**CHAPTER ELEVEN**

Pastor Chiamaka goes through the Pinnacle Hotel’s security clearance formalities without difficulty and enters the dining room with ease. According to the program, heads of state should have had a small diner at the Pinnacle Hotel the day before the real banquet on the last day of their summit. That small dinner at the Pinnacle Hotel was cancelled without explanation. So Chiamaka’s intended plan to meet his president and ask him about Way Omega failed.

Chiamaka’s mobile phone rings, he picks it up. The caller on the other end is in jovial mood. It is the guide calling. The guide informs Pastor Chiamaka that he has scheduled a meeting that is soon to bring together Chiamaka and four other people alongside the guide. Pastor Chineke Chiamaka is invited to room 2059, central wing of the Seamount Hotel. This is the room where the guide is.

Meanwhile, as Comrade Melusi is in bed, flat on his back, day dreaming about his late wife, Ziliza, he reaches for his wallet and pulls out her photograph, his mobile phone rings. He answers. The caller reminds Melusi how he almost failed the security test when the security officers nearly uncovered him. Comrade Melusi is also invited to the very meeting in an hour’s time without fail.

Comrade Melusi returns to the wife’s photograph. In an apostrophe, he promises his late wife (photograph) that he will see to it that the person who killed her shall die to underscore this promise, he rises on his feet, stands at attention, executes a woobly salute and intones an oath. The following day, he swears he will have revenge.

In the meantime, as Prof. Kimani is brushing his teeth, readying for bed, the mirror before him shows he was loose everywhere; his belly hangs over his belt like a half empty sack. He tries to suck it in. It says put. His face had wrinkles like a dry prune. The folds of his skin ran on the left and right of his nose down to the left and right sides of the mouth. He tried to smile them away. They refuse to leave. The flesh under his chin hungs and shakes. Was getting old a process of wholesale loosening?

His mobile phone interrupts his analysis. Prof. Kimani invited in an hour’s time alongside others to room 2059, central wing of the Seamount Hotel. Elsewhere, Engineering Tahir is all set to turn in. his phone rings while he is still engrossed in thoughts about his eye. The caller had left a note for Engineer Tahir about an hour ago. He gets the note. The caller reminds him that they will meet in an hour’s time, room 2059, central wing.

The material day is here. Dr. Afolabi arrives early. Mr. Tad Longway had requested to come early to broach the meeting with him before it began. Other participants of the meeting arrive. When all have taken their seats, Mr. Longway rises since he knows them all and they didn’t know each other. He leads them through introduction. Mr. Longway turns to serious business. Dr. Afolabi then takes over to describe how the mission is to be executed. Dr. Afolabi introduces himself and tells them that he is the one previously known as guide. The four could not believe their eyes and ears.

Dr. Afolabi explains that he had been invited to the summit as an advisor for Way Omega, while the four have come as advocates of Path Alpha, a rival group. Such being the case, he feels he can not openly work with then without appearing to undermine his official role. He also discloses that he studied both Path Alpha and Way omega closely and feels duty-bound to balance his views on each of the documents in the advice he will give to the summit. He seeks for their forgiveness under the prevailing circumstances. They agree with him.

Dr. Afolabi shares that nations don’t host summits just for the sake of amusing foreign visitors and Gambia is no exception. They do so out of self-interest and their presidents themselves usually accept the honor of serving as a summit chair, but this time round Gambia’s president declines the honor because he expects the summit to turn bitter and the chair to end up pleasing some heads of state and displeasing others. Since he reckons he can serve his country’s interest best if he pleases all and displeases none.

Dr. Afolabi indicates that it’s important to take care of this unique situation because the new chair has, up his sleeves, a play he calls the Trick which is good for them. This play opens the door for Path Alpha. Dr. Afolabi proposes that they go and think about the whole thing so that the following day in the summit during the speaker’s microphone session, they raise the issue at hand.

**END OF CHAPTER ELEVEN**

**CHAPTER TWELVE**

The national anthem for Gambia, our homeland strikes. The Gambian president stands up and marches to the speaker’s microphone and seated before him are 49 fellow heads of state. He digs out from a breast pocket a prepared speech. He then reads it. In his short speech he averse that the tsk of the summit is to adopt a common growth strategy for their people: Way Omega. Then he officially opens the meeting.

H.E Miniko Menkiti, president of an important country is the chair after the Gambian president declined. Flanking the chair on his left and right are two other summiteers: Mr. Tiku Zinto on his right, a Minister of Development Planning in an Island country. Dr. Afolabi, here as an advisor is to help the summit along if asked to, is sitting on the chair’s left.

The chair calls Mr. Tiku Zinto as the first speaker. He underscores the need for change and is in support of Way Omega. Dr. Afolabi is the next speaker. In his seven minutes, he makes two requests. One, to share the seven minutes with the five friends and, two, he present another document he would say something about if he were given 15 minutes. The chair accepts the two requests despite protests from Mr. Tiku Zinto.

The document titled Path Alpha is distributed. Dr. Afolabi as he had requested shares his seven minutes with friends who want to greet the summit: Tad Longway, Chineke Chiamaka, Prof. Kimani, Engineer Tahir and Comrade Melusi. Comrade Melusi during his time to greet the summit does not speak, he marches to where the ruler of Zimbabwe is, he wants to avenge his wife Ziliza.

Pandemonium reigns in every corner of the summit hall. Only after great effort does the chair manage to restore order. Dr. Afolabi then concludes by saying he had read both documents: Way Omega and Path Alpha very carefully and his opinion is that Way Omega is big on ideas and Path Alpha small (on ideas), on the other hand he says Way Omega is weak on the implementation of those ideas while Path Alpha is strong.

The debate by the heads of state gets off at a sluggish start. The heads of state then take a break and come back after an hour. Some of the presidents who makes their contributions are Didier Bangoura, Simba Ibarosa, King Jemba Jemba IV, Biba Dibonso and Wasi Wasi Wesiga. The latter is able to spot brewing trouble and introduces a new idea: The trick. He promises two measures to relieve tension: adjournment of the session and two to ask a small group among the presidents i.e Simba Ibarosa, Yamlaza Gamlozi and Didier Bangoura to form a committee and see how best the summit can proceed from that point. The meeting is adjourned.

**END OF CHAPTER TWELVE**

**CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

Dr. Afolabi visits Fiona Mckenzie. He follows the directions he had been given by her. He is warmly welcomed. It’s evening. A few minutes later, there’s a knock at the door. Nicolas Sentinel comes in. Dr. Afolabi and Mr. Nicolas Sentinel meet face to face for the first time. Dr. Afolabi has been looking forward to this great opportunity. He thanks Nick for having given him the tip of the Trick that enabled him manage to put Path Alpha on summit’s agenda.

Dr. Afolabi says that African Presidents condemn trouble makers but ironically some of them are trouble makers. If the heads of state would have had prior knowledge of The Trick, they would have plotted mischief against it. Nick reveals that his silent listener has told him that a method for choosing between Way Omega and Path Alpha had been found and that the Method Committee has named it The Choice Matrix.

Dr. Afolabi has organized for observer status for Fiona McKenzie at the summit the following day and he says he can do the same for Nick. Nick accepts and says he could ask his boss Bob (Mr. Robert Manley) to tag along. They both leave, Nick first then followed by Dr. Afolabi.

**END OF CHAPTER THIRTEEN**