living across from the jungle, it was like living across from a myth. You never know what kind of new or complex creature could wander out. The bio-density and biodiversity of a jungle makes it feel like an alien planet, like a fictional planet, even when you're standing in it.

Many of the words for the spells are made up, but there is one chant at the beginning that is Indonesian, and the translated English is in parenthesis. Indonesia is a very important place because of its significance in the history of life on our planet, and for the human species in particular. It is a hub of life, and that really is the main theme in this show, life. It poses no solutions to meaning of life, living in harmony, or the right way of living, but seeks to explore the nature of life as three different, non-human species struggle to maintain balance between survival and coexistence.

Another theme that is heavily played in this show is women using nature to heal. Even the trees themselves are a symbol of the natural, healing mother.

The trees are quite literally the mother of all Kamaji, and the word Kamaj, I made up using the Bosnian word for mother, majka. It is commonly known that western medicine has been a field dominated by men, until quite recently, but what a lot of people don't know is how discriminative western medicine has been to women since its beginning. It has oppressed women seeking treatment as well as women giving treatment. For most of the existence of modern medicine, all clinical trials were conducted on men, meaning that women have at least one hundred less years of data on their anatomy than men do, and as a result a high percentage of women suffer from chronic illnesses that doctors know absolutely nothing about. Women throughout history in cultures all over the world have used natural healing medicines like teas, herbs, salts, but when these women-operated business started to thrive in a time where women were wanted to be submissive, not independent, the women who owned them were named as witches, and the natural healing they used was demonized. The Indonesian government is trying to pass a law right now that would outlaw black magic, along with a series of oppressive laws that match a pattern of anti-democratic behavior coming from Indonesia's current leadership. Black magic may seem like a silly thing to outlaw and enforce, but it does have real historical significance as a tool of oppression.

Legend of the Kamaj Tree is inspired by my life while simultaneously having nothing to do with my life which makes it really fun to write, and hopefully more fun to watch. Included is the pilot episode, show bible, and some previous works of mine set in this same world.

Legend of the Kamaj Tree

By

Lindsey Brinkman

Note: There are no human characters in this script.

EXT. WESTERN KAMAJ TREE (PAST)- NIGHT

A crowd of jungle creatures of about 4ft tall, whose wings look like giant flower petals, called Kamaji, stand in single, rowed circles.

At the center sits a Kamaji woman; beside her sit TWO distinct PILES OF SOIL, LEAVES AND BUDS from the MAGNIFICENT KAMAJ TREE whose branches stretch out like a canopy above them.

Two other Kamaji cover her upper body in a POULTICE made from leaves.

The crowd of Kamaji put their arms around each other and sway side to side, humming to the rhythm of their movement, softly at first and then louder.

The two Kamaji applying the poultice now lay a circle of soil down around the woman.

They both grab wooden clamps and hold them to to the joints of the woman's wings.

CRRUUNNCCHHH. SNAP

The woman's face turns completely red but not one scream escapes her lips as her wings are ripped from her body.

The same two kamaji quickly use her wings to tightly wrap the piles of soil, leaves and buds.

They place two bundles and the crippled Kamaji woman into the dwelling at the base of the Kamaj tree.

The crowd chants ceremoniously in a low tone.

CROWD
oleh daging bunga, daun ibu, janji
kuncup, diberkati di tanah kehidupan,
harapan tumbuh

(by the flesh of the flower, the
leaves of the mother, and the promise
of the bud, blessed in the soil of
life, hope grows)

The crippled woman's breathing steadies.

Small saplings emerge out of the wing-wrapped bundles.

INT. WESTERN MAGIC TENT - NIGHT

An intricate and colorful tent is built around the trunk of the largest western Kamaj tree; colorful RUGS and PILLOWS cover the floor. Sitting in the dwelling at its base is YATI, an older kamaji woman. Where Yati sits, instead of rings, this tree shows the sacred geometric "flower of life".

Yati violently shudders and opens her eyes.

GITA, a younger kamaji woman, is immediately at her side, pushing a cup of glistening blue liquid to her lips.

GITA
You have been out too long.
(beat.)
Drink.

Yati slurps down the blue liquid.

GITA
Where have you been?

YATI
Back. Far back.

Yati licks her lips like she is analyzing the drink. She looks in her cup.

YATI
This is missing something.

GITA
I have had trouble getting quite a few ingredients lately. Hopefully we will have better luck with this weeks orders.

YATI

Then... I must.. rest.. longer.

Yati faints.

Looking slightly concerned, Gita routinely dabs some oil on a cloth and uses it to wipe the sweat off of Yati's forehead.

EXT. EASTERN KAMAJ TREE - DAY

MAIKA, a strong kamaji woman, teaches a group of very inexperienced kamaji how to make bows and arrows. They move slowly and clumsily, without care of craftsmanship.

MAIKA

(impatiently) It can't be flimsy,
okay? The string has to be tight. Like
this:

Maika tugs on the string of her bow.

Tight, see?

They poorly fix their bows.

MAIKA

Better... that's.... Let's wrap up
here for the day. Keep practicing your
arrows. Everyday, okay?

Maika sheaths her knife, and slings her quiver over her shoulder.

The whole class is already napping or at least laying down on the ground.

Maika walks into one of the only buildings in the village.

INT. HUT - DAY

DEWI, an older prominent woman, and ADYA, her young apprentice, work on hang drying HERBS. Big baskets of herbs sit on the floor of the cluttered hut. Books, notes, and majik objects are piled on top of each other. There is one small bed in the corner.

Adya turns to see Maika and waves excitedly.

ADYA

Maika! Hey-

DEWI

-How was class?

Adya turns back and continues working. As she talks to Dewi, Maika slowly and inconspicuously packs a small bag. She discretely takes a book, then a majik compass, buzzfly in a jar, goo lantern, various herbs, etc.

MAIKA

They're not very enthusiastic about learning.

DEWI

Well, we will have to be persistent.

MAIKA

They have to get serious, or we can't do anything.

DEWI

It's not our way.

MAIKA

Right.

DEWI

We are a calm tribe. They're not used to doing much.

MAIKA

That's because they feel safe.

DEWI

Because we are safe.

MAIKA

Right.

Maika fingers through a small basket of BRIGHT RED HERBS.

MAIKA

Not many red suns.

DEWI
(frustrated) It is what the jungle has
to give.

ADYA
(eagerly) So Maika, when do you plan
to go back out?

Dewi turns away from her work.

Maika freezes.

DEWI
Yes, Maika, when do you plan to leave
your tribe again?

MAIKA
(quietly) Tomorrow.

DEWI
Are you kidding me? Tomorrow! You've
taught barely a handful of classes and
you're already going?

MAIKA
Dewi, that's not fair. Don't be mad.

Dewi fiercely goes back to hanging herbs.

DEWI
Why did you even come back East?

Dewi waits. Maika is silent.

Dewi turns back around. Maika shamefully looks at the basket
of red suns.

DEWI
Adya and I keep this place running
while you're out having your fun/

MAIKA
/You shouldn't *have* to keep this place
running. Why is it always up to you?
(pause.)
and by the way, my *fun* is the reason
we have any of this information in the
first place!

DEWI

We need *you*, not a bunch of knick
knacks.

MAIKA

Right, that's what I bring home. A
bunch of dumb trophies.

Maika grabs a leather journal out of her bag.

MAIKA

A manifesto, cataloging all the
information about our species from
every Kamaji tribe in Dupan.

Adya continues sorting and drying herbs, but reaches her gaze
towards Maika's book, considerably interested in it.

MAIKA

This is what you need. Histories,
spells, maps, guides.

Adya has stopped hanging herbs and is fully absorbed in what
Maika is saying.

DEWI

If it's what I need.

Dewi plops her hand open to receive the book from Maika.
Maika awkwardly pulls the journal closer to her own body.

MAIKA

It's not even close to being finished.

Dewi opens her mouth to speak.

MAIKA

I'll have Cado make a copy when I go
North.

DEWI

That boy is not for you.

MAIKA

You've never met him!

DEWI

He distracts you. Sends you on all
sorts of goose hunts.

MAIKA

Dewi..

DEWI

His own tree does not bless him,
Maika. You need to be careful.

MAIKA

What is that supposed to mean?

DEWI

I have never seen a Kamaj tree fail to
heal the broken limb of one her
children. It is a bad omen.

MAIKA

Cado taught me the spell that saved
Adya's life last year.

Dewi turns to finally look at Adya, who quickly shuffles back
to work, pretending like she never stopped.

MAIKA

Just something I picked *out having*
fun.

DEWI

You are still an Eastern Kamaji. You
have a duty to *your* tribe.

MAIKA

I am fulfilling my duty. And I'm
leaving tomorrow.

Maika grabs a spiky-shaped, yellow fruit from one of the many
baskets full of food and various plants, takes a big bite and
walks out of the hut.

ADYA

Maika, wait up!

Dewi gently grabs Adya's wrist.

DEWI

Let her go.

EXT. KEMATIAN MOUNTAINS - DAY

CADO, a Northern Kamaji, hikes up a steep, icy mountain. He wears a FUR COAT that awkwardly bulges in the back where his wings are.

Cado kneels by a DEAD KAMAJI who is completely frozen and dressed in a flight suit.

CADO
(shivering) I promise, when I come
down, I will carry you back to your
tree. You deserve to finally be buried
with your roots.

Cado takes his MITTENS off, takes a DRY LEAF from his MESSENGER BAG, and grinds it between his hands. He pinches the grounds in his fingers.

CADO
Kesini.

The wind whips up, scattering the ground leaf everywhere.

CADO
shit.

He takes a SMALL SACHET BAG out of his bag and holds it in his mouth. He grinds another DRY LEAF, and this time carefully puts the grinds in the sachet bag.

He ties the sachet onto the dead kamaji's finger.

CADO
Kesini.

Cado takes a COMPASS out of his bag that has a leaf as its needle.

The needle points at the dead kamaji.

Cado walks around the body slowly. The needle points at the dead kamaji.

Cado continues up the mountain, struggling as it gets steeper and steeper, and gusts of wind threaten to blow him off the mountain.

EXT. EASTERN KAMAJ TREE - NIGHT

SNORING.

Eastern Kamaji sleep soundly, scattered about on the ground, and in hammocks that hang in the tree branches of the *huge* Kamaj tree.

Adya pops up from her hammock and looks around. Quietly, she shimmies accross a branch, holding her breath as she passes over Dewi's hammock.

Getting to a point far enough away from other hammocks and branches, she drops from the tree. Her wings flutter so that her feet make no sound as they kiss the earth.

She tip toes a few steps, and stops. She has a necklace with a small glass bottle. She uncorks it and pulls a small oval fruit from her pocket.

She squeezes the fruit and its luminescent juice drips into the bottle. She replaces the cork.

Holding out the bottle out in front of her like a lantern, walks forward.

ADYA

(whispering to herself) Maika, I was just wondering.. I mean I was thinking it would benefit the tribe if I could..

Maika, I'd like to come with you.

Can I come with you?

Adya walks into the same shabby hut from earlier. The single bed in the room has a blanket neatly laid on top.

Adya sits on the bed and lets out a defeated sigh. She sets the glowing bottle on the shelf beside her.

She lays down on the bed flat on her back, staring straight up.

The goo slowly gets dimmer until it goes dark.

EXT. SOUTHERN TREE - NIGHT

Maika flies in the moonlight over the jungle canopy.

Breaking through the canopy, she lowers through the trees arriving at another kamaj tree. Unmistakably, it is the same tree that grows in the east and west, however, it grows in a much sandier, lighter colored soil.

The hammocks that hang in the Southern Kamaj tree are empty. The whole tribe is partying. Fish roasts on spikes around a fire.

A few kamaji erupt in cheer. they sit watching their friend, HUEY, flying in middair, rapidly repeating successive backflips.

He stops flipping. Dizzily shakes his head. He wears a flight suit.

HUEY

Maika!

The group swarms Maika, knocking her back some with a group hug. She is surprised to find a drink in her hand once the gang backs off.

PUNK MUSIC always plays in the South.

Two kamaji walk with their arms around Maika's shoulders until they get back to the bonfire and sit around it in a circle.

KIP holds his drink up to toast and hovers in the air.

KIP

My friends! Tonight is an important night, a magnificent night.

Woo's, cheers, and "here here"'s. Maika laughs, relaxing into a comfortable environment.

KIP (CONT)

Tonight we drink! We feast! We dance!

Kip hold his hand out to Huey. Huey denies.

KIP (CONT)

Tonight we party! Cheers to you all!
to Maika being her with us! to the
flight brigade!

Kip hold his drink higher and flies higher at the same time.
As he knocks his drink back, he does a back flip. He drinks
half of it and the other half spills down his shirt and down
onto the kamaji below him.

The others drink to the toast.

They party.

Huey and maika, both drunk at this point, talk.

HUEY

So how'ya been Maik? still dating that
cripple?

MAIKA

(elbowing him) Huey!

HUEY

What? I think he's bad news

MAIKA

(laughs) he's a librarian.

HUEY

Still. I mean Maik, the tree won't
even heal him. That's gotta say
something about the kinda guy he is.

MAIKA

You don't know anything about what the
tree has to say. No one in the south
even uses their tree.

HUEY

We use the tree. We might do things
differently here, but were still
Kamaji.

MAIKA

In the west they know all kinds of
magic.

HUEY

(some joke mimicking western vanity)

They laugh.

HUEY

So is that where you just came from?

MAIKA

No, that's where I'm going. I just came from the east.

HUEY

You left home in the middle of the night?

MAIKA

It doesn't really feel like home anymore.

HUEY

I understand. I miss them too, everyday.

MAIKA

No you don't. You don't understand. I lost the only people in the east that really knew me. My tribe, my own tree, that I was born from, feels foreign now.

HUEY

I noticed that you don't wear your flight brigade uniform anymore.

MAIKA

Because I'm not in the flight brigade, Huey. No eastern Kamaji is.

Maika leaves Huey. She walks over the the bonfire, and someone fills up her wooden mug. She joins Kip who is obnoxiously dancing.

EXT. SOUTHERN TREE - DAY

The sun shines brightly down on the Southern Kamaj Tree.

Kamaji lay passed out - hungover on the front lawn like.

Sand sticks to Maika's face as she lifts her head up. She squints at the bright sun, and groans. She gives her wings a big stretch before using them to lift herself up to standing.

She looks around for her bag, and finds it next to Huey- who is still asleep like the rest of the Kamaji. Looking regretfully at Huey, she grabs her bag, and flies west.

EXT. WESTERN TREE - DAY

A large open market buzzes with busy Kamaji - selling and shopping. Rich colored fabrics tied to the branches of the western Kamaj trees, link the trees together and create a richly colored canopy over the market.

Stands sell different things - various dried and fresh fruits and herbs, mysterious bundles, jars of liquids and goos.

Gita's arms overflow with goodies and supplies. She stops at a table with tightly wrapped cloth bundles and a sign that says SPELL BUNDLES. bundles have different labels like Fly Higher - 6 hr oxygen boost. One Night Night Vision - cast at sundown. Color change - eyes - pink. Color change - wings - blue.

GITA

Hey Mels, got my order?

MELS, the seller, grabs a sack of various items and ingredients from behind her and puts them on her table.

MELS

I'm still waiting on the bean slugs.

GITA

Seriously?

MELS

Getting harder to come by, but don't worry. I'll keep my price the same for my favorite customer.

GITA

You're ripping me off, Mels.

MELS

How about a "free color change" for
your troubles? Pick any you like.

GITA

How about two "one-night night
visions", instead? For my troubles.

Mels tosses the two bundles into the sac and hands it to
Gita, who can barely grab it with all the other items in her
arms.

MELS

Pleasure doing business.

Gita walks toward the largest of the three western Kamaj
trees. It has a large tent built around the trunk.

INT. WESTERN MAGIC TENT - DAY

Yati with her eyes closed meditating in the small dwelling at
the base of the tree when Gita quietly carries in her
supplies. Herbal smoke spills out of an ANTIQUE GOLD INCENSE
BURNER.

Yati keeps her eyes closed as she acknowledges Gita's
entrance.

YATI

Better luck with ingredients today?

GITA

Regrettably, no.

YATI

It may be time to ask our mother for a
blessing of abundance.

Yati gets out of the tree dwelling. She uses knife to break
off a small sharp sliver of bark off the tree.

Gita sits in the tree dwelling holding a small amount of the
herbs from her supply run. She sets the herbs down so that
they touch the wood of the tree beneath her.

GITA

A sacrifice of the land.

Yati gives Gita the sharp wood.

YATI
A sacrifice of the flesh.

Yati sings softly as Gita pricks each finger on her right hand.

One by one Gita touches her 5 bloody fingers to the wood supporting her.

The herbs magically disintegrate. Maika walks in.

Gita smiles.

Yati gives Maika a hug.

YATI
Our mother answers quickly.

MAIKA
What did you ask for?

GITA
Abundance.

Gita gently crawls out of the dwelling.

GITA
We were not expecting you back so soon.

MAIKA
I am not sure I come with abundance. I don't have much of everything.

YATI
But you found everything on the list?

Maika nods.

YATI
Then you bring much abundance. Come, show us.

Gita and Yati look at the ingredients that Maika lays out on the table - the red suns from the east, the dust and purple flower from the south, two fuzzy pale blue flowers, and roots of different colors.

YATI

Do you know what these specific ingredients are for?

MAIKA

My historical training.

YATI

You are eager to learn?

MAIKA

Desperate.

YATI

Good. we need more mages in the other tribes.

(beat.)

I have been eager to learn as well. The west obviously has a peculiar nature. The past is richer than we think.

Yati runs her fingers against the bark of the tree.

YATI

Memories run deep in these fibers.

Gita prepares a tonic using the roots, red suns, and sparkly dust.

Gita holds a cup out to Maika. A thick, reddish, glittering liquid swirls in it.

Maika is surprised to see the tonic prepared so quickly.

Gita swirls her finger around the top of the cup in a stirring motion

GITA

Menaska.

Steam instantly swirls up from the now hot tea.

YATI

Would you like to see?

Maika sits in the tree's dwelling, looks wearily at the potion.

GITA

One gulp.

Maika throws back the liquid, holds it in her mouth, gags, and and swallows. Her eyes immediately close and her muscles relax.

Gita swiftly catches the cup as it falls from Maika's hand.

Gita grinds the purple flower with a mortar and pestle.

She opens the incense burner and sprinkles the purple flower over the glowing embers. She closes the burner and gently blows on it. The smoke changes color to purple and quickly fades back to gray.

EXT. KEMATIAN MOUNTAINS - DAY

Using two ice axes (pick axes?), Cado clings to the side of a steep, icy mountain. Below him where it is less steep, there is a kamaji in a flight suit, snow and ice covering their pale dead body.

Cado climbs up through snowy wind.

He breaks through the clouds, finally reaching the summit and clear skies.

Cado tries to breathe deep. He tries again. His skin loses color.

Cado sways sheepishly. He tries again to breathe in oxygen, and faints, falling backwards off the mountain's peak.

INT. WESTERN MAGIC HUT- SUNSET

Maika's eyes pop open. She is pale and sweating profusely.

Gita holds the blue fuzzy flowers up to Maika's nose for her to smell.

GITA

what did you see?

Maika takes a quick sniff of the flowers and knocks them down.

MAIKA

A nightmare.

(beat.)

How far back was that?

You are far too novice to see into the past yet. For now, you can only see the now.

MAIKA

I have to go.

Maika gets up shakily out of the tree. Gita catches her when she stumbles.

GITA

You need to rest.

MAIKA

Dont you have a spell bundle that can rest me up? I have to go. I have to go now.

Maika releases herself from Gita's support. She stumbles around the tent, fumbling through some of Gita's items from the market. She grabs the bundle labelled one-night night-vision.

Maika rushes back into the tree's dwelling. She peaks at the info tag on the bundle: it reads 'One Night Night Vision Cast at Sunset Only "chelad malihet"', and then places it in her lap.

MAIKA

chelad mailihet.

The bundle disintegrates. Its particles float toward the wood of the tree, and the tree absorbs the particles.

GITA

Where are you going?

MAIKA

North. I have to check on someone.

Yati hands Maika a bag full of various herbs and spell bundles.

EXT. WESTERN KAMAJ TREE - SUNSET

Maika flies weakly, staying in the jungle, below the tree canopy.

EXT. JUNGLE- NIGHT

Maika tiredly flutters lower and lower. Her eyes have a green tint to them- the whole eye.

Maika grabs a fruit from a tree and desperately eats it.

She stumbles through the jungle, coming dangerously close to disastrously tripping over thick tree roots.

She starts to sweat a lot. Color returns to her face and her pupils dilate.

Her path becomes lazy. She looks around, confused at her surroundings and then begins to giggle.

She sees colors coming off of all things.

She dreamily stares at a vibrant green tree frog.

Maika delicately pushes palm brush to the side, revealing a beautiful spot in the jungle where the trees meet the beach.

Maika, drenched in sweat, sits to catch her breath.

The sand moves like an ocean wave, and, every now and then, flickers with little flashes of light.

A crab comes out of the sand - crawling over other crabs like him - the sand shifting around their bodies.

The crab coughs fire on a tree on the out skirt of the jungle. The tree catches briefly, but it doesn't spread.

The crab skitters quickly toward Maika. It coughs fire again into the air.

Maika, caught off guard, falls backwards off the branch she was sitting on. Her tired and weak wings fail to catch her before she falls.

The crab skitters frantically - continuing to cough sporadically. Maika picks herself up and runs after it.

She pins it, and stabs through its hard shell with her knife.

EXT. NORTH - DAYBREAK

Tall walls woven out of thorns. Two Kamaji equipped in armor stand guard.

Maika, dirty and disheveled, drowsily stumbles toward the wicker gates.

GUARD

Maika, Is that you?

MAIKA

Cado, is he here?

GUARD

(chuckles) Cado? course he's here.

(pause)

Are you alright?

Maika's muscles and posture relax in relief.

MAIKA

I fine. I'll go meet him in the library.

A castle built around a Kamaj tree is at the center of the walled in village. Kamaji herd livestock, forge weapons, and some use delicate hand gestures to magically weave the vines that make up the wall.

INT. NORTHERN KAMAJ LIBRARY.

A cylindrical library is built around the trunk of the Northern Kamaj tree. Books line the tall walls. Loose leaf notes are strewn about.

Maika's hopeful look turns to panic. She tosses the place for clues.

MAIKA

No, no no. Dammit, Cado.

Maika rushes out of the library.

BANG BANG BANG BANG. Maika frantically knocks on a door in the hall.

A Kamaji, dressed in pale blue silk robes, and adorned with a crown, flings the door open.

KETUA

(mad) What is going on?

MAIKA

Cado, did he say where he was going?

KETUA

Ugh, you're that eastern girl he's been seeing. No wonder you look so filthy.

MAIKA

Did he say where he was going?

KETUA

What on Aeire are you talking about?

MAIKA

He's not here, and I believe he is in great danger.

KETUA

Cado doesn't go anywhere child. He can't fly.

MAIKA

He's got feet, asshole.

KETUA

You may be from another tribe, but you are in the North now. To all who are in the North, I am their Queen, and you will treat your Queen with respect.

Maika storms out of the castle.

EXT- DUPAN JUNGLE SKY SPACE - DAY

Dark circles under her eyes, Maika flies quickly.

MAIKA

I'm coming. I'll find you. I'll find
you, I promise.

EXT. KEMATIAN MTN. -DAY

Cado, short of breath, stands on top of the mountain peak.
The sun is bright. He faints, falling over the edge.

EXT. OZ

Cado falls a good distance, but Tiny pixies, called Yinari,
catch him and carry him to their pine forest home that is
super cold. Cado is asleep, but shivering.

They cover him in snow. They all glow - many different
colors. When they touch the snow, it glows too.

SHOW BIBLE

Episode 2 Outline

- Maika makes the trek up Kematian mountain to find Cado - coming across some of her dead friends along the way. Some flashbacks to Maika's time with the flight brigade. The flight brigade was a group of Eastern and Southern Kamaji expert flyers/aerialists. Every Eastern Kamaji in the brigade besides Maika died trying to fly over the Kematian Mountain range.
- Maika must utilize a myriad of spells to survive, but she actually makes it over the mountain on her own and finds the Yinari Forest. Besides being extremely cold in this new land, she is unharmed from her journey.
- While Cado slowly heals, he learns a little about the Yinari creatures and their home. They communicate in unison like a hive mind or oracle. Cado is inquisitive and asks many questions about the history of the Yinari people and their magic. They give information quite willingly at first, but soon become wary once Cado is strong enough to start writing things down, which he does with enthusiasm. Wariness turns to genuine alarm once Maika arrives at the forest.
- Maika uses spells to heal Cado more quickly. They exchange lots of knowledge from their most recent adventures.
- Gorom (the fire crabs) start moving further inland, eventually attacking the Southern Tree.

Episode 3 Outline

- Maika and Cado return to the jungle with two of the bodies of the perished flight brigade to bury by the tree roots - they take the first one east and the second one south - they must be buried with the trees they were born to in a magical ceremony.
- Upon finding out the south was attacked, Cado wants to rush North to tell Ketua about the other land he has found.
- Maika doesn't trust Ketua, and wants to know the real reason Cado went up the mountain.
- Maika asks Yati if she has ever seen the lands beyond the jungle.

Other Notes and Plot Points:

The Dupan Jungle where the Kamaji live is being invaded by Gorom: fire-breathing crabs.

Maika's philosophy is to defend the jungle not invade the Yinari forest, but her tree also is at the least risk since it is the tree furthest inland, farthest from the coast.

The Gorom will start to invade like an infestation, a zombie invasion.

Each tribe handles it differently. They attack south first. South fight quite well. Huey and Kip fight side by side and eventually get together. Kip is the loverboy theatrical type (think Elliot from the magicians). Kip gets burned by the gorom. Huey rushes him to the Southern Kamaj tree, but it doesn't save him. Huey transforms into a disciplined leader - from being immature, petty, generally a 'loveable dick' type of character.

Ketua wants to expand and dominate this newly discovered land like a proper queen. The West prepares for the worst in all situations and has a dark history. The South focuses on survival. East avoids and denies the problem.

Yati finds out how to make new Kamaj trees, which is unheard of and taboo since part of the Kamaji's beliefs are that the trees are eternal. Yati keeps it a secret for a while, but eventually she tells Keuta, and they make a plan to invade the Yinari forest.

The Eastern tribe completely avoid the problem of invasion. They feel protected since they are so much deeper in the jungle than the other tribe, but good efforts from the other tribes end up pushing the Gorom to move East, resulting in the destruction of the Eastern tree. It is the first Kamaj tree to be consumed by the Gorom's flames. Lots of easterners die because they are slow and lazy. Dewi and Adya nearly die trying to save them. Maika saves Dewi and Adya. Guilt and shame weigh on Maika for not trying harder to train her tribe in combat.

One episode will take place in the past: ancient Dupan jungle, explaining some of the history of the Kamaji. Primitive. Really dark blood magic. This will be when Maika's training with Yati has progressed, so Maika herself will be seeing the past. The training

Maika has to do to see into the past is rough and forces her to deal with the tragedies of her own past.

Legend of the Kamaj Tree
A Short Film

By

Lindsey Brinkman

FADE IN:

EXT. DUPAN JUNGLE - NIGHT

A thick jungle.

A village with small wooden huts. Three large trees form a triangle. One is on fire.

Kamaji: winged creatures, around 4 ft tall, scatter about in fear.

One creature flies in the air only to be shot down by a spear.

Gorom: 7 ft tall, scaly, creatures with shells on their backs carry torches, spears and axes.

A fire burns as a line on the edge of the jungle, dividing it from the large, sandy coastline.

EXT. NORTHERN KAMAJ VILLAGE - DAY

A primitive village made of mostly wood and some stone. Small huts and work stations are scattered about, spreading out from the village center - a majestic tree with a small castle like structure built around it. It's springtime: bright leaves cover the tree, large buds are on the verge of blooming.

Various Kamaji, fairy-like creatures with wings resembling flower petals, work to build defenses around the village. They put up sharpened wooden beams, and with delicate hand gestures, they magically grow thorned vines that wrap around and secure the wooden beams.

Two Kamaji argue: CADO, a kamaji male dressed in common linens with a brace holding his soft pink wings down and KETUA, a yellow-winged kamaji female dressed in pale blue robes and a vine crown.

KETUA

...I will not condone this type of
sick magic...

CADO
Ketua, I beg you...

MAIKA, a strong-looking kamaji female with bright orange wings, dressed in LEATHER ARMOR and equipped with a KNIFE on her belt, a QUIVER, and BOW flies down, landing next to Cado, and startling Ketua.

MAIKA
Sorry... I didn't know if I was
supposed to use the door.

Maika gestures to the guarded entrance to the village.

KETUA
(now composed) Nonsense. We are not
trying to keep out fellow Kamaji.
(pause)
Welcome, Maika. I am grateful you are
here.

Ketua begins to walk, gesturing for them both to follow. Cado squeezes Maika's hand. Maika smiles, excited to see him.

KETUA (CONTD)
It is not often we get help from other
tribes.

MAIKA
I'm afraid that many other easterners
do not have the skill to assist in
this war, but I am trying to change
that.

KETUA
Yes, Cado tells me you have been
traveling to the other tribes for
quite some time. How are they doing?

MAIKA
East is much too isolated to be
affected yet. The South sees
occasional nearby attacks, much like
here, but their aerialists have been
able to deal with them effectively.

KETUA
and the West? I am assuming you flew
in from there?

MAIKA

Yes. The western villages are on the front lines. Their defense and protection spells are holding off the Gorom, for now. The three tree system there does allow for greater magic output, but, unfortunately, their efforts might be pushing the Gorom to spread out toward here and the Southern Tree.

CADO

(to Ketua) It's time to take my plan seriously/

KETUA

/Cado, please.

CADO

The Gorom are not going to stop taking land until the jungle is gone/

KETUA

(to Maika) /We expect another attack at the full moon, when the jungle is busiest.

They enter the castle-like structure, a stone building. Tree branches line the ceiling, holes in the structure let the branches extend outside. A hallway lined with doors; Ketua stops at one.

(CONTD)

Here are your quarters. I will have someone bring you some food. I know your journey has been long.

CADO

Have them bring it to the library. Maika is going to brief me on some western spells.

KETUA

Of course.

Ketua turns to Maika.

Training starts before daybreak. On top of the library.

Cado bows. Maika awkwardly copies.

Cado leads Maika to the door at end of the hallway.

INT. NORTHERN KAMAJ TREE-LIBRARY-SUNSET

A grand cylindrical library: built like a castle tower, no roof. At the center is the trunk of the majestic Kamaj tree, which has a small dwelling at its base, big enough for a single Kamaji to sit upright. The library accommodates the tree, letting its long branches spread to the outside. LADDERS of various sizes rest against the walls of bookshelves; stacks of BOOKS and loose PAPERS are strewn around.

Cado picks Maika up at the waist and spins her around. Her wings do most of the work. They hug as she lowers her feet to the ground.

CADO

I am so happy to see you.

MAIKA

I have a whole lot to show you.

Maika pulls out a BOOK and loose NOTES from a SAC she is carrying. She hands Cado the loose papers.

MAIKA

New protection spells from the west. I tried to adapt them to a single tree, but you should double check.

Cado takes the papers and looks at them carefully.

CADO

What about...

Maika opens her book: the cover is made of tightly woven vines, the pages look old. There is newer looking ink on the pages she opens, contrasting the old looking diagram it is written over.

MAIKA

This is what I have.

CADO

Maika, this is everything.

MAIKA

It can't be any buds either. We can't use them while they are small - they don't hold enough magic. It has to be when they are almost born.

Maika reaches her hand out to touch one of the very large buds.

MAIKA

(somerberly) Like how they are now.

CADO

Then we do it now.

Cado removes his brace. His wings pop out like letting go of crinkled paper; they are both obviously deformed.

Maika plucks a handful of leaves from the tree.

Cado plucks three of the large buds, whispering to each of them before removing from the tree.

CADO

Membella.

Maika pulls out the knife from her belt.

MAIKA

Are you sure about this?

CADO

I was born for this.

Cado covers his own mouth with his hands. Maika takes the knife to the joint of his left wing, and severs it from his body. Cado stifles his screams.

INT. NORTHERN KAMAJ TREE-LIBRARY-NIGHT

MAIKA sits inside the dwelling at the base of the tree. Upon where she sits are the tree's rings. Special to this type of tree, the rings look like the flower of life sacred geometry.

CADO sits across from her, holding both of her hands. His left wing joint drips blood.

A gibbous moon shines down on the tree. The room is illuminated by lanterns, but instead of holding fire they are filled with different colored luminescent goos.

In Maika's lap sits a bundle of earth, leaves, and buds from the Kamaj tree, all wrapped in Cado's wing.

Maika adjusts to sit up straighter. She puts her hand up to Cado's face. He smiles and lean into it.

Two deep breaths and they both close their eyes.

ALL
oleh daging bunga, daun ibu, janji
kuncup, diberkati di tanah kehidupan,
harapan tumbuh

(by the flesh of the flower, the
leaves of the mother, and the promise
of the bud, blessed in the soil of
life, hope grows)

Energy radiates through the tree as they repeat this chant. The veins of the leaves light up different colors and so do the buds, and most importantly, so does the bundle in Maika's lap.

A low hum fills the room.

Their chant culminates loudly one last time.

The tree falls dark. The bundle continues to emanate a small glow from inside it.

Maika cradles the bundle and crawls out of the tree dwelling.

She lowers it into a backpack that has a book and some handwritten notes inside, and sets it next to her armor.

Cado slacks into the tree's dwelling and relaxes. He emits a soft moonlight glow and the blood from his wound stops dripping.

Maika starts to make a few arrows. Cado gets up. He walks over to her, and grabs her hips from behind.

MAIKA
Rest!

Cado spins her around.

CADO
Dance with me.

MAIKA
Get back in the tree!

CADO
I'm not bleeding (pause) come on

With one hand on her hip, he grabs her hand. They dance to *Moodna, Once with Grace by Gus Dapperton*. Cado dances effortlessly as Maika focuses to keep up.

CADO
You've been practicing your footwork.

MAIKA
Are you impressed?

He cranks the skill up a notch. Maika trips on a spin. Her wings lift her up in the air as she laughs.

Looking into Cado's eyes, she takes a breath to relax her wings down. As her toes delicately touch the floor, Cado reaches his hands to her cheeks and kisses her.

She rests her head on his shoulder. They slowly sway back and forth.

Maika touches Cado's back, where his wing used to be.

MAIKA
Are you okay?

Cado shrugs and tilts his head toward his other, deformed wing.

CADO
It's not like I was using it anyway.
(beat)
When are you heading back East?

MAIKA
Depends. They're helpless without me, but if we can push the Gorom back from here, I might have some more time. We can find a safe home for the seed...

Loud banging drums. A horn. They stop dancing.

MAIKA

Already?

Another horn.

Maika rushes to equip her bow and quiver, putting the new arrows in that she just made.

Cado grabs the bundle, still glowing, from the tree and shoves it in Maika's sac. He hands it to her.

CADO

Whatever happens, you keep this with you. Keep it safe.

Maika nods. Cado grabs the new protection spells Maika gave him as well as some other papers.

A low level of smoke enters the room.

He gives her a kiss before sitting in the tree dwelling and beginning to chant.

Maika flies up and out of the Library.

EXT. NORTHERN KAMAJ TREE SKY SPACE - NIGHT

Maika flies above the Northern Kamaj village, above the dark silhouette of the Dupan Jungle.

A large force of Gorom rustle through the jungle, bringing fire with them.

Maika shoots all her arrows. The fire only grows. Northern Kamaji soldiers are knocked out of the sky by large spears.

She looks at the overwhelming force, hopeless at defending against it.

She flies back towards the library in an effort to rescue Cado.

Fire engulfs the small wood buildings and the large wooden spikes set up as defense. It engulfs the wooden castle-like structure built around the great tree. Funneled through the cylindrical library, fire swirls up to hit Maika like a blast from an explosion.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF NORTHERN KAMAJ VILLAGE- NIGHT

Maika is knocked just out of the fire's range. She dizzily makes her way to standing. Her wings are broken and burnt.

She tries to fly. Her wings fail her. She screams.

She turns back towards the village, clumsily running towards the fire.

A Gorom soldier notices her. He walks towards her and lifts his spear to aim.

Maika slowly backs up. The Gorom begins to charge at her.

CRASH! A huge branch falls off the Northern Kamaj Tree. As it bounces, a wall of ash flies into the air. Maika uses this as an opportunity to escape; she runs away from the fire into the dark jungle.

EXT. DUPAN JUNGLE - NIGHT

Maika's runs for a good distance. Her legs look weak as noodles. Her wings flap uselessly behind her.

She stops and looks at a COMPASS on her wrist.

The compass works by an enchanted Kamaj leaf. She follows where the leaf directs. Wiping tears from her cheeks, she takes off, running clumsily through the tropical, alien jungle.

It is too dark for her to see clearly. She trips over a large tree root and falls flat forward.

Immediately she hops up and continues sprinting.

Smoke follows her.

Her legs shake. She throws down her bow and quiver and keeps running.

Smoke follows her.

Her whole body shakes. She is covered in sweat, ash, and burns.

Eventually, she collapses at the base of a tree. She plucks a BLUE FRUIT from it and takes a big, juicy bite. The inside of the fruit glows pink. Maika squeezes the glowing goo onto her hands. She waves her hands around and they act like flashlights.

Waving her flashlights hands around, she illuminates a small flying insect.

MAIKA
(relieved) A buzzfly!

She claps the insect in both hands and whispers to it.

MAIKA
To Dewi at the Eastern Tree by the
mountains: Evacuate the village. Fly
up the mountain. The North has fallen.
I must assume the west has too. Gorom
are coming now. I'm right behind you.
Maika.

She releases the buzzfly, checking her compass to make sure it is flying in the right direction.

Her feet are cut up from thorns, and covered in blood. She tries to cover her feet in the goo as well, but winces, deciding just to cover the tops of her feet.

She takes off all her armor. She trembles as she tries to put back on the backpack.

Smoke and a red haze grow nearer.

The glow from her feet illuminates the ground where she steps. She takes a few steps, each more painful than the last.

Looking behind her, she drops her backpack. She rips out one page from the book and takes the notes. Ash from the sky sprinkles down onto the paper. She folds it and tucks it into her vest.

She takes the bundle out of the pack, shamefully drops it on the ground, and cuts it in half. The glow from within it goes dark. Maika wipes away a tear as soon as it falls from her eye.

She uses the two halves of Cado's wing to wrap each of her feet.

MAIKA

Obat.

The wings emit a soft glow and seal to her feet. She lets out a sigh, temporarily relieved from the physical pain.

She runs as fast as she can, whipping through the jungle, repeating the chant from the paper (the same chant her and Cado did together), panting loudly and constantly looking behind her.

A soft orange glow emerges from the opposite direction of the fire: the sun is rising.

EXT. EASTERN KAMAJ TREE - DAWN

The Eastern Tree is nestled at the base of steep mountains. This is where the fog settles. As morning breaks, the eastern tree is consumed in a soft yellow haze.

The Eastern Kamaji remain asleep in their hammocks or comfortably on the ground.

Maika runs in, still repeating her chant. She grabs a random stick off the ground, using it to poke ADYA, who is asleep in a hammock in the tree.

MAIKA

Adya, get up. Get everyone out.

ADYA

(sleepily) huh...Maika?

MAIKA

Get out!

Maika tears off one of her wings. Her scream wakes up most of the village.

Adya sits up straight.

DEWI, and older-looking Kamaji woman, is at Maika's side immediately.

Maika drops down to collect some soil.

MAIKA

FLEE. Over the mountains. Go now!

Dewi is on the ground next to Maika.

Adya is already gathering everyone.

Maika plucks leaves, and four buds from the tree. She clasps the buds in her hands while they are still attached to the branches and whispers "Membella" before plucking them off and wrapping them her wing and soil.

The whole tribe stands in a group, muttering among themselves. Adya looks back at Dewi and Maika. Dewi nods at Adya.

Adya turns around. She flies up. The rest of the Kamaji follow her.

Smoke mixes with the eastern fog. Despite the sun getting higher, the jungle gets darker.

Maika crawls toward the dwelling at the base of the Eastern Kamaj tree.

MAIKA

(to Dewi) Go.

Dewi ignores her and helps her into the tree's base. Maika sits in the tree like she did in the North, with the bundle gently placed in her lap. Dewi sits down opposite her and holds each of her hands.

Maika chants. Dewi is silent, but holds Maika's hands tightly.

The tree glows many different colors. What is left of the jungle hums in the same energy as her chant.

Fire reaches the eastern Kamaji village.

Dewi peeps her eyes open only to realize their fate. Flames engulf their surroundings, reaching the tops of the nearby trees and above.

Maika keeps her eyes shut. Her concentration devoted only to her chant.

Her chant culminates. The tree glows. The flames crack and roar.

Black

EXT. FORMER DUPAN JUNGLE - DAY

A sea of sand sits at the base of steep mountains. A small Kamaj tree grows its first buds.

FADE OUT:

END.

Kamaj Tree

By

Lindsey Brinkman

Cast of Characters

MAIKA:

UNIVERSALLY CONSIDERED THE SMARTEST IN HER TRIBE. THE EASTERN KAMAJI HAVE THE SIMPLEST LIFE OF THEIR KIND, SPENDING MOST OF THEIR TIME NAPPING AND EATING. OTHER TRIBES CONSIDER THEM LAZY BUT EASTERNERS CONNECTION TO THEIR TREE GIVES THEM THE LONGEST LIFE SPAN OF ANY OTHER TRIBE. MAIKA TRAVELS THE DUPAN JUNGLE IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TO BRING BACK TO HER TRIBE. SHE VISITS THE NORTHERN TRIBE OFTEN TO LEARN FROM THE MASONS, READ AT THE LIBRARY, AND TO SEE THE LIBRARIAN.

CADO:

LIBRARIAN FOR THE NORTH KAMAJI TRIBE. HIS WINGS WERE DAMAGED AT BIRTH, AND THEY BECAME COMPLETELY UNUSABLE AFTER AN ACCIDENT WHEN HE WAS A CHILD. HIS WINGS STAY IN A BRACE UNLESS HE IS SLEEPING. DREAMS OF ADVENTURE. DABBLES IN SPELLMAKING. ROMANTICALLY INVOLVED WITH MAIKA FROM THE EAST.

KETUA:

LEADER OF THE NORTHERN KAMAJ TREE. REGAL AND PROUD.

Maika and Cado stand in a large library. It is built around a tree so huge that the branches enter from the outside, stretch across the library, and exit through the other side. The library is incredibly tall, as it was made for creatures who can fly. However, there are ladders of various different sizes leaning against the shelves. There are stacks of books all over the floor and a table in the middle of the room with books and paper strewn about on top.

Lights up. Maika is sitting on the table in the middle of the room. Cado stands precariously on a ladder reaching for a book. After realizing the ladder is just too short, he climbs down. He walks across the room to grab another, slightly taller ladder. Maika stands on the table and her wings flutter.

MAIKA

I can grab it.

CADO

So can I.

Maika sits back down. Cado positions the ladder where he wants it. He turns back to look at her.

CADO

This is my job, you know. I'm the only one who knows which books are where.

Maika gestures towards the books that lay all over the floor.

MAIKA

I think you make it that way on purpose!

CADO

You always have to find a way to make yourself useful in the world, Maika!

MAIKA

Well then find something that makes *me* useful! I have to go back with new info, good info, considering how long I've been gone this time.

After successfully retrieving the book he wanted, Cado climbs down the ladder and walks to Maika who still sits on the table. He holds the book in both hands behind his back.

CADO

When do you go back?

MAIKA

I could return sooner if you would ever let me bring a book home!

Maika jumps off the table, and attempts to swipe the book from Cado's hand. He gracefully evades.

CADO

You are not good on your legs

MAIKA

But I am learning.

She steps back to show off. Her wings perk up but she takes a breath to fight her instincts and she holds her wings down. She leaps up like a ballerina, lands a little shaky, but corrects herself and smiles.

CADO

I'm so proud of you

Cado spins towards her and grabs her for a dance. Maika stumbles around him and her wings perk up instinctively.

You've got this.

She relaxes her wings back down.

After a while she rests her head on his shoulder, and they dance slower.

MAIKA

I wish I could stay here forever

CADO
Yeah?

MAIKA
You and me together in this amazing place.

CADO
Being stuck in the library all day isn't a dream,

MAIKA
Blasphemy!

They stop their dance and laugh.
Maika walks to the shelves and
strokes her fingers along the
spines of the books.

MAIKA
Amazing

CADO
You wanna see what I've been working on?

MAIKA
Always

CADO
Here

Cado hands her the book he got off
of the shelf earlier. The cover is
woven from vines with an image of a
Kamaj Tree woven on the front.

MAIKA
Penjaga Sakti. I already have this!

CADO
I know, I know. I've been adapting some of the spells in it.

Cado grabs a few of the loose sheets
of paper from the table, and starts
looking around on the floor through
some other stacks of loose paper.

MAIKA
How can you do something so genius and then just throw it on
the floor?

CADO
Hey come on, I live a little closer to the floor than you do

Maika kneels down next to him on
the floor, curious to see what it
is that he is looking for.

MAIKA

How many have you made?

CADO

A few new ones this year, but I figured it out. I've been working on this spell forever and I've finally figured out the ratios

Maika picks up some of the papers and flips through them, they are covered in charts and drawings, and pages and pages of mathematics. Cado finds the page he was looking for.

CADO

Here.

He hands her a piece of paper and flips to the correct page in the Penjaga Sakti.

MAIKA

So what does it do to the growth spell?

CADO

It turns it into a regrowth spell, of sorts.

MAIKA

Cado, is this for your wings?

(beat)

The ingredients... Cado you can't possibly/

CADO

/It's not for my wings. It's to grow a new tree.

MAIKA

A new Kamaj tree. Come on

CADO

No I'm serious, I've been working on this since I was young.

MAIKA

The Kamaj Trees formed alongside the planet. They're as old as Aeire, itself.

CADO

Not all of them.

(beat)

You know Ketua was my mentor when I was young, so I would sit in on some of her meetings. She used to talk to the leaders in the west quite often. There is a Kamaji from the west who is more in tune to the magic of the trees than the rest of us. She once spent a whole week meditating in the tree dwelling and claimed to see into the past. She saw the

MAIKA

The third tree in the west.

CADO

you've been there. Is it really true that the third tree is smaller than the other two?

MAIKA

I don't remember. The western trees are all really close together. They don't really feel separated.

(beat)

But even if all that is true, why do you want to do this? The ingredients.. its not a small price to pay.

CADO

Maika this could be our only hope at surviving the Gorom.

MAIKA

How is a sapling going to provide any protection against Gorom invaders? You have a castle here!

CADO

These walls won't matter when the Gorom come. They'll burn everything.

MAIKA

You have warriors, here. Your tribe is equipped for anything.

CADO

It won't protect us. We have to get far away from where the Gorom can ever reach us.

MAIKA

Kamaji can seek asylum in my village. It is the farthest from the coast. It's already the best place in the jungle from the Gorom.

CADO

There is no safe place in the jungle.

MAIKA

the jungle is all we have. there is no where else to go.

CADO

Over the mountains.

MAIKA

Like I said. There is no where else to go.

CADO

Maika..

MAIKA

Look I know that you don't get it. No other Kamaji live anywhere near the mountains, but a lot of my friends have died trying to get over those mountains

CADO

The mountains are the only place the Gorom can't go.

MAIKA

We cant go there either! Kematian mountains! Do you know why their named that? It means death. NONE survive.

CADO

I did.

MAIKA

What?

CADO

I made the trek a few months back, and I made it over.

MAIKA

Youre joking

CADO

Oh yeah cause this is just my sense of humor.

MAIKA

How? How long did that even take you?

CADO

About seven weeks.

MAIKA

You trekked all that way way east, and didn't come visit me at my tree?

CADO

I didnt think you'd be there! Youre travelling most of the time.

MAIKA

So, what's it like?

CADO

Cold.

(beat)

its a lot let lively than the jungle, but there is water, and it's safe.

MAIKA

Still, Cado. The ingredients in this spell... its not worth it

CADO

Maika, please, believe me, this is our only hope.

MAIKA

Two buds, Cado? and a wing? This is brutality.

CADO

Its not like my wings are getting much use anyway.

MAIKA

And the buds? You're okay sacrificing children like ingredients in some stew?

CADO

Of course not. I'm not saying full blooms, just buds, like how they are now. Tiny buds that have just begun after winter.

MAIKA

Ugh

CADO

I don't do this flippantly, or without regard. You should know me better than that.

MAIKA

I thought I did.

CADO

Let me show you something. Can you fly me up there?

He nods up to the top of the library.

Scene 2

MAIKA AND CADO STAND ON THE ROOF OF THE LIBRARY. IT IS THE HIGHEST PART OF THE LARGE BUILDING THAT DISTINGUISHES THE NORTHERN KAMAJ TREE FROM THE OTHERS. THE NORTHERNERS ARE THE ONLY KAMAJI TO LIVE EXCLUSIVELY IN BUILDINGS. THEY ALSO HAVE ROOMS FOR GOVERNING, MASONRY, AND OF COURSE THE MASSIVE LIBRARY.

Cado points into the distance.

CADO

It's not fog that weaves through the jungle, Maika. We thought it was. For a long time we watched thinking everything was normal. It's smoke. I see less of the jungle every time i come up here. The Gorom haven't reached the western tribes yet, but the smoke has.

Maika can barely bring herself to go toward the edge, not for the fear of falling of course, but as if looking a little closer at her home as it suffocates, as it burns, might break her heart.

MAIKA

Our home

She can't bear to look for long.

CADO

Maika...

Maika holds the paper with the spell out in front of him.

MAIKA

Look at what you can do! You can think of anything.. you can make a spell to save this place!

CADO

We have no chance here

MAIKA

You never have faith in yourself

CADO

I do. I believe in my plan

MAIKA

We are not the only creatures in the jungle! This place is a nexus of life

CADO

Life is where we survive

He loving grabs her hands, but she is not looking at him.

CADO

I'll have to cast it soon. Before the buds grow much more.

MAIKA

So, soon you'll be gone?

CADO

The spell still has to be cast from within a tree dwelling, just like any other spell. It can grow here for a while, but yeah, soon I'll have to plant it in the spot where it will stay.

MAIKA

How do you know it will even work?

CADO

I haven't tried it, obviously.

It should work. It works on paper every time.

MAIKA

So that's it then. Soon you'll be gone.

CADO

I want you to come with me. It will take a while but we could tend to the new sapling together, and make preparations for when the others have to join us.

He waits for Maika's response, but she gives none.

This is how we survive. We need a place to take refuge from the Gorom.

MAIKA

The Eastern tree is already preparing for refuge for all the other tribes, and we will make more defenses once I get back.

CADO

We need a new tree where Gorom can't reach.

MAIKA

The eastern tree is as far inland as we can go. With Gorom closing in from the coast, My tree is already positioned in the optimal location. Casting this spell, it's useless violence.

CADO

The jungle isn't stopping the Gorom. Our only refuge

MAIKA

I'm not giving up on our jungle! I come here to learn how to save it, not to abandon it.

CADO

We can't give up on our people. They will burn with the jungle.

MAIKA

I have hope that we fight another day.

CADO

but we might not get another after that. I am the only one who can do this spell. My wings don't work anyway. And I'm not helping anyone being trapped in this room!

MAIKA

I think you're wrong.

She holds up the torn paper with
the revised spell.

This is wrong.

CADO

I don't do this flippantly, or without regard. and I can't
do it alone.

MAIKA

Trees as old as the planet itself. It always was a nice
fantasy.

(beat)

To think they are born out of so much pain.

Cado cups a bud that emerges from a
tree branch. He leans in close to
it.

CADO

(whispers) Membela.

Cado looks Maika in the eye.

Please. consider it.

MAIKA

I can't. My tribe. They need me. They're not like yours.
They could never build something like this.

She gestures towards the grandiose
structure that they are standing
atop.

I'm the one who has to protect them.

CADO

Not very big on work, huh?

MAIKA

It's just not something that we value. We sleep on the
forest floor, we eat what we gather, and we just live. We've
never had to build anything, until now.

CADO

It's nice to be useful.

MAIKA

It's nerve-racking.

(beat)

What about you? What will they do with you gone?

CADO

Ha! They'll be just fine

MAIKA

That's not true. They need you here, just as much as they need me there.

CADO

Almost everyone is literate now, and its not like this job was made for me.

He looks down at the top shelves of the library. They are a deathly height for someone with no wings, and the books that once filled them are now strewn around the floor of the library.

But you always have to find a way to make yourself useful in this world, Maika! And I did.

He points to the piece of paper Maika holds with the spell.

This is how I'm needed.

Maika is distracted by something she sees in the sky. She squints to get a better look.

MAIKA

Wow you guys are sending out huge missions now, I've never seen so many Kamaji fly in at once.

Cado looks out and squints.

CADO

I don't think those are ours.

MAIKA

Then who?

(beat)

My god, there are so many.

CADO

I think they're westerners.

MAIKA

Cado, what are we looking at?

CADO

An evacuation.

MAIKA

That could be all three west tribes. I've never seen anything like it.

CADO

Take me back down. I have to go tell Ketua.

MAIKA

of course.

CADO

Maika, you have get the ingredients.

MAIKA

What?

CADO

Look at that. They wouldn't all leave their trees, if even one of them was still standing. We don't know how close the Gorom are, but we need a new home, fast.

They fly back down into the library. Cado runs out of the room. Maika holds the spell in her hand and frantically paces around the library.

She takes big, deep breaths.

MAIKA

Oh god, yep, I'm gonna puke. I'm gonna puke. Okay, soil from the base of the Kamaj trunk.

She looks at her feet at the hard, constructed floor.

Can you even find soil in this place?

she moves a huge stack of books to reveal the trunk of the Kamaj tree, tucked away in the library. There is a small dwelling in the trunk, just big enough for Maika, or any Kamaji to fit if they are seated. The floor is built above the soil and roots. Maika tries to wriggle her hand through the crack in the floor, but it won't fit. She searches around the library for a hard object, and starts to smash at the floor around the tree trunk. She breaks a small chunk off, and reaches her hand down to grab a handful of soil. She looks for a place to put it and ends up just awkwardly setting the pile on top of the table. She looks back at the paper with the spell.

okay, three leaves.

She plucks three leaves off of the tree branches. She seems to pick

each one carefully, and sets them down on top of the pile of soil.
two buds, but which ones?

She starts to look at each bud on the tree, almost inspecting it.
Maybe there are some that are already damaged.

Footsteps are heard from offstage and Cado and Ketua talking.

KETUA
Cado, please. You have to get in the bunker.

CADO
I'm not hiding while everyone else prepares for attack. I'm doing the spell.

KETUA
Not this old myth again. Please, not right now Cado. Get yourself safe.

CADO
It's going to work. It's going to save us. And I am not going to let you stop me because you think I am

The sound of fluttering wings grows loud as the flock of Kamaji approach the Northern tribe. And then the sounds cease altogether indicating that they have landed. Maika's head is spinning trying to inspect each bud in the room. From above we hear a captain yell "ARCHERS AIM... LOOSE!" The Kamaji are at war.

Maika's hands and lips shake as she reaches for buds on the tree. She hesitates and then clasps two in her hand.

She leans in close and whispers to the buds.

MAIKA
Membela.

She closes her eyes, unable to look at what she is about to do. She plucks the two buds from the tree.

Cado enters the room.

MAIKA

I... I've gotten the ingredients.

CADO

Help me with the last one.

Cado hands her a sharp knife, and takes the brace off of his wings. He turns around, with his back toward Maika and he waits for her.

MAIKA

which one?

CADO

surprise me.

She holds his wing with one and the knife in the other. She begins to slowly cut at the joint. Cado screams. Quickly she hacks it off. He screams louder.

MAIKA

okay hurry, get in the dwelling, before you bleed too much.

He sits in the tree dwelling.

MAIKA

Are you okay?

CADO

Fine... the magic works fast.

His bleeding quickly stops.

Bring me the ingredients. Wrap it all in my wing

She wraps the soil, leaves, and buds in the wing. It looks like a fairy burrito.

MAIKA

Do you need the spell?

CADO

No I know it.

She hands him the bundle.

You have to go. Fly home, warn your tribe.

MAIKA

you can come with me. I'll just wait for you to finish the spell.

CADO

Go now. I will meet you there with others from my tribe.
You'll need some real fighters at the east tree soon.

Cado starts to hum a tune. Maika folds the spell and puts it in her pocket. She flies up and out of the library, looking back at Cado.

Flames surround the building. The Gorom move fast and it is much worse than Maika thought. She flies away from the Northern village, but when she turns to look back, it is under heavy attack. Bricks crash to the ground and fire swirls around the tall walls. She flies back toward it to try to help Cado. As she turns around the entire village bursts into flame. The Kamaj Tree spreads the fire through the entire construct, and the building basically explodes. Maika is thrown out of the sky, and lands into a tree, tumbling down to the jungle floor.

MAIKA

No!! Cado!

Maika sobs. She stands up and tries to fly. She screams, realizing that her left wing is terribly broken. The top half is bent over, and it hangs limp. She starts to run.

I have to get home... I have to get them out of this jungle...

She struggles running, covered in dirt, she tries to catch her breath.

Use your legs, Maika. *Use. Your. Legs.*

Lights down.

Black out.

End of play.

Legend of the Kamaj Tree

by

Lindsey Brinkman

Cast of Characters

- MAIKA: Though the Kamaji have no official leadership, Maika is the most trusted in the tribe to make important decisions on its behalf. Most Kamaji do not leave the community that surrounds their specific Kamaj tree, except to gather fruit which lies nearby, but Maika has traveled the jungle in hopes of creating a coalition to defend against the Gorom invasion.
- ADYA: Adya is inspired by the tree. She is young, not a child but not an elder or and expert like Dewi and Maika.
- DEWI: Dewi is devoted and loyal. She takes care of the Kamaji children and has not left the community in quite some time. Only Maika is a more trusted adviser to the East Kamaji than Dewi.
- SETTING: The Kamaj Tree of the Eastern Kamaji. Deep in the Dupan Jungle on the planet Aeire. Kamaji are winged, pixie-like creatures who usually never stray very far from their birth tree.

Spotlight opens on MAIKA. She sits on the ground, out of breath. The top of one of her wings hangs down, badly broken.

MAIKA

Use your legs, Maika. No time to rest. Use your *legs*.

Spotlight off. Maika exits.

Lights up.

ADYA and DEWI work to fortify a HUT in the small Kamaji village. TWO BOWS and QUIVERS sit carefully placed near the two Kamaji women. Everything in the village seems like a natural extension of the prominent KAMAJ TREE. There is a small dug-out at the base of the tree just big enough to fit a Kamaji if they are sitting down. Winter is ending and the Kamaj tree has small buds.

ADYA

Babies are supposed to fly after the spring bloom. If we lock them in here their wings may never develop. A whole year of Kamaji may never be able to fly.

DEWI

They will fly, but we need to make preparations.

Dewi hands Adya some materials.

Come on. We need to get at least one of these finished before night.

ADYA

Maika should be back soon?

DEWI

She sent a buzzfly from the Northern tree a few days ago. She better come back with something helpful.

ADYA

You're angry?

DEWI

She's been gone months this time.

ADYA

She has the hardest job in the village, it takes time.

DEWI

We don't *have* time.

ADYA

We are the farthest tree from the coast. What she is doing is important

DEWI

The Gorom are not slowing down. We may be far from the coast, but we cannot count on the depth of the jungle for protection anymore.

ADYA

Whenever she does get back, I'm going to ask if she will let me go with her on the next expedition.

DEWI

Hmmm

ADYA

What?

DEWI

Just peculiar. You're such a home body.

ADYA

I don't want to leave.

Adya puts her hand on the Kamaji tree, and takes a breath as if re-energized.

I feel lost whenever I'm away.

DEWI

All of us but Maika.

ADYA

The western Kamaji know how to fight. The Southern Kamaji are building weapons and defenses. If the Gorom make it to the center of the jungle... we can't protect this place. We're a gathering society. We don't know even know how to hunt.

DEWI

We don't need to hunt/

ADYA

/What I mean is: only a few of us know how to use these things.

She gestures towards the bows and arrows.

If we are going to win this fight, we have to learn, and we have to train.

Dewi starts working harder on the hut.

DEWI

Gorom don't fight, Adya, they destroy. Kamaji born this year will have it harder than any other. Our top priority is giving them a place where they can be safe.

ADYA

But how can we protect them before they bloom?

DEWI

We can only tend to the Kamaj tree. May she have enough magic to keep them alive until spring.

Maika enters. She is weak and covered in scrapes from the jungle brush. Her clothes are tattered and now both wings are badly damaged.

A light amount of smoke follows from where Maika enters.

DEWI

Oh my.. Adya, help me get her to the tree!

Adya and Dewi rush to Maika and lift her to the Kamaj tree.

MAIKA

Adya, fetch me my book.

Dewi lowers Maika into the tree's dug-out.

DEWI

You can't cast a spell now. Sit still and be with the tree. You will heal soon.

MAIKA

Gorom will be here soon.

Dewi takes a step back.

Adya hands Maika the book she requested. The cover is woven from thin vines, with the image of a Kamaj tree on the front.

DEWI

You've led them here. You've endangered our home!

MAIKA

I didn't lead them here, but they are coming this way.

Maika finds the page in her book that she was looking for and

examines it. She pulls a torn piece of paper from her pocket and holds it next to the page.

ADYA

We have to evacuate.

DEWI

We have to protect our tree. Our children.

MAIKA

I need dirt from the base of the tree. I need 3 leaves. I need 2 buds, and

Maika grabs her wing, the part that hangs down broken, and rips it off of her body. She does her best to stifle a scream.

Adya grabs the dirt and leaves, and stops when she looks at the buds.

DEWI

Adya you can't!

Adya looks at Maika.

ADYA

How do I pick which ones?

DEWI

We cannot sacrifice our buds! Not even for a protection spell!

MAIKA

Choose at random. None of them will survive this.

DEWI

How dare/ you!

MAIKA

/We are the last Kamaji tribe in the Dupan jungle. Our kind faces extinction. The jungle itself fades away.

DEWI

No

ADYA

The other tribes../

MAIKA

The Kamaji from the north and south, the three tribes in the west, they are all gone. Their trees gone with them. The Gorom move quickly and when they come they turn everything to sand.

(beat)

We must evacuate east to the Kematian mountains. I need two buds for a regeneration spell. To grow a new Kamaj tree.

ADYA

But the Kamaj trees are ancient. They are tied to the soul of planet Aeire. You can't just grow a new one.

MAIKA

I can and I need to do it now! It can only sprout its first root from inside another Kamaj tree. Cado from the North has been working on this spell his whole life. It is the only thing that can save the Kamaji race from immediate extinction.

DEWI

No. We can't evacuate. I won't. No Kamaji has ever been able to fly above the Kematian mountains. Many of our boldest have died trying. We should stay and defend our land, not just for the Kamaji, for the whole jungle!

MAIKA

Then we will walk. We will crawl across the mountains. The jungle is gone. Ours may be the last to burn, but our tree is doomed.

Adya, give me the buds.

Adya reaches her hand out and clasps two buds in one hand without plucking them from the tree.

DEWI

Adya, no!

Adya mouths a prayer, and plucks the two buds.

Maika wraps the buds, leaves, and soil in her torn piece of wing. She sings a tune without words, and the remaining jungle creatures join her.

ADYA

It's working.

(beat)

Dewi, help me gather everyone. We have to start moving.

DEWI

You can grow a new tree, but I will not leave these buds.

Smoke slithers through the jungle floor.

ADYA

You will die! There is no way to protect the buds. The Gorom are coming right now.

Adya starts walking and looks back at Dewi who is frozen still.

Dewi we have to go! We have to get our people to safety!

As Adya turns back away from Dewi, sparks start to flicker through the forest ground.

A large tree branch falls. Adya reaches for a bow and arrow. Dewi runs to Maika who is still singing.

DEWI

Maika, get up! We are going now.

Maika gets up and out of the tree, but her injuries cause her to move slowly.

A large branch crashes off of the Kamaj tree. It falls to the ground pinning down Adya's legs.

MAIKA

Go.

Maika hands the bundle to Dewi.

Run!

Maika collapses.

DEWI

Adya!

Dewi holds the bundle in one arm like a baby, and uses her other arm to free Adya.

Once free, Adya grabs her bow and fires a target offstage, but she is struck down upon her release.

Dewi crawls, and clings to the bundle as branches fall down around her.

The jungle flashes red.

The jungle is gone. There is only sand, and one very, very small Kamaj tree.

Lights down.

Blackout.

End of Play.