



4K **TRIBE
VERSUS
PRIDE**

1 x 50 min. Written and directed by **Dereck Joubert**

4K, 5.1 + Stereo Executive producers: **Ivo Filatsch, Sabine Holzer**



TERRA MATER
Factual Studios

The Maasai people of Kenya have an ancient ritual. Their young men must prove their skills and courage — by killing a wild lion.

A Maasai warrior band of brothers runs out into the grassland, looking for their next conquest. The game is simple — gather as one around a lion, and move in. It's tribe versus one of the pride. Spears are thrown, the raging lion defends itself. Sometimes warriors are killed and maimed, but those are considered the brave ones. Trophies are taken home, stories become legends, bonds are strengthened, and the brotherhood gets stronger.

For thousands of years, this was an essential tradition for the Maasai to celebrate the rite of passage from boy to man. To earn the respect of his brothers, a young man had to engage in direct combat with a lion. His face would be painted in traditional colours, representing Gods, enemies, and the lions they honoured — yet still needed to kill.

But these times are over. Fifty years ago, an estimated 450,000 lions lived alongside the Maasai in Africa. Today, these numbers have changed dramatically. There are now two million Maasai — but only 20,000 lions left in the whole of Africa. As a means to stop the falling lion numbers, the Maasai have decided to change

one of their culture's most defining traditions. And as a result, the African lion, respected as one of the fiercest predators, gets another chance.

The Maasai elders proposed a different form of this rite of passage, a big and important step for them, as culture and rituals are not changed in a heartbeat. But this particular case was recognised as so important that it was agreed by all the Maasai.

The young men of the Maasai now compete in a different physical test — athletics. In 2008, the Maasai Olympics were founded, now taking place in Kenya biannually. The competition is organized in three levels — local, regional and ecosystem-wide competitions. Instead of killing, the young Maasai athletes are running, jumping and throwing spears.

Even more important, conservation education has become blended with sports. Today, the hunt is for medals — not lions. They are trophies of a different kind, but are regarded with the same importance and approval within the communities. Bravery can still be tested and expressed, while the lion, friend and foe of the Maasai, may continue to roam the African savannahs.



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