

Richard Turere: My invention that made peace with lions

http://www.ted.com/talks/richard_turere_a_peace_treaty_with_the_lions

This is where I live. I live in Kenya¹, at the south parts of the Nairobi National Park². Those are my dad's cows at the back, and behind the cows, that's the Nairobi National Park. Nairobi National Park is not fenced³ in the south widely, which means wild animals like zebras⁴ migrate⁵ out of the park freely. So predators⁶ like lions follow them, and this is what they do. They kill our livestock⁷. This is one of the cows which was killed at night, and I just woke up in the morning and I found it dead, and I felt so bad, because it was the only bull⁸ we had.

My community⁹, the Maasai¹⁰, we believe that we came from heaven with all our animals and all the land for herding¹¹ them, and that's why we value them so much. So I grew up hating lions so much. The morans are the warriors who protect our community and the livestock, and they're also upset about this problem. So they kill the lions. It's one of the six lions which were killed in Nairobi. And I think this is why the Nairobi National Park lions are few.

So a boy, from six to nine years old, in my community is responsible for his dad's cows, and that's the same thing which happened to me.

So I had to find a way of solving this problem. And the first idea I got was to use fire, because I thought lions were scared of fire. But I came to realize that that didn't really help, because it was even helping the lions to see through the cowshed¹². So I didn't give up. I continued. And a second idea I got was to use a scarecrow¹³. I was trying to trick the lions [into thinking]¹⁴ that I was standing near the cowshed. But lions are very clever. They will come the first day and they see the scarecrow, and they go back, but the second day, they'll come and they say, this thing is not moving here, it's

¹ 肯亞共和國，位於非洲東部，瀕臨印度洋

² 內羅畢國家公園

³ 用籬笆圍住

⁴ 斑馬

⁵ 隨季節而移居

⁶ 掠奪者，食肉動物。

⁷ 家畜

⁸ 公牛

⁹ 社區

¹⁰ 馬賽人 (Maasai)，是東部非洲現在依然活躍的，也是最著名的一個遊牧民族，人口將近 90 萬，主要活動範圍在肯亞的南部及坦尚尼亞的北部。

¹¹ 集中畜群；驅趕畜群

¹² 看清楚牛棚

¹³ 稻草人

¹⁴ 騙獅子

always here. So he jumps in and kills the animals. So one night, I was walking around the cowshed with a torch¹⁵, and that day, the lions didn't come. And I discovered that lions are afraid of a moving light. So I had an idea. Since I was a small boy, I used to work in my room for the whole day, and I even took apart¹⁶ my mom's new radio, and that day she almost killed me, but I learned a lot about electronics¹⁷. So I got an old car battery¹⁸, an indicator box¹⁹. It's a small device²⁰ I found in a motorcycle²¹, and it helps motorists²² when they want to turn right or left. It blinks²³. And I got a switch²⁴ where I can switch on the lights²⁵, on and off. And that's a small torch²⁶ from a broken flashlight²⁷.

So I set up everything. As you can see, the solar panel²⁸ charges the battery²⁹, and the battery supplies the power to the small indicator box. I call it a transformer³⁰. And the indicator box makes the lights flash³¹. As you can see, the bulbs³² face outside, because that's where the lions come from. And that's how it looks to lions when they come at night. The lights flash and trick the lions into thinking I was walking around the cowshed, but I was sleeping in my bed.

So I set it up in my home two years ago, and since then, we have never experienced any problem with lions. And my neighboring homes heard about this idea. One of them was this grandmother. She had a lot of her animals being killed by lions, and she asked me if I could put the lights for her. And I said, "Yes." So I put the lights. You can see at the back, those are the lion lights. Since now, I've set up seven homes around my community, and they're really working. And my idea is also being used now all over Kenya for scaring other predators like hyenas³³, leopards³⁴, and it's also being used to scare elephants away from people's farms.

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- 15 火把
16 支解
17 電子產品
18 電池
19 盒型指示器
20 裝置
21 摩托車
22 駕車人
23 閃光
24 開關
25 打開燈
26 噴燈
27 手電筒
28 太陽能板
29 幫電池充電
30 一種電子感應器件
31 閃亮
32 燈泡
33 鬣狗

Because of this invention, I was lucky to get a scholarship³⁵ in one of the best schools in Kenya, Brookhouse International School, and I'm really excited about this. My new school now is coming in and helping by fundraising³⁶ and creating an awareness³⁷. I even took my friends back to my community, and we're installing³⁸ the lights to the homes which don't have [any], and I'm teaching them how to put them.

So one year ago, I was just a boy in the savanna³⁹ grassland herding my father's cows, and I used to see planes flying over, and I told myself that one day, I'll be there inside. And here I am today. I got a chance to come by plane for my first time for TED. So my big dream is to become an aircraft⁴⁰ engineer and pilot⁴¹ when I grow up.

I used to hate lions, but now because my invention is saving my father's cows and the lions, we are able to stay with the lions without any conflict⁴². Ashê olên. It means in my language, thank you very much.

Chris Anderson: You have no idea how exciting it is to hear a story like yours. So you got this scholarship.

Richard Turere: Yep

CA: You're working on other electrical⁴³ inventions. What's the next one on your list?

RT: My next invention is, I want to make an electric fence.

CA: Electric fence?

RT: But I know electric fences are already invented, but I want to make mine.

CA: You already tried it once, right, and you -- RT: I tried it before, but I stopped because it gave me a shock.⁴⁴

CA: In the trenches⁴⁵. Richard Turere, you are something else⁴⁶. We're going to cheer you on every step of the way⁴⁷, my friend. Thank you so much.

³⁴ 豹子

³⁵ 獎學金

³⁶ 籌募基金

³⁷ 意識、覺醒

³⁸ 裝置

³⁹ 稀樹草原

⁴⁰ 飛機

⁴¹ 飛行員

⁴² 衝突

⁴³ 電器的

⁴⁴ 電擊

RT: Thank you.

⁴⁵ 「壕溝裡」「困境中」、「窘境」

⁴⁶ 了不起

⁴⁷ 在你每一步上幫你加油打氣