

SURA YA SABA

For three years Ikemefuna lived in Okonkwo's household and the elders of Umuofia seemed to have forgotten about him. He grew rapidly like a yam tendril in the rainy season, and was full of the sap of life. He had become wholly absorbed into his new family. He was like an elder brother to Nwoye, and from the very first seemed to have kindled a new fire in the younger boy. He made him

Kwa miaka mitatu Ikemefuna aliishi katika nyumba ya Okonkwo na wazee wa Umuofia walionekana kumsahau. Alikua upesi kama mwavuli katika msimu wa mvua, na alikuwa amejaa utomvu wa maisha. Alikuwa amejishughulisha kabisa na familia yake mpya. Alikuwa kama ndugu mkubwa kwa Nwoye, na tangu mwanzo kabisa alionekana kuwasha moto mpya kwa mvulana

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feel grown-up, and they no longer spent the evenings in his mother's hut while she cooked, but now sat with Okonkwo in his obi, or watched him as he tapped his palm tree for the evening wine. Nothing pleased Nwoye now more than to be sent for by his mother or another of his father's wives to do one of those difficult and masculine tasks in the home, like splitting wood, or pounding food. On receiving such a message through a younger brother or sister, Nwoye would feign annoyance and grumble aloud about women and their troubles.

Okonkwo was inwardly pleased at his son's development, and he knew it was due to Ikemefuna. He wanted Nwoye to grow into a tough young man capable of ruling his father's household when he was dead and gone to join the ancestors.

He wanted him to be a prosperous man, having enough in his barn to feed the ancestors with regular sacrifices. And so he was always happy when he heard him grumbling about women. That

mdogo. Alimfanya ajisikie mtu mzima, na hawakukaa tena jioni kwenye kibanda cha mamake alipokuwa akipika, lakini sasa aliketi na Okonkwo kwenye obi yake, au walimtazama alipokuwa akipiga mtende wake kwa divai ya jioni. Hakuna kilichomfurahisha Nwoye sasa zaidi ya kutumwa na mama yake au mke mwingine wa baba yake kufanya moja ya kazi hizo ngumu na za kiume nyumbani, kama kupasua kuni, au kupiga chakula. Alipopokea ujumbe kama huo kupitia kwa kaka au dada mdogo, Nwoye alijifanya kuwa ameuadhika na kunung'unika kwa sauti kuhusu wanawake na matatizo yao.

Okonkwo alifurahishwa sana na maendeleo ya mwanawe, na alijua ni kwa sababu ya Ikemefuna. Alitaka Nwoye akue na kuwa kijana mgumu na mwenye uwezo wa kutawala nyumba ya babake alipokuwa amekufa na kwenda kujiunga na mababu.

Alitaka awe mtu mwenye mafanikio, mwenye vitu vya kutosha katika ghala lake ili kuwalisha mababu kwa dhabihu za kawaida. Na kwa hivyo alifurahi kila wakati alipomsikia

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showed that in time he would be able to control his women-folk. No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (and especially his women) he was not really a man. He was like the man in the song who had ten and one wives and not enough soup for his foo-foo.

So Okonkwo encouraged the boys to sit with him in his obi, and he told them stories of the land--masculine stories of violence and bloodshed. Nwoye knew that it was right to be masculine and to be violent, but somehow he still preferred the stories that his mother used to tell, and which she no doubt still told to her younger children--stories of the tortoise and his wily ways, and of the bird eneke-nti-oba who challenged the whole world to a wrestling contest and was finally thrown by the cat. He remembered the story she often told of the quarrel between Earth and Sky long ago, and how Sky withheld rain for seven years, until crops withered and the dead could not be buried because the hoes

akinung'unika juu ya wanawake. Hiyo ilionyesha kwamba baada ya muda angeweza kudhibiti wanawake-wake. Haijalishi jinsi mwanamume alivyokuwa na ustawi, kama hakuwa na uwezo wa kuwatawala wanawake wake na watoto wake (na hasa wanawake wake) hakuwa mtu wa kweli. Alikuwa kama mtu katika wimbo huo ambaye alikuwa na wake kumi na mmoja na supu haitoshi kwa foo-foo wake.

Kwa hivyo Okonkwo akawahimiza wavulana kuketi naye katika obi yake, na akawaambia hadithi za ardhi--hadithi za kiume za vurugu na umwagaji damu. Nwoye alijua kwamba ilikuwa sawa kuwa mwanamume na kuwa mjeuri, lakini kwa namna fulani bado alipendelea hadithi ambazo mama yake alikuwa akisimulia, na ambazo bila shaka bado aliwaambia watoto wake wadogo - hadithi za kobe na njia zake za ujanja. na ya ndege eneke-nti-oba ambaye alishindana na dunia nzima kwenye mashindano ya mieleka na hatimaye kutupwa na paka. Alikumbuka hadithi ambayo mara nyingi alisimulia juu ya ugomvi kati ya Dunia na Anga

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broke on the stony Earth. At last Vulture was sent to plead with Sky, and to soften his heart with a song of the suffering of the sons of men. Whenever Nwoye's mother sang this song he felt carried away to the distant scene in the sky where Vulture, Earth's emissary, sang for mercy. At last Sky was moved to pity, and he gave to Vulture rain wrapped in leaves of coco-yam. But as he flew home his long talon pierced the leaves and the rain fell as it had never fallen before. And so heavily did it rain on Vulture that he did not return to deliver his message but flew to a distant land, from where he had espied a fire. And when he got there he found it was a man making a sacrifice. He warmed himself in the fire and ate the entrails.

That was the kind of story that Nwoye loved. But he now knew that they were for foolish women and children, and he knew that his father wanted him to be a man. And so he feigned that he no

zamani, na jinsi Anga ilizuia mvua kwa miaka saba, hadi mimea ikauka na wafu hawakuweza kuzikwa kwa sababu majembe yalivunjika kwenye Dunia yenye mawe. Hatimaye Tai alitumwa kumwomba Sky, na kulainisha moyo wake kwa wimbo wa mateso ya wana wa watu. Kila mara mama Nwoye alipoimba wimbo huu alihisi kubebwa hadi eneo la mbali angani ambapo Vulture, mjumbe wa Dunia, aliimba kwa rehema. Mwishowe, Anga alihurumiwa, na akampa Vulture mvua iliyofunikwa kwa majani ya coco-yam. Lakini alipokuwa akiruka nyumbani kwa mkuki wake mrefu ulitoboa majani na mvua ikanyesha jinsi haikuwahi kunyesha. Na mvua kubwa ikanyesha juu ya Tai hivi kwamba hakurudi kutoa ujumbe wake bali akaruka hadi nchi ya mbali, ambako alikuwa ameona moto. Na alipofika pale akakuta ni mtu anatoa sadaka. Akaota moto na kula matumbo.

Hiyo ilikuwa aina ya hadithi ambayo Nwoye alipenda. Lakini sasa alijua kwamba zilikuwa za wanawake na watoto wapumbavu, na alijua kwamba baba yake alitaka awe mwanamume. Na kwa

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longer cared for women's stories. And when he did this he saw that his father was pleased, and no longer rebuked him or beat him. So Nwoye and Ikemefuna would listen to Okonkwo's stories about tribal wars, or how, years ago, he had stalked his victim, overpowered him and obtained his first human head. And as he told them of the past they sat in darkness or the dim glow of logs, waiting for the women to finish their cooking. When they finished, each brought her bowl of foo-foo and bowl of soup to her husband. An oil lamp was lit and Okonkwo tasted from each bowl, and then passed two shares to Nwoye and Ikemefuna.

In this way the moons and the seasons passed. And then the locusts came. It had not happened for many a long year. The elders said locusts came once in a generation, reappeared every year for seven years and then disappeared for another lifetime. They went back to their caves in a distant land, where they were guarded by a race of stunted men.

hivyo alijifanya kuwa hajali tena hadithi za wanawake. Na alipofanya hivyo aliona kwamba baba yake alikuwa amependeza, na hakumkemea tena au kumpiga. Kwa hivyo Nwoye na Ikemefuna wangesikiliza hadithi za Okonkwo kuhusu vita vya kikabila, au jinsi, miaka iliyopita, alivyomvizia mhasiriwa wake, kumshinda na kupata kichwa chake cha kwanza cha kibinadamu. Na kama alivyowaambia siku za nyuma walikaa gizani au mwanga hafifu wa magogo, wakingoja wanawake wamalize kupika. Walipomaliza, kila mmoja alileta bakuli lake la foo-foo na bakuli la supu kwa mumewe. Taa ya mafuta iliwashwa na Okonkwo akaonja kutoka kwa kila bakuli, kisha akapitisha hisa mbili kwa Nwoye na Ikemefuna.

Kwa njia hii miezi na misimu ilipita. Ndipo nziige wakaja. Haikuwa imetokea kwa miaka mingi kwa muda mrefu. Wahenga walisema nziige walikuja mara moja katika kizazi, walijitokeza tena kila mwaka kwa miaka saba na kisha kutoweka kwa maisha mengine. Walirudi kwenye mapango yao katika nchi ya mbali, ambako walilindwa na jamii ya

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And then after another lifetime these men opened the caves again and the locusts came to Umuofia.

They came in the cold harmattan season after the harvests had been gathered, and ate up all the wild grass in the fields.

Okonkwo and the two boys were working on the red outer walls of the compound. This was one of the lighter tasks of the after-harvest season. A new cover of thick palm branches and palm leaves was set on the walls to protect them from the next rainy season. Okonkwo worked on the outside of the wall and the boys worked from within. There were little holes from one side to the other in the upper levels of the wall, and through these Okonkwo passed the rope, or tie-tie, to the boys and they passed it round the wooden stays and then back to him, - and in this way the cover was strengthened on the wall.

The women had gone to the bush to collect firewood, and the little children to visit their playmates in

watu waliodumaa. Na kisha baada ya maisha mengine watu hawa walifungua tena mapango na nzige wakaja Umuofia.

Walikuja katika msimu wa baridi wa harmattan baada ya mavuno kukusanywa, na wakala nyasi zote za kondeni.

Okonkwo na wavulana wawili walikuwa wakifanya kazi kwenye kuta nyekundu za nje za boma. Hii ilikuwa mojawapo ya kazi nyepesi za msimu wa baada ya kuvuna. Kifuniko kipya cha matawi mazito ya mitende na majani ya mitende kiliwekwa kwenye kuta ili kuwalinda kutokana na msimu ujao wa mvua. Okonkwo alifanya kazi nje ya ukuta na wavulana walifanya kazi kutoka ndani. Kulikuwa na mashimo madogo kutoka upande mmoja hadi mwingine katika ngazi za juu za ukuta, na kupitia hayo Okonkwo alipitisha kamba, au tie-tie, kwa wavulana na wakaipitisha pande zote za mbao na kisha kurudi kwake, - na. kwa njia hii kifuniko kiliimarishwa kwenye ukuta.

Wanawake walikuwa wameenda porini kutafuta kuni, na watoto wadogo kuwatembelea wenzao wa

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the neighbouring compounds. The harmattan was in the air and seemed to distill a hazy feeling of sleep on the world. Okonkwo and the boys worked in complete silence, which was only broken when a new palm frond was lifted on to the wall or when a busy hen moved dry leaves about in her ceaseless search for food.

And then quite suddenly a shadow fell on the world, and the sun seemed hidden behind a thick cloud. Okonkwo looked up from his work and wondered if it was going to rain at such an unlikely time of the year. But almost immediately a shout of joy broke out in all directions, and Umuofia, which had dozed in the noon-day haze, broke into life and activity.

"Locusts are descending," was joyfully chanted everywhere, and men, women and children left their work or their play and ran into the open to see the unfamiliar sight. The locusts had not come for many, many years, and only the old people had seen them

kucheza katika viwanja vya jirani. Harmattan ilikuwa angani na ilionekana kutuliza hali ya usingizi juu ya ulimwengu. Okonkwo na wavulana walifanya kazi kwa ukimya kamili, ambao ulivunjwa tu wakati kipande kipya cha mitende kilipoinuliwa hadi ukutani au wakati kuku mwenye shughuli nyingi alipohamisha majani makavu katika utafutaji wake usiokoma wa kutafuta chakula.

Na kisha ghafla kivuli kilianguka juu ya ulimwengu, na jua likaonekana limefichwa nyuma ya wingu nene. Okonkwo alitazama juu kutoka kwa kazi yake na kujiuliza ikiwa mvua ingenyesha kwa wakati usiowezekana wa mwaka. Lakini karibu mara moja kelele za furaha zilisikika kila upande, na Umuofia, ambayo ilikuwa imesinzia kwenye ukungu wa mchana, ilianza maisha na shughuli.

"Nzige wanashuka," iliimbwa kwa furaha kila mahali, na wanaume, wanawake na watoto waliacha kazi zao au mchezo wao na kukimbilia nje ili kuona tukio lisilojulikana. Nzige hao hawakuwa wamefika kwa miaka mingi sana, na wazee tu ndio

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before.

At first, a fairly small swarm came. They were the harbingers sent to survey the land. And then appeared on the horizon a slowly-moving mass like a boundless sheet of black cloud drifting towards Umuofia. Soon it covered half the sky, and the solid mass was now broken by tiny eyes of light like shining star dust. It was a tremendous sight, full of power and beauty.

Everyone was now about, talking excitedly and praying that the locusts should camp in Umuofia for the night. For although locusts had not visited Umuofia for many years, everybody knew by instinct that they were very good to eat. And at last the locusts did descend. They settled on every tree and on every blade of grass, they settled on the roofs and covered the bare ground. Mighty tree branches broke away under them, and the whole country became the brown-earth colour of the vast, hungry swarm.

Many people went out with

walikuwa wamewaona hapo awali.

Mara ya kwanza, kundi ndogo kabisa lilikuja. Walikuwa ni wapambe waliotumwa kuchunguza ardhi. Na kisha ikatokea kwenye upeo wa macho misa inayosonga taratibu kama karatasi isiyo na kikomo ya wingu jeusi likielea Umuofia. Muda si muda ilifunika nusu ya anga, na ile misa mnene sasa ikavunjwa na macho madogo ya nuru kama vumbi la nyota inayong'aa. Ilikuwa taswira ya ajabu, iliyojaa nguvu na uzuri.

Kila mtu alikuwa sasa hivi, akiongea kwa furaha na kuomba kwamba nziye wakae huko Umuofia kwa usiku huo. Kwani ingawa nziye walikuwa hawajatembelea Umuofia kwa miaka mingi, kila mtu alijua kwa silika kwamba walikuwa wazuri sana kula. Na mwishowe wale nziye wakashuka. Walikaa juu ya kila mti na juu ya kila majani, walikaa juu ya paa na kufunika ardhi tupu. Matawi makubwa ya miti yalivunjika chini yao, na nchi nzima ikawa rangi ya kahawia-ya ardhi ya kundi kubwa la njaa.

Watu wengi walitoka na vikapu

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baskets trying to catch them, but the elders counselled patience till nightfall. And they were right. The locusts settled in the bushes for the night and their wings became wet with dew. Then all Umuofia turned out in spite of the cold harmattan, and everyone filled his bags and pots with locusts. The next morning they were roasted in clay pots and then spread in the sun until they became dry and brittle. And for many days this rare food was eaten with solid palm-oil.

Okonkwo sat in his obi crunching happily with Ikemefuna and Nwoye, and drinking palm-wine copiously, when Ogbuefi Ezeudu came in. Ezeudu was the oldest man in this quarter of Umuofia. He had been a great and fearless warrior in his time, and was now accorded great respect in all the clan. He refused to join in the meal, and asked Okonkwo to have a word with him outside. And so they walked out together, the old man supporting himself with his stick. When they were out of earshot, he said to Okonkwo: "That boy calls you father. Do not bear a hand in his death." Okonkwo was surprised, and was

wakijaribu kuwakamata, lakini wazee wakashauri wawe na subira hadi usiku. Na walikuwa sahihi. Nzige walikaa vichakani kwa usiku huo na mabawa yao yakalowa umande. Kisha Umuofia wote walijitokeza licha ya baridi kali, na kila mtu akajaza mifuko yake na vyungu vyake na nzige. Asubuhi iliyofuata zilichomwa kwenye vyungu vya udongo na kisha kutandazwa kwenye jua hadi zikakauka na kukauka. Na kwa siku nyingi chakula hiki adimu kililiwa kwa mafuta ya mawese.

Okonkwo alikaa kwenye obi yake akigongana kwa furaha na Ikemefuna na Nwoye, na akinywa mvinyo wa mawese kwa wingi, wakati Ogbuefi Ezeudu alipoingia. Ezeudu alikuwa mtu mzee zaidi katika robo hii ya Umuofia. Alikuwa shujaa mkuu na asiye na woga katika wakati wake, na sasa alipewa heshima kubwa katika ukoo wote. Alikataa kujumuika kwenye chakula, na akamwomba Okonkwo azungumze naye nje. Na hivyo wakatoka pamoja, mzee akijiegemeza kwa fimbo yake. Walipokuwa wamezimika, alimwambia Okonkwo: "Mvulana huyo anakuita baba. Usichukue mkono katika kifo chake."

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about to say something when the old man continued: "Yes, Umuofia has decided to kill him. The Oracle of the Hills and the Caves has pronounced it. They will take him outside Umuofia as is the custom, and kill him there. But I want you to have nothing to do with it. He calls you his father."

The next day a group of elders from all the nine villages of Umuofia came to Okonkwo's house early in the morning, and before they began to speak in low tones Nwoye and Ikemefuna were sent out. They did not stay very long, but when they went away Okonkwo sat still for a very long time supporting his chin in his palms. Later in the day he called Ikemefuna and told him that he was to be taken home the next day. Nwoye overheard it and burst into tears, whereupon his father beat him heavily. As for Ikemefuna, he was at a loss. His own home had gradually become very faint and distant. He still missed his mother and his sister and would be very glad to see them. But somehow he knew he was not going to see them. He remembered once when men had

Okonkwo alishangaa, akataka kusema jambo ndipo mzee huyo aliendelea: "Ndiyo, Umuofia ameamua kumuua. Oracle of the Hills and the Caves imetamka. Watamtoa nje ya Umuofia kama ilivyo desturi, na muue huko. Lakini nataka usiwe na uhusiano wowote nayo. Anakuita baba yake."

Siku iliyofuata kundi la wazee kutoka vijiji vyote tisa vya Umuofia walikuja nyumbani kwa Okonkwo asubuhi na mapema, na kabla hawajaanza kuzungumza kwa sauti ya chini Nwoye na Ikemefuna walitumwa nje. Hawakukaa sana, lakini walipoondoka Okonkwo alitulia tuli kwa muda mrefu sana akiegemeza kidevu chake kwenye viganja vyake. Baadaye mchana alimpigia simu Ikemefuna na kumwambia kwamba angepelekwa nyumbani siku iliyofuata. Nwoye aliposikia hivyo akabubujikwa na machozi, ambapo baba yake alimpiga sana. Kuhusu Ikemefuna, alikuwa amepoteza. Nyumba yake mwenyewe ilikuwa hatua kwa hatua kuwa dhaifu sana na mbali. Bado alimkumbuka mama yake na dada yake na angefurahi sana

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talked in low tones with his father, and it seemed now as if it was happening all over again.

Later, Nwoye went to his mother's hut and told her that Ikemefuna was going home. She immediately dropped her pestle with which she was grinding pepper, folded her arms across her breast and sighed, "Poor child."

The next day, the men returned with a pot of wine. They were all fully dressed as if they were going to a big clan meeting or to pay a visit to a neighbouring village. They passed their cloths under the right arm-pit, and hung their goatskin bags and sheathed machetes over their left shoulders. Okonkwo got ready quickly and the party set out with Ikemefuna carrying the pot of wine. A deathly silence descended on Okonkwo's compound. Even the very little children seemed to know. Throughout that day Nwoye sat in his mother's hut and tears stood in his eyes.

kuwaona. Lakini kwa namna fulani alijua hatawaona. Alikumbuka siku moja watu walipozungumza kwa sauti ya chini na baba yake, na ilionekana sasa kana kwamba ilikuwa ikitokea tena.

Baadaye, Nwoye alienda kwenye kibanda cha mamake na kumwambia kwamba Ikemefuna alikuwa akienda nyumbani. Mara moja alidondosha mchi wake aliokuwa anasaga pilipili, akakunja mikono yake kwenye titi lake na kuhema, "Maskini mtoto."

Siku iliyofuata, wanaume hao walirudi wakiwa na chungu cha divai. Wote walikuwa wamevalia mavazi kamili kana kwamba wanaenda kwenye mkutano mkubwa wa ukoo au kutembelea kijiji jirani. Walipitisha nguo zao chini ya shimo la mkono wa kulia, na kuning'iniza mifuko yao ya ngozi ya mbuzi na panga kwenye mabega yao ya kushoto. Okonkwo alijiandaa haraka na sherehe ikaanza huku Ikemefuna akiwa amebeba chungu cha mvinyo. Kimya cha kifo kilitanda kwenye boma la Okonkwo. Hata watoto wadogo sana walionekana kujua. Siku hiyo yote Nwoye alikaa

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kwenye kibanda cha mama yake
na machozi yakamtoka.

At the beginning of their journey the men of Umuofia talked and laughed about the locusts, about their women, and about some effeminate men who had refused to come with them. But as they drew near to the outskirts of Umuofia silence fell upon them too.

The sun rose slowly to the centre of the sky, and the dry, sandy footway began to throw up the heat that lay buried in it. Some birds chirruped in the forests around. The men trod dry leaves on the sand. All else was silent. Then from the distance came the faint beating of the ekwe. It rose and faded with the wind--a peaceful dance from a distant clan.

"It is an ozo dance," the men said among themselves. But no one was sure where it was coming from. Some said Ezimili, others Abame or Aninta. They argued for a short while and fell into silence again, and the elusive dance rose and fell with the wind. Somewhere a man was taking one of the titles

Mwanzoni mwa safari yao wanaume wa Umuofia walizungumza na kucheka juu ya nzige, juu ya wanawake wao, na juu ya wanaume wa kike ambao walikataa kuja nao. Lakini waliposogea karibu na viunga vya Umuofia kimya kikawashika pia.

Jua lilichomoza polepole hadi katikati ya anga, na barabara kavu, yenye mchanga ilianza kutupa joto lililokuwa limezikwa ndani yake. Ndege wengine walipiga kelele katika misitu iliyo karibu. Wanaume walikanyaga majani makavu kwenye mchanga. Mengine yote yalikuwa kimya. Kisha kwa mbali kikatokea kipigo hafifu cha ekwe. Iiinuka na kufifia kwa upepo--ngoma ya amani kutoka kwa ukoo wa mbali.

"Ni ngoma ya ozo," wanaume walisema kati yao. Lakini hakuna aliyekuwa na uhakika ilikuwa inatoka wapi. Wengine walisema Ezimili, wengine Abame au Aninta. Walibishana kwa muda mfupi na kunyamaza tena, na dansi ya kutoroka ikapanda na kuanguka na upepo. Mahali fulani

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of his clan, with music and dancing and a great feast.

mtu alikuwa akichukua mojawapo ya vyeo vya ukoo wake, pamoja na muziki na dansi na karamu kuu.

The footway had now become a narrow line in the heart of the forest. The short trees and sparse undergrowth which surrounded the men's village began to give way to giant trees and climbers which perhaps had stood from the beginning of things, untouched by the axe and the bush-fire. The sun breaking through their leaves and branches threw a pattern of light and shade on the sandy footway.

Njia ya miguu ilikuwa sasa imekuwa mstari mwembamba katikati ya msitu. Miti mifupi na vichaka vichache vilivyozunguka kijiji cha watu hao vilianza kutoa nafasi kwa miti mikubwa na wapandaji miti ambao labda walikuwa wamesimama tangu mwanzo wa mambo, bila kuguswa na shoka na moto wa kichaka. Jua lililopenya kwenye majani na matawi yao lilitupa muundo wa mwanga na kivuli kwenye barabara ya mchanga.

Ikemefuna heard a whisper close behind him and turned round sharply. The man who had whispered now called out aloud, urging the others to hurry up.

Ikemefuna alisikia mnong'ono karibu nyuma yake na akageuka kwa kasi. Yule mtu aliyenong'ona sasa aliita kwa sauti, akiwahimiza wengine wafanye haraka.

"We still have a long way to go," he said. Then he and another man went before Ikemefuna and set a faster pace.

"Bado tuna safari ndefu," alisema. Kisha yeye na mwanamume mwingine wakatangulia mbele ya Ikemefuna na kuweka mwendo wa kasi zaidi.

Thus the men of Umuofia pursued their way, armed with sheathed machetes, and Ikemefuna, carrying a pot of palm-wine on his head,

Hivyo watu wa Umuofia wakafuata njia yao, wakiwa wamejihami kwa mapanga, na Ikemefuna, akiwa amebeba

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walked in their midst. Although he had felt uneasy at first, he was not afraid now. Okonkwo walked behind him. He could hardly imagine that Okonkwo was not his real father. He had never been fond of his real father, and at the end of three years he had become very distant indeed. But his mother and his three-year-old sister... of course she would not be three now, but six. Would he recognise her now? She must have grown quite big. How his mother would weep for joy, and thank Okonkwo for having looked after him so well and for bringing him back. She would want to hear everything that had happened to him in all these years. Could he remember them all? He would tell her about Nwoye and his mother, and about the locusts... Then quite suddenly a thought came upon him. His mother might be dead. He tried in vain to force the thought out of his mind. Then he tried to settle the matter the way he used to settle such matters when he was a little boy. He still remembered the song: Eze elina, elina!

Sala

chungu cha divai ya mawese kichwani mwake, akatembea katikati yao. Ingawa mwanzoni alikuwa na wasiwasi, hakuogopa sasa. Okonkwo alitembea nyuma yake. Hakuweza kufikiria kuwa Okonkwo hakuwa baba yake halisi. Hakuwahi kumpenda baba yake halisi, na mwisho wa miaka mitatu alikuwa mbali sana. Lakini mama yake na dada yake wa miaka mitatu ... bila shaka hangekuwa watatu sasa, lakini sita. Je, angemtambua sasa? Lazima alikua mkubwa sana. Jinsi mama yake angelia kwa furaha, na kumshukuru Okonkwo kwa kumtunza vizuri na kumrudisha. Angetaka kusikia kila kitu kilichompata katika miaka hii yote. Je, angeweza kuwakumbuka wote? Angemwambia kuhusu Nwoye na mama yake, na kuhusu nzige... Kisha ghafla wazo likamjia. Mama yake anaweza kuwa amekufa. Alijaribu bila mafanikio kuliondoa wazo hilo akilini mwake. Kisha akajaribu kusuluhisha jambo hilo kwa njia ambayo alitumia kusuluhisha mambo hayo alipokuwa mvulana mdogo. Bado alikumbuka wimbo: Eze elina, elina!

Sala

Mambo Husambaratika

Eze ilikwa ya Ikwaba akwa ogholi Mfalme pia alimzika kaburini

Ebe Danda nechi eze Ebe Uzuzu
nete egwu Sala

He sang it in his mind, and walked
to its beat. If the song ended on his
right foot, his mother was alive. If
it ended on his left, she was dead.
No, not dead, but ill. It ended on
the right. She was alive and well.
He sang the song again, and it
ended on the left. But the second
time did not count. The first voice
gets to Chukwu, or God's house.
That was a favourite saying of
children. Ikemefuna felt like a
child once more. It must be the
thought of going home to his
mother.

One of the men behind him
cleared his throat. Ikemefuna
looked back, and the man growled
at him to go on and not stand
looking back. The way he said it
sent cold fear down Ikemefuna's
back. His hands trembled vaguely
on the black pot he carried. Why
had Okonkwo withdrawn to the
rear? Ikemefuna felt his legs

Ebe Danda nechi eze Ebe Uzuzu
nete egwu Sala

Aliimba akilini mwake, na
kutembea kwa mpigo wake. Ikiwa
wimbo uliisha kwenye mguu wake
wa kulia, mama yake alikuwa hai.
Ikiwa iliishia upande wake wa
kushoto, alikuwa amekufa.
Hapana, sio amekufa, lakini
mgonjwa. Iliishia upande wa
kulia. Alikuwa hai na mzima.
Aliimba wimbo huo tena, na
ukaishia upande wa kushoto.
Lakini mara ya pili haikuhesabu.
Sauti ya kwanza inafika kwa
Chukwu, au nyumba ya Mungu.
Huo ulikuwa msemu unaopendwa
na watoto. Ikemefuna alihisi kama
mtoto kwa mara nyingine tena. Ni
lazima kuwa na mawazo ya
kwenda nyumbani kwa mama
yake.

Mmoja wa watu waliokuwa
nyuma yake akasafisha koo lake.
Ikemefuna akatazama nyuma, na
mwanamume huyo akamfokea
aendelea na asisimame akitazama
nyuma. Jinsi alivyosema ilipelekea
hofu baridi chini ya mgongo wa
Ikemefuna. Mikono yake
ilitetemeka ovyo kwenye chungu
cheusi alichobeba. Kwa nini

Chinua Achebe

melting under him. And he was afraid to look back.

As the man who had cleared his throat drew up and raised his machete, Okonkwo looked away. He heard the blow. The pot fell and broke in the sand. He heard Ikemefuna cry, "My father, they have killed me!" as he ran towards him. Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak.

As soon as his father walked in, that night, Nwoye knew that Ikemefuna had been killed, and something seemed to give way inside him, like the snapping of a tightened bow. He did not cry. He just hung limp. He had had the same kind of feeling not long ago, during the last harvest season. Every child loved the harvest season. Those who were big enough to carry even a few yams in a tiny basket went with grown-ups to the farm. And if they could not help in digging up the yams, they could gather firewood together for roasting the ones that would be eaten there on the farm.

Okonkwo alikuwa amejiondoa nyuma? Ikemefuna alihisi miguu yake ikiyeyuka chini yake. Na aliogopa kutazama nyuma.

Yule mtu aliyekuwa amesafisha koo lake aliposogea na kuinua panga lake, Okonkwo alitazama pembeni. Alisikia pigo. Chungu kilianguka na kupasuka kwenye mchanga. Alisikia Ikemefuna akilia, "Baba yangu, wameniu!" huku akimkimbia. Akiingiwa na hofu, Okonkwo akachomoa panga lake na kumkata. Aliogopa kudhaniwa dhaifu.

Mara tu baba yake alipoingia ndani, usiku huo huo, Nwoye alijua kwamba Ikemefuna alikuwa ameuawa, na jambo fulani likaonekana kuwa gumu ndani yake, kama vile kupigwa kwa upinde uliokazwa. Hakulia. Alining'inia tu. Alikuwa na hisia kama hizo muda si mrefu uliopita, wakati wa msimu wa mavuno uliopita. Kila mtoto alipenda msimu wa mavuno. Wale waliokuwa wakubwa vya kutosha kubeba hata viazi vikuu chache kwenye kikapu kidogo walienda na watu wazima shambani. Na kama hawakuweza kusaidia katika kuchimba viazi vikuu, wangeweza

Mambo Husambaratika

This roasted yam soaked in red palm-oil and eaten in the open farm was sweeter than any meal at home. It was after such a day at the farm during the last harvest that Nwoye had felt for the first time a snapping inside him like the one he now felt. They were returning home with baskets of yams from a distant farm across the stream when they heard the voice of an infant crying in the thick forest. A sudden hush had fallen on the women, who had been talking, and they had quickened their steps.

Nwoye had heard that twins were put in earthenware pots and thrown away in the forest, but he had never yet come across them. A vague chill had descended on him and his head had seemed to swell, like a solitary walker at night who passes an evil spirit on the way. Then something had given way inside him. It descended on him again, this feeling, when his father walked in that night after killing Ikemefuna.

kukusanya kuni pamoja kwa ajili ya kuchoma zile ambazo zingeliwa pale shambani. Kiazi hiki kilichochomwa kilicholowekwa katika mafuta mekundu ya mawese na kuliwa kwenye shamba la wazi kilikuwa kitamu kuliko chakula chochote cha nyumbani. Ilikuwa baada ya siku kama hiyo shambani wakati wa mavuno ya mwisho ambapo

Nwoye alihisi kwa mara ya kwanza mshtuko ndani yake kama vile alivyohisi sasa. Walikuwa wakirudi nyumbani wakiwa na vikapu vya viazi vikuu kutoka shamba la mbali ng'ambo ya kijito waliposikia sauti ya mtoto mchanga akilia kwenye msitu mnene. Kimya cha ghafla kilikuwa kimewaangukia wale wanawake waliokuwa wakizungumza, na wakaharakisha hatua zao. Nwoye alikuwa amesikia kwamba mapacha waliwekwa kwenye vyungu vya udongo na kutupwa msituni, lakini alikuwa bado hajawahi kukutana nao. Ubaridi usioeleweka ulikuwa umemshukia

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na kichwa chake kilionekana
kuvimba, kama mtu anayetembea
peke yake usiku ambaye hupita
pepo mchafu njiani. Kisha kitu
kilikuwa kimejifungua ndani yake.
Ilimjia tena, hisia hii, wakati baba
yake alipoingia usiku huo baada
ya kumuua Ikemefuna.