



## **The snake and the maiden**

The adventure continues. Today we travel to the heart of Africa - to the Uagadu region, where the Bambar tribe live.

Many years ago, Uagadu was one of the richest lands in the whole of Africa. But the land wasn't rich because people worked hard. No, it was because a giant river snake by the name of Bida, which lived in the river that crossed the land.

The seven tribes that lived in Uagadu all worshipped Bida. And who wouldn't? After all, the snake brought the rains that watered their cotton fields, vegetable gardens, and orchards.

Thanks to the rains, the people of Uagadu always had clothes to wear and plenty of food to eat. Peace reigned and the land prospered. In fact, Uagadu was almost heaven on earth.

In return for bringing the rains, Bida only asked the people of the region for one offering each spring. He wanted to eat the prettiest maiden in the whole land.

Each of the seven tribes took turns making the painful sacrifice demanded by the snake. And so it went on year after year until it was the turn of the Bambar tribe, the most warlike of the seven tribes.

When the time came, the tribal elders met to decide which girl should be sacrificed. After a lot of talk, the oldest man told the villagers that Sia had been chosen.

Sia was certainly the prettiest maiden in the whole Bambar tribe. She was 16 and had dark eyes and long curly hair gathered up with head bands. Her beauty had captivated the hearts of the young warriors of the tribe. Amadu was one of them.

He had fallen head over heels for the beautiful Sia. In fact, he was madly in love. That's why he couldn't believe his ears when he heard that Sia had been chosen to be sacrificed to Bida and he rebelled against this decision.

He found it so terribly unfair that he was prepared to do whatever it took to save the girl from being devoured by the snake.

And the best way to do this was to take on the terrible snake.

The night before the sacrifice, Amadu picked up his best spear and slipped out of the village unseen. He went to the river bank and hid among the bushes, close to the place where the giant snake dwelt.

He kept watch the whole night, being very careful not to make a sound.

When the sun rose, from his hiding spot Amadu saw the approaching procession of villagers and Sia, who was dressed in sacrificial robes.

She was placed on a wooden platform that had been built for the occasion on the river bank.

After a while, the snake reared its ugly head in the middle of the river, drawn by the sound of the drums and the ritual chanting of the villagers. "Bida, Bida, Bida...!"

The moment for the sacrifice had come.

The snake swam towards Sia, its jaws open wide.

"Bida, Bida...!" chanted the tribe.

But just as the snake was about to swallow the girl whole, Amadu rushed out from his hiding place and threw his spear with all his might.

Amadu had good aim. The boy's spear flew straight and true, piercing the snake's neck from one side to the other.

But though Bida was mortally wounded with the spear piercing his neck, he still summoned the strength to speak:

"You have slain me!" he hissed. "What have you done? Who will bring you the clouds and the rains? Who will water your cotton fields, vegetable gardens and orchards? What will you eat? How will you clothe yourselves?"

With those words, Bida died.

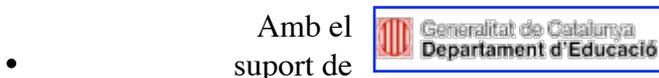
From that day forth, the clouds and the rains stopped coming to Uagadu. The river dried up and the land was gripped by drought. Uagadu became a desert.

The elders of the seven tribes accused Amadu and his beloved Sia of treason and banished them. But the young couple found another land and lived happily ever after.

Their love had changed the customs of the tribes of Uagadu for good.

With Bida dead, the people of the seven tribes of Uagadu had to fend for themselves and take their destiny into their own hands.

*Script: J.M. Hernandez Ripoll*



© CCRTV Interactiva, S.A. | Televisió de Catalunya, S.A.

- [Avís legal](#) |
- [Segell de qualitat](#) |
- [Contacta \*\*5480\*\*](#) |
- - [Idiomes](#)
    - [Català](#)
    - [Castellano](#)
    - [English](#)