

SURA YA KUMI NA TISA

The last big rains of the year were falling. It was the time for treading red earth with which to build walls. It was not done earlier because the rains were too heavy and would have washed away the heap of trodden earth, and it could not be done later because harvesting would soon set in, and after that the dry season.

It was going to be Okonkwo's last

Mvua kubwa za mwisho za mwaka zilikuwa zikinyesha. Ulikuwa ni wakati wa kukanyaga udongo mwekundu wa kujenga kuta. Haikufanywa mapema zaidi kwa sababu mvua ilikuwa kubwa sana na ingesomba rundo la udongo uliokanyagwa, na haikuweza kufanywa baadaye kwa sababu uvunaji ungeanza upesi, na baada ya hapo msimu wa kiangazi.

Ilikuwa mavuno ya mwisho kwa

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harvest in Mbanta. The seven wasted and weary years were at last dragging to a close. Although he had prospered in his motherland Okonkwo knew that he would have prospered even more in Umuofia, in the land of his fathers where men were bold and warlike. In these seven years he would have climbed to the utmost heights. And so he regretted every day of his exile. His mother's kinsmen had been very kind to him, and he was grateful. But that did not alter the facts. He had called the first child born to him in exile Nneka--

"Mother is Supreme"--out of politeness to his mother's kinsmen. But two years later when a son was born he called him Nwofia--
"Begotten in the Wilderness."

As soon as he entered his last year in exile Okonkwo sent money to Obierika to build him two huts in his old compound where he and his family would live until he built more huts and the outside wall of his compound. He could not ask another man to build his own obi

Okonkwo huko Mbanta. Miaka saba iliyoharibika na kuchoka ilikuwa mwishowe inakaribia mwisho. Ingawa alikuwa amefanikiwa katika nchi ya mama yake Okonkwo alijua kwamba angefanikiwa zaidi huko Umuofia, katika nchi ya baba zake ambapo watu walikuwa wajasiri na wapenda vita. Katika miaka hii saba angepanda hadi urefu wa juu kabisa. Na hivyo alijuta kila siku ya uhamisho wake. Ndugu za mama yake walikuwa wamemtendea wema sana, naye alishukuru. Lakini hilo halikubadili ukweli. Alikuwa amemwita mtoto wa kwanza kuzaliwa kwake uhamishoni Nneka--

"Mama ndiye Mkuu" - kutokana na adabu kwa jamaa za mama yake. Lakini miaka miwili baadaye mtoto wa kiume alipozaliwa alimwita Nwofia--
"Mzaliwa wa Jangwani."

Mara tu alipoingia mwaka wake wa mwisho uhamishoni Okonkwo alituma pesa kwa Obierika ili amjengee vibanda viwili katika boma lake la zamani ambapo yeye na familia yake wangeishi hadi ajenge vibanda vingine na ukuta wa nje wa boma lake. Hakuweza

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for him, nor the walls of his compound. Those things a man built for himself or inherited from his father.

As the last heavy rains of the year began to fall, Obierika sent word that the two huts had been built and Okonkwo began to prepare for his return, after the rains. He would have liked to return earlier and build his compound that year before the rains stopped, but in doing so he would have taken something from the full penalty of seven years. And that could not be. So he waited impatiently for the dry season to come.

It came slowly. The rain became lighter and lighter until it fell in slanting showers. Sometimes the sun shone through the rain and a light breeze blew. It was a gay and airy kind of rain. The rainbow began to appear, and sometimes two rainbows, like a mother and her daughter, the one young and beautiful, and the other an old and faint shadow. The rainbow was called the python of the sky. Okonkwo called his three wives

kumwomba mtu mwingine amjengee obi yake mwenyewe, wala kuta za boma lake. Mambo hayo mtu alijijengea au kurithi kutoka kwa baba yake.

Mvua kubwa za mwisho za mwaka zilipoanza kunyesha, Obierika alituma taarifa kwamba vibanda hivyo viwili vimejengwa na Okonkwo akaanza kujiandaa kurudi, baada ya mvua kunyesha. Angetaka kurudi mapema na kujenga kiwanja chake mwaka huo kabla ya mvua kunyesha, lakini kwa kufanya hivyo angechukua kitu kutoka kwa adhabu kamili ya miaka saba. Na hiyo haiwezi kuwa. Kwa hiyo alingoja kwa hasira msimu wa kiangazi ufike.

Ilikuwa polepole. Mvua ilizidi kuwa nyepesi zaidi hadi ikanyesha kwenye manyunyu. Wakati fulani jua liliangaza kupitia mvua na upepo mwepesi ukavuma. Ilikuwa mvua ya mashoga na hewa. Upinde wa mvua ulianza kuonekana, na wakati mwingine upinde wa mvua mbili, kama mama na binti yake, mmoja mchanga na mzuri, na mwingine kivuli cha zamani na dhaifu. Upinde wa mvua uliitwa chatu wa

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and told them to get things together for a great feast. "I must thank my mother's kinsmen before I go," he said.

Ekwefi still had some cassava left on her farm from the previous year. Neither of the other wives had. It was not that they had been lazy, but that they had many children to feed. It was therefore understood that Ekwefi would provide cassava for the feast. Nwoye's mother and Ojiugo would provide the other things like smoked fish, palm-oil and pepper for the soup. Okonkwo would take care of meat and yams.

Ekwefi rose early on the following morning and went to her farm with her daughter, Ezinma, and Ojiugo's daughter, Obiageli, to harvest cassava tubers. Each of them carried a long cane basket, a machete for cutting down the soft cassava stem, and a little hoe for digging out the tuber. Fortunately, a light rain had fallen during the night and the soil would not be very hard.

angani.

Okonkwo aliwaita wake zake watatu na kuwaambia wakusanye mambo pamoja kwa ajili ya karamu kuu. "Lazima niwashukuru ndugu wa mama yangu kabla sijaenda," alisema. Ekwefi bado alikuwa na mihogo iliyobaki kwenye shamba lake kutoka mwaka uliopita. Hakuna hata mmoja wa wake wengine alikuwa. Si kwamba walikuwa wavivu, bali walikuwa na watoto wengi wa kulisha. Kwa hiyo ilieleweka kwamba Ekwefi angetoa mihogo kwa ajili ya sikukuu hiyo. Mama yake Nwoye na Ojiugo wangetoa vitu vingine kama samaki wa kuvuta, mafuta ya mawese na pilipili kwa ajili ya supu. Okonkwo angetunza nyama na viazi vikuu.

Ekwefi aliamka mapema asubuhi iliyofuata na kwenda shambani kwake na bintiye, Ezinma, na binti ya Ojiugo, Obiageli, kuvuna mizizi ya mihogo. Kila mmoja wao alibeba kikapu kirefu cha miwa, panga la kukata shina laini la muhogo, na jembe dogo la kuchimba kiazzi. Kwa bahati nzuri, mvua ndogo ilikuwa imenyeshwa usiku na udongo haungekuwa mgumu sana.

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"It will not take us long to harvest as much as we like," said Ekwefi.

"But the leaves will be wet," said Ezinma. Her basket was balanced on her head, and her arms folded across her breasts. She felt cold. "I dislike cold water dropping on my back. We should have waited for the sun to rise and dry the leaves."

Obiageli called her "Salt" because she said that she disliked water. "Are you afraid you may dissolve?"

The harvesting was easy, as Ekwefi had said. Ezinma shook every tree violently with a long stick before she bent down to cut the stem and dig out the tuber. Sometimes it was not necessary to dig. They just pulled the stump, and earth rose, roots snapped below, and the tuber was pulled out.

When they had harvested a sizable heap they carried it down in two trips to the stream, where every woman had a shallow well for fermenting her cassava.

"It should be ready in four days or

"Haitatuchukua muda kuvuna tupendavyo," alisema Ekwefi.

"Lakini majani yatakuwa mvua," Ezinma alisema. Kikapu chake kilikuwa kimesawazishwa juu ya kichwa chake, na mikono yake ikiwa imekunjwa kwenye matiti yake. Alihisi baridi. "Sipendi maji baridi yakinidondokea mgongoni. Tungesubiri jua lichomoze na kukausha majani."

Obiageli alimwita "Chumvi" kwa sababu alisema kwamba hapendi maji. "Je, unaogopa unaweza kufuta?"

Uvunaji ulikuwa rahisi, kama Ekwefi alisema. Ezinma alitikisa kila mti kwa nguvu kwa kijiti kirefu kabla ya kuinama kukata shina na kuchimba kiazzi. Wakati mwingine haikuwa lazima kuchimba. Walichota tu kisiki, ardhi ikainuka, mizizi ikakatwa chini, na mizizi ikatolewa.

Walipovuna lundo kubwa walilibeba chini kwa safari mbili hadi kwenye kijito, ambapo kila mwanamke alikuwa na kisima kifupi cha kuchachusha mihogo yake.

"Inapaswa kuwa tayari ndani ya

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even three," said Obiageli. "They are young tubers."

"They are not all that young," said Ekwefi. "I planted the farm nearly two years ago. It is a poor soil and that is why the tubers are so small."

Okonkwo never did things by halves. When his wife Ekwefi protested that two goats were sufficient for the feast he told her that it was not her affair.

"I am calling a feast because I have the wherewithal. I cannot live on the bank of a river and wash my hands with spittle. My mother's people have been good to me and I must show my gratitude."

And so three goats were slaughtered and a number of fowls. It was like a wedding feast. There was foo-foo and yam pottage, egusi soup and bitter-leaf soup and pots and pots of palm-wine.

All the umunna were invited to the feast, all the descendants of Okolo, who had lived about two hundred years before. The oldest member

siku nne au hata tatu," alisema Obiageli. "Ni mizizi michanga."

"Wote sio wachanga," Ekwefi alisema. "Nilipanda shamba karibu miaka miwili iliyopita. Ni udongo duni na ndiyo maana mizizi ni midogo."

Okonkwo hakuwahi kufanya mambo kwa nusu. Mkewe Ekwefi alipopinga kwamba mbuzi wawili walitosha kwa karamu hiyo, alimweleza kuwa halikuwa jambo lake.

"Ninaitisha karamu kwa sababu nina uwezo. Siwezi kuishi kando ya mto na kunawa mikono kwa mate. Watu wa mama yangu wamekuwa wazuri kwangu na lazima nionyeshe shukrani zangu."

Na hivyo mbuzi watatu walichinjwa na idadi ya ndege. Ilikuwa kama karamu ya harusi. Kulikuwa na vyakula vya foo-foo na viazi vikuu, supu ya egusi na supu ya majani machungu na sufuria na sufuria za mvinyo wa mawese.

Umunna wote walialikwa kwenye karamu hiyo, wazao wote wa Okolo, ambao walikuwa wameishi karibu miaka mia mbili kabla.

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of this extensive family was Okonkwo's uncle, Uchendu. The kola nut was given him to break, and he prayed to the ancestors. He asked them for health and children. "We do not ask for wealth because he that has health and children will also have wealth. We do not pray to have more money but to have more kinsmen. We are better than animals because we have kinsmen. An animal rubs its itching flank against a tree, a man asks his kinsman to scratch him." He prayed especially for Okonkwo and his family. He then broke the kola nut and threw one of the lobes on the ground for the ancestors.

As the broken kola nuts were passed round, Okonkwo's wives and children and those who came to help them with the cooking began to bring out the food. His sons brought out the pots of palm-wine. There was so much food and drink that many kinsmen whistled in surprise. When all was laid out, Okonkwo rose to speak.

"I beg you to accept this little kola," he said. "It is not to pay you

Mshiriki mkubwa zaidi wa familia hii kubwa alikuwa mjomba wa Okonkwo, Uchendu. Kola nut alipewa kuvunja, na aliomba kwa mababu. Aliwauliza afya na watoto. "Hatuombi mali kwa sababu mwenye afya na watoto pia atakuwa na mali, hatuombi kuwa na fedha nyingi bali kuwa na ndugu wengi zaidi, sisi ni bora kuliko wanyama kwa sababu tuna jamaa, mnyama anasugua ubavu wake wa kuwashwa. mti, mtu anamwomba jamaa yake amkwaruze." Alisali hasa kwa Okonkwo na familia yake. Kisha akavunja nati ya kola na akatupa lobe moja chini kwa mababu.

Wakati kokwa zilizovunjika zikipitishwa, wake na watoto wa Okonkwo na wale waliokuja kuwasaidia kupika walianza kuleta chakula. Wanawe wakaleta vyungu vya divai ya mitende. Kulikuwa na vyakula na vinywaji vingi hivi kwamba ndugu wengi walipiga miluzi kwa mshangao. Yote yalipowekwa wazi, Okonkwo aliinuka na kuzungumza.

"Nakuomba ukubali kola hii ndogo," alisema. "Siyo kukulipa

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back for all you did for me in these seven years. A child cannot pay for its mother's milk. I have only called you together because it is good for kinsmen to meet."

Yam pottage was served first because it was lighter than foo-foo and because yam always came first. Then the foo-foo was served. Some kinsmen ate it with egusi soup and others with bitter-leaf soup. The meat was then shared so that every member of the umunna had a portion. Every man rose in order of years and took a share. Even the few kinsmen who had not been able to come had their shares taken out for them in due term.

As the palm-wine was drunk one of the oldest members of the umunna rose to thank Okonkwo: "If I say that we did not expect such a big feast I will be suggesting that we did not know how openhanded our son, Okonkwo, is. We all know him, and we expected a big feast. But it turned out to be even bigger than we expected. Thank you. May all you took out return again tenfold.

kwa yote uliyonifanyia katika miaka hii saba. Mtoto hawezi kulipa maziwa ya mama yake. Nimewaita tu pamoja kwa sababu ni vizuri kwa jamaa kukutana."

Kianzi kikuu kilitolewa kwanza kwa sababu kilikuwa chepesi kuliko foo-foo na kwa sababu viazi vikuu vilikuja kwanza kila mara. Kisha foo-foo ikatolewa. Baadhi ya jamaa walikula na supu ya egusi na wengine kwa supu ya majani machungu. Kisha nyama iligawanywa ili kila mwanachama wa umunna apate sehemu. Kila mtu aliinuka kwa mpangilio wa miaka na kuchukua sehemu. Hata wale jamaa wachache ambao hawakuweza kufika walichukuliwa hisa zao kwa muda ufao.

Wakati mvinyo wa mitende ukilewa mmoja wa washiriki wa zamani zaidi wa umunna aliinuka na kumshukuru Okonkwo: "Nikisema kwamba hatukutarajia karamu kubwa kama hii, nitakuwa nikipendekeza kwamba hatukujua jinsi mtoto wetu, Okonkwo, alivyo mkarimu. Sote tunamfahamu, na tulitarajia karamu kubwa. Lakini ikawa kubwa zaidi kuliko tulivyotarajia. Asante. Wote

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It is good in these days when the younger generation consider themselves wiser than their sires to see a man doing things in the grand, old way. A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to save them from starving. They all have food in their own homes. When we gather together in the moonlit village ground it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. You may ask why I am saying all this. I say it because I fear for the younger generation, for you people." He waved his arm where most of the young men sat. "As for me, I have only a short while to live, and so have Uchendu and Unachukwu and Emefo. But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice. And what is the result? An abominable religion has settled among you. A man can now leave his father and his brothers. He can curse the gods of his fathers and his ancestors, like a hunter's dog that suddenly goes mad and turns on his master. I fear for you, I fear for the clan."

mliotoka nje mrudi tena mara kumi. Ni vyema katika siku hizi ambapo kizazi kipya kinajiona kuwa wenye busara zaidi. kuliko mabwana zao kumuona mtu anafanya mambo kwa ustaarabu wa kizamani. Mtu anayewaita jamaa zake kwenye karamu hafanyi hivyo ili kuwaokoa na njaa. Wote wana chakula majumbani mwao. Tunapokusanyika pamoja katika ardhi ya kijiji chenye mwanga wa mbalamwezi sio kwa sababu ya mwezi, kila mtu anaweza kuiona kwenye kiwanja chake. Tunakusanyika kwa sababu ni vizuri kwa jamaa kufanya hivyo. Unaweza kuuliza kwa nini nasema haya. Nasema kwa sababu ninaogopa. kwa kizazi kipya, kwa ajili yenu." Alipunga mkono pale ambapo vijana wengi walikaa. "Na mimi nina muda mfupi tu wa kuishi, na pia Uchendu na Unachukwu na Emefo. Lakini nawaogopa nyinyi vijana kwa sababu hamuelewi jinsi uhusiano wa jamaa una nguvu. Hamjui ni nini. kusema kwa sauti moja. Na matokeo yake ni nini? Dini chukizo imekaa kati yenu. Mtu sasa anaweza kumwacha baba yake na ndugu zake. Anaweza kulaani miungu ya baba zake na

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He turned again to Okonkwo and said, "Thank you for calling us together."

babu zake, kama mbwa wa mwindaji aendaye ghafla. wazimu na kumgeukia bwana wake. Nakuogopa, naogopa kwa ajili ya ukoo. Akamgeukia tena Okonkwo na kusema, "Asante kwa kutuita pamoja."