A: Runyankore–Rukiga Riddles

Rec: AM and DA\(^{1}\); tr: AM; perf. IK\(^{2}\) (Kikatsi, Ankole, 16 July 2005).
By permission of Isirairi Katuka

1. Ahi enkyerere ihisize ziri hariho encweera – Omugurusi oshweire omukazi muto
   Where there are ripe berries there is a cobra – An old man married to a young girl
2. Ka wabaire ori omutonzi notonda, ori omuhangi nohanga, akati k’omunyanja kakoomeraki? – Omwaana w’omufumu kufa
   You were a carver who carves things, a creator who creates things; then why did the tree in the middle of the lake dry up? – The death of a healer’s child
3. Footoora ab’orikufootoora nyowe torinfootoora! – Enjojo neribata eibaare
   Crush whomever you want to crush but you will never crush me! – An elephant stepping on a stone

Rec: AM; tr: AM; perf. AR\(^{3}\) (Rushere, Ankole, 1 Aug. 2005).
By permission of Aida Rubabinda.

4. Enkwanzi za muka Ishaza ku ishoba tishoboroka – Eshagama omu mate
   Once the beads for Ishaza’s wife they are entangled they can never be disentangled – Blood mixed with milk
5. Akainika omukama
   – Akashekye omu maarwa

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\(^{1}\) Douglas Aijuka, my assistant collector, worked with me in the field to record and transcribe these texts. He is a native of Rwanda–Orwera in Ankole.

\(^{2}\) Isirairi Katuka, performer and expert in Ankole oral tradition.

\(^{3}\) Aida Rubabinda, performer; she is a retired primary-school teacher resident in Nshwere, Nyabushozi.
– Akabaare omu nkaito
– Akasyo omu ishokye
– Ekisasi ky’enju
– That which makes a king stoop
– A straw in beer
– A stone in a shoe
– A shaving blade in the hair
– The door shade of a hut

6. Nyekoreire ensi ntahatsi eiguru – Enjara n’eiriho
   I am carrying the earth while holding heaven in my palm – Hunger and thirst

7. Tanga orwondo, rwataaha kyeeri – Omugurusi naaza kuteera ekiro
   Stop the mud, it has moved across the land – An old man looking for sex in the night

8. Rugaba ashendekyereize Nyamuhanga – Omukazi w’enda oshendekereize ondijo
   The Provider is escorting the Creator – A pregnant woman escorting another

9. Rugaba abumbatiire Nyamuhanga – Omukazi oine enda
   The Provider is hugging the Creator – A pregnant woman

10. Kuri zabaire enjoka zikaaturiire – Embazi z’enju
    Had they been snakes they would have eaten us – The rafters of a house

11. Amaarwa gahiire owa rwata! – Enkoni nungi omu mahwa
    Beer has been brewed at the idiot’s home! – A nice stick growing in a thorny bush

Rec: AM; tr. AM; perf. PRM (Wakiso, Buganda, 10 May 2005).
By permission of Patience Rubabinda Mushengyezi.

12. Kaatsiba twahwa – Akahanda kaza omu kitara
    It has closed and we are going to perish – A footpath to the granary

    The One-With-Small-Hands is the One-With-Strong-Resolve – A milk pot holder

14. Owa Ntimba nibayomba
    – Eshande omu rutookye
    – Enjura omu rutookye
    At Ntimba’s home they are shouting
    – Weaverbirds in a banana plantation
    – Rain in a banana plantation