

## Character Assessment of Chief Matenge

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Matenge is the main antagonist in the story. He is the sub- chief and ruler of Golema Mmidi, but also the brother of paramount chief Sekoto. The sub-chief is regarded by the people as a tyrant. Matenge is a egotistical megalomaniac, who has inherited un-paid "servants" and land so therefore feels superior. It is this personality which leads him to fight with everybody who has the intelligence to threaten his position.

#### The conflicts with [Makhaya](#).

As Makhaya is the main protagonist, it is obvious that there would be a conflict between, him, the kind-hearted and the evil tyrant, Matenge. The conflict between the sympathetic Makhaya and the dictator Matenge, is the main theme in the book as Matenge is ruling the people in the way which made Makhaya leave South Africa. For more information about his past go to [Hints of Makhaya's Past](#). Matenge's persistence to rid himself of Makhaya is evident after Makhaya is called to Matenge mansion, and insults Matenge and Joas Tsepe.

Chief Matenge has a personality which causes a gut feeling, one which would indicate that he is after power and the ability to control; in other words evil. His sense of royalty is sickening, he treats all of his servants like slaves, and his one "friend", another man looking for power, Joas Tsepe like a dog. These actions evoke the feeling which, all hero versus evil, stories have; in this case Matenge versus Gilbert and Makhaya. The satire in [Chapter 5](#) helps to provoke the reader into despising this character.

The relationship between [Paramount Chief Sekoto](#) and Matenge has been turbulent. Chief Sekoto has a kind and caring personality, as demonstrated on page 52, this leads to a side- story between the two brothers and the conflict for both power, and for attention which Matenge seeks from his brother.

As the story continues Matenge's character degenerates, from the regal or kingly Matenge, on page 65, to the Matenge who was abandoned by his servants and then the guilt of mistreating people caused him to hang himself. This escape he makes, through suicide, is cowardly, just cowardly. He can't justify the reason why he has called Paulina, and when the whole town turns up, rather than face the humiliation, he hangs himself.

The inherited power of Matenge has caused him to believe that he is better than any other living being and therefore has a compulsive need to act in this manner, and put everybody else down accordingly. The need to seek attention creates a reliance on his servants and the average man and when the servants abandon him and all the villagers turn up for Paulina's trail, he finds himself abandoned and alone and his eyes are open to the monster he has become, this caused his depression to increase suddenly and then to commit suicide.