



# Joseph Lesibia

**Sukutan Village,  
Laikipia, Kenya**



This is my dog, called Danger. He helps to herd and to protect our livestock. This picture was taken when he was cooling off in the dam. In our community we believe that **the dog is our night watch at the Boma**; the dog helps us Morans to protect our home. If a lion or a hyena is approaching Danger will start barking in a special way so you will know when he has spotted a predator and when he has seen a human. He changes his barking for different things. He is an intelligent dog because he knows that he can't bark at an elephant because if he does the elephant would come charging and destroy the Boma.

I took these pictures to tell how we use

our trees. The left tree can be used for fencing. You can also remove the bark of the tree, leave it in boiling water for a while and as the water changes to purple you can use it as a medicine. So if you eat fatty food like a lot of meat you can use the bark tea to help you digest. During the dry season the right tree will bear fruit. We then pick the fruit and give it to the goats when there is no grass. The middle tree looks like an umbrella, called 'Rororoi'. It gives the livestock and us shelter from the sun. We remove the bark, grind it and apply it to wounds for both livestock and humans.



This picture is of my good friend. He is one of the best Morans I know. **We grew up together, went herding side by side and did our Moran training at the same time.** I trust him.

The Morans should not be below 13; you are normally around 18 to 20 when you become one. At a separate Boma they are trained by the Elders for some months before the initiation. During the training the boys will be wearing an animal skin to show that they are becoming Morans. The day before the circumcision everyone fetches water in calabashes. At 6 in the morning the ceremony starts. You follow a certain hierarchy depending on the rank of

your father. The water that you fetched the day before will be poured on your head and then you will be circumcised. **You have to be brave and not show that you are afraid.** Morans should not be cowards.

These pictures represent **three generations of cows**. The jawbone belonged to my favourite bull. When I pass the place where it is I stop for a moment to remember the bull. The bull died during the drought of 2007 due to a lack of pastures and water. It was one of many that died that year.

When I see the brown bull I remember his father. The calf is the third generation of my favourite bull. It is a very naughty calf.



There are competitions among the Morans. We dress up and sing. This happens during the green season. We remove the beads during the dry season to show that we are working hard. The job of a Moran is to look after the cattle and be **responsible for the security of the Boma**. We defend the Boma and the livestock from predators and cattle raiders.

I remember the conflict with the Pokot in 2007/2008. I was living away from the women in a Boma only for Morans. **The Pokot came and tried to steal our cattle at night.** We were awake so we heard them coming. We blew the horn to warn everyone of the danger and the Pokot disappeared. In the morning we saw the footprints of at least 100 people.



This is the nursery school. When I pass I stop and listen to what the children are being taught. I'm very interested to hear what they are learning because **I didn't go to school myself.** So I go there and listen, surprised that the children know so much that I never learnt.

