



## The Rhino in the Paddock

*Tito Alai*

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## **The Rhino in the Paddock** Tito Alai

*The Rhino in the Paddock* by Tito Alai is a funny and affecting coming-of-age story set against a backdrop of great political and cultural change. It tells the tale of Kenya's postcolonial transition during the 1970s as seen through the eyes of an African boy who finds himself thrust into the alien environment of a British boarding school at the age of six.

Looking back on his childhood, Thwon paints a vivid picture of life on his parents' farm in rural Kenya—his carefree days, his brush with death from cholera, and the visit from his grandfather, when the old man passes his rhino identity to Thwon in accordance with the spirits of the ancestors.

The boy's cleverness, rugged emotional self-sufficiency, and instinctive approach to life will both help and hinder him, as his inherited rhino spirit runs up against the values of his colonial British instructors. But Thwon refuses to conform to the regimenting effects of the Western educational establishment, leading to often hilarious challenges and conflicts that escalate to a dramatic climax.

An engaging story told in a fresh voice, *The Rhino in the Paddock* is a vivacious contribution to the African cultural renaissance.

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