

THE HEALING POWER

TIMOTHY CHILEZI
(2683111)

HOW TO READ THIS STORY

WELCOME. YOU ARE ABOUT TO STEP INTO THE WORN SANDALS OF MWAYI, A TRADITIONAL HEALER IN A MALAWIAN VILLAGE FACING A CRISIS. THIS IS YOUR STORY, AND YOUR CHOICES WILL CARVE ITS PATH.

- READ THE NARRATIVE ON EACH PAGE.
- WHEN YOU FACE A DILEMMA, CLICK ON THE HYPERLINK BUTTON THAT CALLS TO YOU.
- YOUR JOURNEY WILL LEAD TO ONE OF THREE POSSIBLE ENDINGS, EACH A REFLECTION OF THE VALUES YOU CHOOSE TO UPHOLD.
- INTEGRATED INTO THE STORY ARE PIECES OF EPHEMERA—DOCUMENTS AND ARTIFACTS FROM MWAYI'S WORLD. THESE ARE NOT MERE DECORATION; THEY ARE WINDOWS INTO HER SOUL AND HER CONFLICT.
- ONE PATH CONTAINS A PUZZLE, A RIDDLE FROM THE ELDERS. THE SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND ON THE FINAL PAGE IF YOU NEED GUIDANCE.

THERE IS NO "WINNING," ONLY UNDERSTANDING. LISTEN TO THE WORLD, THINK WITH YOUR HEART AND SPEAK THROUGH YOUR CHOICES.

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY AT THE LAKE

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THE RITUAL

THE WATER OF LAKE CHILWA IS COOL AND FAMILIAR AGAINST YOUR SKIN. YOU, MWAYI, STAND WAIST-DEEP, THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN PAINTING THE SURFACE IN HUES OF ROSE AND GOLD. IN YOUR HANDS, YOU CRADLE A CEREMONIAL GOURD, ITS SURFACE ETCHED WITH THE SIGNS OF YOUR LINEAGE. THE CHANT YOU WHISPER IS OLDER THAN YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S GRANDMOTHER, A PLEA TO THE MIZIMU, THE SPIRITS OF THE WATER, FOR PURIFICATION AND BALANCE. THE RHYTHMIC LAPING OF THE WAVES IS THE ONLY ACCOMPANIMENT. ON THE SHORE, YOUR APPRENTICE, LIMBANI, GRINDS MPUNGABWI ROOTS WITH A PESTLE. YOU HAVE TRAINED HIM SINCE HE WAS A BOY, ORPHANED BY A FEVER YOU COULD NOT CURE. YOU SEE THE DEVOTION IN HIS MOVEMENTS, BUT LATELY, A NEW SHADOW FLITS BEHIND HIS EYES AND A QUESTION NOT YET VOICED.

A FRANTIC CRY SHATTERS THE MORNING'S PEACE. ASIMA, A YOUNG MOTHER FROM THE VILLAGE, STUMBLES FROM THE PATH, HER SON CHIKONDI LIMP IN HER ARMS. HIS SMALL BODY IS CURLED TIGHT, WRACKED WITH SHIVERS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE MORNING CHILL. HIS SKIN IS HOT, YET DRY AS DUST.

"MWAYI, PLEASE! THE SICKNESS... IT HAS TAKEN HIM!"

AS YOU WADE TOWARDS HER, A NEW, ALIEN SOUND GROWLS IN THE DISTANCE. A CLOUD OF DUST BILLOWS FROM THE ROAD, RESOLVING INTO THE HULKING SHAPES OF GOVERNMENT TRUCKS. THEY GRIND TO A HALT, AND MEN AND WOMEN IN CRISP, FOREIGN CLOTHES DISEMBARK, THEIR MOVEMENTS EFFICIENT AND LOUD. A TALL, RED-HAIRED MAN STEPS FORWARD. DR. O'REILLY. HIS CHICHEWA IS FUNCTIONAL, BUT HIS TONE IS ABSOLUTE.

"THERE IS A CHOLERA OUTBREAK. THE WATER IS CONTAMINATED. WE ARE SETTING UP A CLINIC. ALL SICK MUST COME TO US IMMEDIATELY. TRADITIONAL PRACTICES WILL WORSEN THE SPREAD."

HIS EYES SWEEP OVER YOUR BEADED NECKLACE, THE HERBS IN LIMBANI'S MORTAR, WITH A CLINICAL DETACHMENT THAT FEELS LIKE A VIOLATION. THE VILLAGERS, WHO MOMENTS AGO LOOKED TO YOU WITH REVERENCE, NOW WEAR MASKS OF TERROR AND CONFUSION. ASIMA CLUTCHES CHIKONDI TIGHTER, HER GAZE DARTING BETWEEN YOU AND THE DOCTOR. LIMBANI LOOKS AT YOU, HIS EXPRESSION A BATTLEFIELD OF LOYALTY AND A DESPERATE, FEARFUL HOPE.

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST RESPONSE TO THIS INTRUSION?

COOPERATE. THE CHILD'S LIFE IS PARAMOUNT.

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RESIST. YOU WILL NOT LET THEM ERASE YOUR WORLD.

GO TO PAGE 5

6 WAYS

STOP CHOLERA

01

BOIL ALL WATER FOR
AT LEAST 1 MINUTE



02

USE ONLY PROVIDED
WATER PURIFICATION
TABLETS.



03

WASH HANDS
WITH SOAP.



04


ALL DIARRHEA AND VOMITING
MUST BE REPORTED TO THE
CLINIC IMMEDIATELY.

(4)

05
TRADITIONAL REMEDIES
ARE INEFFECTIVE AND
DANGEROUS.



YOUR PRIDE STINGS, BUT A HEALER'S FIRST DUTY IS TO LIFE. "LIMBANI," YOU SAY, YOUR VOICE STEADY DESPITE THE TREMOR IN YOUR HEART. "HELP ASIMA CARRY CHIKONDI. LET US SEE WHAT THESE OUTSIDERS CAN DO." YOU MEET DR. O'REILLY'S GAZE, NOT WITH SUBMISSION, BUT WITH A PRAGMATIC GRACE. "WE WILL SHOW YOU TO THE CLEARING BY THE BAOBAB TREE. IT IS A GOOD PLACE FOR YOUR CLINIC."

THE DOCTOR GIVES A CURT NOD, HIS TEAM ALREADY UNLOADING BOXES OF SUPPLIES THAT SMELL OF SHARP ALCOHOL AND CLEAN PLASTIC. AS YOU LEAD THEM, YOU FEEL THE WEIGHT OF THE VILLAGERS' STARES. SOME ARE GRATEFUL, OTHERS BETRAYED. LIMBANI WALKS BESIDE YOU, HIS RELIEF PALPABLE, BUT IT DOES LITTLE TO WARM THE COLD STONE OF DREAD IN YOUR STOMACH. YOUR AUTHORITY, ONCE AS SOLID AS THE EARTH, HAS BEGIN TO CRACK.

THE WORDS "INEFFECTIVE AND DANGEROUS" SEEM TO BURN ON THE PAGE. DAYS PASS. THE CLINIC IS A HIVE OF CONTROLLED CHAOS. YOUR SHRINE IS DESERTED. ONE EVENING, LIMBANI SPEAKS THE FEAR YOU HAVE BURIED. HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

REINFORCE YOUR FAITH. WE MUST
NOT WAVER.

GO TO PAGE 6

ADMIT YOUR UNCERTAINTY. THE
OLD WAYS ARE FAILING.

GO TO PAGE 7

THE ARRIVAL - RESIST

A FIRE IGNITES IN YOUR CHEST. THIS IS YOUR HOME, YOUR PEOPLE. YOU WILL NOT LET THEM BE COLONIZED BY THIS MAN IN HIS CLEAN SHIRT. YOU DRAW YOURSELF TO YOUR FULL HEIGHT, YOUR VOICE CARRYING OVER THE MURMURING CROWD WITH THE WEIGHT OF GENERATIONS.

"THIS IS MY VILLAGE. I AM THE HEALER HERE. THE SPIRITS OF OUR ANCESTORS AND THE WISDOM OF THE PLANTS HAVE PROTECTED US SINCE LONG BEFORE YOUR TRUCKS AND YOUR BOTTLES. WE DO NOT NEED YOUR... YOUR POISONS."

DR. O'REILLY'S JAW TIGHTENS. "THIS IS NOT ABOUT SPIRITS OR TRADITION. THIS IS ABOUT BACTERIA, INVISIBLE ORGANISMS IN THE WATER. YOUR RITUALS CANNOT KILL THEM." HE GESTURES TO CHIKONDI. "THAT CHILD WILL DIE WITHOUT PROPER TREATMENT."

THE VILLAGERS ARE A SEA OF DIVIDED LOYALTIES. SOME SHOUT THEIR AGREEMENT WITH YOU, THEIR FEAR TURNING TO ANGER. OTHERS LOOK AT THE SHAKING CHILD, THEN AT THE DOCTOR'S STERILE BOXES, THEIR FAITH IN YOU WARRING WITH THEIR INSTINCT FOR SURVIVAL. LIMBANI STANDS FROZEN, THE MORTAR AND PESTLE STILL IN HIS HANDS, HIS FACE A PORTRAIT OF ANGUISH.

YOU HAVE DRAWN A LINE IN THE SAND. THE TENSION ESCALATES OVER THE FOLLOWING DAYS. HOW DO YOU HANDLE THE GROWING CRISIS?

REINFORCE YOUR FAITH. DOUBLE DOWN ON RITUALS.

[GO TO PAGE 6](#)

LISTEN TO THE ELDER'S WISDOM AND ADMIT UNCERTAINTY.

[GO TO PAGE 7](#)



REINFORCE FAITH

YOU TURN ON LIMBANI, THE FEAR AND FRUSTRATION BOILING OVER. "SILENCE!" YOU SNAP, THE WORD SHARPER THAN A KNIFE. "THE SPIRITS ARE TESTING US, AND YOU ARE FAILING! MY GRANDMOTHER'S KNOWLEDGE IS NOT SOME CHILDISH STORY. IT IS THE SOUL OF THIS LAND, THE BREATH OF OUR PEOPLE. IF YOU HAVE LOST YOUR FAITH, THEN YOU HAVE LOST YOUR WAY, AND YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN THEM."

YOU SEE THE HURT IN HIS EYES, BUT YOU HARDEN YOUR HEART. DOUBT IS A CRACK THROUGH WHICH THE WHOLE WORLD CAN FLOOD. YOU MUST BE THE ROCK, THE UNYIELDING CENTER. YOU SPEND THE NEXT DAYS PERFORMING MORE INTENSE RITUALS, YOUR CHANTS LOUDER, YOUR OFFERINGS MORE LAVISH. BUT THE DRUMS THAT USED TO CALL THE MIZIMU NOW SEEM TO BEAT ONLY FOR THE DEAD."

YOUR RESOLVE IS A FORTRESS, BUT THE SIEGE CONTINUES. A CRITICAL TEST ARRIVES.

[CONTINUE](#)

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THE WORDS ARE LIKE SWALLOWING BROKEN GLASS, BUT YOU FORCE THEM OUT. YOU LOOK AT LIMBANI, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, YOU LET THE MASK OF THE INFALLIBLE HEALER SLIP. "I... DO NOT KNOW, LIMBANI." YOU WHISPER THE CONFESSION TO THE GROUND, THEN MEET HIS GAZE. "I SEE THE DEATHS. I FEEL THE SILENCE OF THE SPIRITS. MY PRAYERS... THEY HIT THE SKY AND FALL BACK TO EARTH. PERHAPS... PERHAPS THERE IS MORE TO HEALING THAN I WAS TAUGHT. PERHAPS MY PRIDE HAS BLINDED ME."

A PROFOUND SILENCE FOLLOWS YOUR ADMISSION. THEN, LIMBANI'S POSTURE SOFTENS. THE CONFLICT IN HIS EYES IS REPLACED BY A GLIMMER OF SHARED BURDEN. "MWAYI..." HE BEGINS, BUT WORDS FAIL HIM. ELDER MBEWE, WHO HAD BEEN OBSERVING FROM A DISTANCE, GIVES YOU A SLOW, APPROVING NOD. THE ADMISSION HAS NOT SOLVED ANYTHING, BUT IT HAS CREATED A NEW, FRAGILE SPACE, A SPACE FOR POSSIBILITY.

A PATH OF HUMILITY
OPENS BEFORE YOU

GO TO PAGE 9

THE WEIGHT OF FAITH

A SHOUT ECHOES FROM THE RIVER DELTA. A YOUNG GIRL, TIYAMIKE, HAS COLLAPSED ON THE VERY BANK WHERE YOU PERFORM YOUR MOST SACRED CLEANSINGS. SHE IS GHOSTLY PALE, HER BODY RAVAGED BY THE SICKNESS. HER FAMILY AND A CROWD OF VILLAGERS GATHER, THEIR FACES ETCHED WITH PANIC.

"CHANI CHITSIME, MWAYI! MIZIMU YAKWIYA!" (CLEANSE THE RIVER, MWAYI! THE SPIRITS ARE ANGRY!) THEY PLEAD, THEIR VOICES A UNIFIED CRY FOR THE OLD MAGIC.

DR. O'REILLY PUSHES THROUGH THE THRONG, HIS FACE SET IN GRIM LINES. "DON'T BE A FOOL! SHE HAS SEVERE DEHYDRATION. SHE NEEDS INTRAVENOUS FLUIDS AND ANTIBIOTICS NOW, OR HER HEART WILL STOP. THIS IS NOT A MATTER FOR PRAYERS."

ALL EYES ARE ON YOU. THIS IS YOUR MOMENT. TO PROVE THAT FAITH IS STRONGER THAN FEAR, THAT TRADITION CAN TRIUMPH. YOU RAISE YOUR ARMS TO THE HEAVENS, YOUR VOICE RISING IN THE ANCIENT CHANT. YOU ANOINT TIYAMIKE WITH SACRED OILS AND SPRINKLE THE POTENT HERBS INTO THE WATER. FOR A GLORIOUS MOMENT, YOU FEEL THE OLD POWER COURSING THROUGH YOU, THE CERTAINTY OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S HAND ON YOUR SHOULDER.

BUT AS THE LAST WORD OF THE CHANT FADES, TIYAMIKE'S CONDITION DOES NOT IMPROVE. A TERRIBLE RATTLE ESCAPES HER LIPS. HER MOTHER'S HOPEFUL SOBS TURN INTO A WAIL OF UTTER DESPAIR. DR. O'REILLY SHOVES PAST YOU, HIS SHOULDER KNOCKING YOU ASIDE. "I TOLD YOU," HE SNARLS, LIFTING THE TINY, LIMP BODY. "YOUR MAGIC IS KILLING HER." HE RUNS TOWARDS THE CLINIC, THE CROWD PARTING FOR HIM.

YOU ARE LEFT ALONE BY THE RIVER. THE HERBS FLOAT USELESSLY ON THE WATER. THE EYES OF THE VILLAGE ARE NO LONGER FILLED WITH REVERENCE, BUT WITH A TERRIFYING, HOLLOW PITY. THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR LIFE HAS CRUMBLED TO DUST.
THE FINAL BLOW COMES WHEN YOU DISCOVER LIMBANI HAS NOT JUST LOST FAITH. HE HAS JOINED THE ENEMY. HOW DO YOU HANDLE HIS ULTIMATE BETRAYAL?

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FIND THE STRENGTH TO FORGIVE HIM.
GO TO PAGE 11

PUNISH HIM FOR HIS DISLOYALTY.
GO TO PAGE 12

MPHALA YA CHILWA VILLAGE QUARANTINE NOTICE

- All movement in/out of the village is prohibited.
- All water sources are declared contaminated.
- All cases of illness must be reported to the temporary clinic.
- Traditional healing practices related to water are suspended.
- Failure to comply is a criminal offense.

Signed: Dr. P. O'Reilly, MD, On behalf of
the Government



A NEW PATH (UNCERTAINTY PATH)

NEWS COMES OF A COLLAPSED CHILD BY THE RIVER. YOU AND LIMBANI ARRIVE TO FIND DR. O'REILLY ALREADY THERE, HIS FINGERS ON TIYAMIKE'S NECK. "SEVERE DEHYDRATION. WE NEED TO MOVE," HE BARKS, NOT LOOKING UP.

THE GIRL'S MOTHER CLUTCHES YOUR ARM, HER NAILS DIGGING INTO YOUR SKIN. "KOMA MWABI, MWAYI! UYENERA KUCHITAYA!" (BUT THE CURSE, MWAYI! YOU MUST REMOVE IT!)

YOU LOOK AT THE CHILD'S SUFFERING FACE, AT THE DOCTOR'S CLINICAL DETERMINATION, AND AT LIMBANI'S HOPEFUL, ANXIOUS EYES. YOU REMEMBER ELDER MBEWE'S WORDS: "WHEN THE RIVER FORGETS ITS SONG, THE HEALER MUST LEARN A NEW ONE." YOU TAKE A DEEP BREATH, THE WEIGHT OF A THOUSAND ANCESTORS ON YOUR SHOULDERS.

"THIS IS NOT A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS," YOU ANNOUNCE, YOUR VOICE CLEAR AND RESONANT. "IT IS A CHOICE TO USE BOTH." YOU LOCK EYES WITH DR. O'REILLY. "GIVE HER YOUR FLUIDS. I WILL PREPARE A MWANAMPHEPO TEA TO CALM HER SPIRIT AND A GINGER PASTE FOR HER NAUSEA. WE WILL WORK TOGETHER."

THE DOCTOR STARES AT YOU, HIS PROFESSIONAL MASK SLIPPING FOR A FRACTION OF A SECOND, REVEALING SURPRISE, THEN A FLICKER OF RESPECT. HE GIVES A SINGLE, SHARP NOD.

UNDER THE SPRAWLING CANOPY OF THE GREAT BAOBAB, YOU WORK SIDE BY SIDE. LIMBANI BOILS WATER OVER A CLEAN FIRE, USING A POT YOU TOOK FROM THE CLINIC. YOU SING A LOW, SOOTHING PRAYER AS YOU CRUSH THE HERBS, NOT FOR A MIRACLE, BUT FOR HARMONY.

TIYAMIKE RECEIVES THE IV DRIP AND SIPs THE TEA. THROUGH THE LONG NIGHT, HER FEVER BREAKS. THE SYNTHESIS HAS WORKED. BUT THE OLD GUARD IS NOT PLEASED. TO CONTINUE THIS PATH, YOU MUST PASS A TEST OF WISDOM. ELDER MBEWE GIVES YOU A RIDDLE, A TRADITIONAL CODE TO PROVE YOUR UNDERSTANDING: "I AM THE BEGINNING OF THE END, THE START OF EVERY ETERNITY, THE FINISH OF EVERY RACE. WHAT AM I?"

FIND THE STRENGTH TO
FORGIVE HIM.
GO TO PAGE 11

IF YOU NEED TO THINK, THE
STORY WAITS FOR YOU
HERE.

THE SYNTHESIS (PUZZLE SOLVED)

THE LETTER 'E'. IT IS THE BEGINNING OF "END," THE START OF "ETERNITY," THE FINISH OF "RACE." YOU GATHER THE SKEPTICAL ELDERS. "THE ANSWER IS 'E,'" YOU TELL THEM. "IT IS NOT AN END, BUT AN ELEMENT. LIKE EARTH, WATER, AIR, AND FIRE, THE DOCTORS' KNOWLEDGE IS A NEW ELEMENT. WE DO NOT ABANDON THE OLD ONES WHEN A NEW ONE IS DISCOVERED. WE LEARN ITS PROPERTIES. WE LEARN TO COMBINE THEM TO CREATE A STRONGER WORLD, A MORE RESILIENT HEALING."

ELDER MBEWE SMILES, A SLOW, DEEP CRACK IN HIS WEATHERED FACE. THE OTHER ELDERS MURMUR, BUT THE HOSTILITY IN THEIR EYES RECEDES, REPLACED BY THOUGHTFUL CALCULATION. THE SYNTHESIS HOLDS. THE CHOLERA OUTBREAK IS CONTAINED NOT BY A SINGLE VICTOR, BUT THROUGH A HARD WON COLLABORATION. A NEW, HYBRID FORM OF HEALING TAKES ROOT IN THE VILLAGE, ONE THAT HONORS THE PAST WITHOUT BEING ITS PRISONER.

RECONCILIATION.
[THE END]

(10)



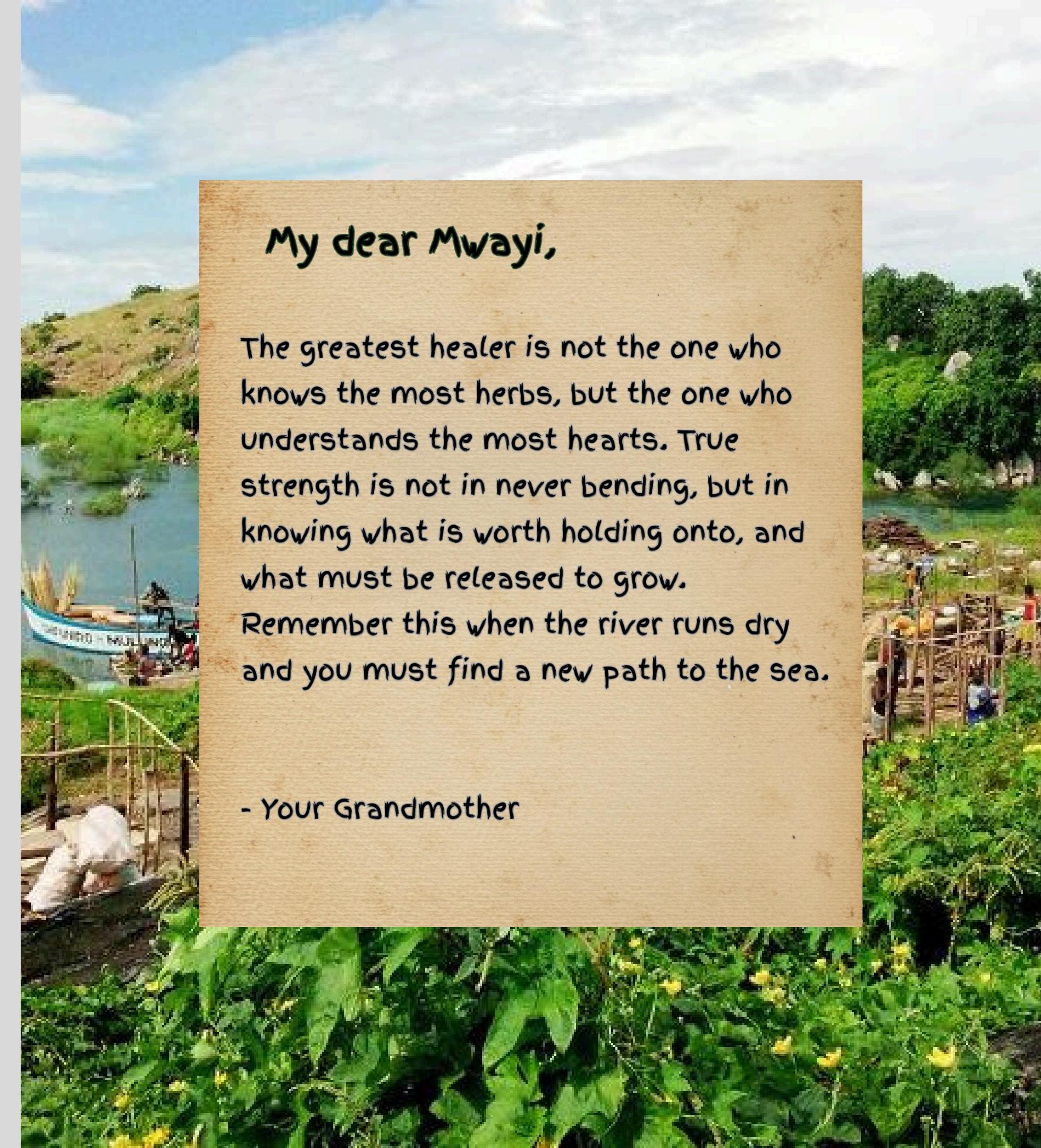
FORGIVENESS

THE ANGER AND BETRAYAL ARE A STORM INSIDE YOU, BUT AS YOU LOOK AT LIMBANI, THIS BOY YOU RAISED, NOW A MAN STANDING BY HIS OWN CONVICTIONS, THE STORM SUBSIDES, LEAVING A LANDSCAPE OF PROFOUND SORROW. "UCHITA ZOMWE UNAGANIZA KUTI NDIZOLUNGAMA," (YOU DID WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS RIGHT) YOU SAY, YOUR VOICE THICK WITH TEARS YOU WILL NOT SHED. "YOU SOUGHT TO SAVE LIVES. HOW CAN I, A HEALER, PUNISH YOU FOR THAT?" YOU REACH OUT AND PLACE A HAND ON HIS CHEEK, THE WAY YOU DID WHEN HE WAS A FRIGHTENED CHILD. "WANDIKWANA M'MAGANIZO ANGA MONGA MWANA WANGA." (YOU HAVE BEEN LIKE MY OWN SON IN MY THOUGHTS.) "AND A CHILD MUST SOMETIMES FIND HIS OWN PATH, EVEN IF IT BREAKS HIS MOTHER'S HEART TO WATCH HIM GO."

TEARS STREAM FREELY DOWN HIS FACE. "MWAYI, I... THANK YOU." HE DOES NOT ASK FOR YOUR BLESSING, BUT IN YOUR FORGIVENESS, HE RECEIVES IT. THE BOND IS MENDED, NOT AS IT WAS, BUT TRANSFORMED, STRONGER IN ITS HONESTY.

THIS ACT OF GRACE LEADS TO A FINAL TEST WHERE YOUR NEW FOUND WISDOM IS YOUR ONLY TOOL, CULMINATING IN ENDING 3:

RECONCILIATION.
[THE END]



My dear Mwayi,

The greatest healer is not the one who knows the most herbs, but the one who understands the most hearts. True strength is not in never bending, but in knowing what is worth holding onto, and what must be released to grow.

Remember this when the river runs dry and you must find a new path to the sea.

- Your Grandmother

PUNISHMENT

THE HURT CURDLES INTO SOMETHING COLD AND HARD. YOU DRAW YOURSELF UP, YOUR FACE A MASK OF STONE. "SUILIPO MWANA WANGA!" (YOU ARE NO LONGER MY SON!) YOU DECLARE, EACH WORD A SHARD OF ICE. "YOU HAVE SPAT ON THE WISDOM OF YOUR ANCESTORS, ON THE MEMORY OF MY GRANDMOTHER, ON EVERYTHING I HAVE BUILT. YOU ARE CAST OUT. YOU ARE DEAD TO ME. DO NOT SPEAK TO ME AGAIN, AND DO NOT DARE TO COME TO MY FUNERAL."

YOU SEE THE WORDS LAND LIKE PHYSICAL BLOWS. HIS FACE CRUMPLES, THE HOPE AND DEFIANCE EXTINGUISHED, REPLACED BY A DEVASTATION SO COMPLETE IT IS PAINFUL TO BEHOLD. HE NODS ONCE, A SHALLOW, BROKEN MOVEMENT, TURNS, AND WALKS AWAY. YOU ARE ALONE. YOU HAVE REASSERTED YOUR AUTHORITY, YOU HAVE UPHELD TRADITION, YOU HAVE PUNISHED BETRAYAL. BUT AS YOU STAND IN THE SILENCE OF YOUR SHRINE, YOU FEEL NO VICTORY, ONLY THE IMMENSE, CRUSHING WEIGHT OF YOUR SOLITUDE. THE TRADITION YOU PROTECTED HAS BECOME A COLD, EMPTY TOMB.

FAITH RESTORED (TRAGIC HOPE).
[THE END]

THE COST OF SCIENCE (ALTERNATE PATH)

YOUR CONSISTENT CHOICE TO SIDE WITH THE DOCTORS LEADS TO A CLINICAL, EFFICIENT VICTORY OVER THE CHOLERA. THE OUTBREAK IS CONTAINED. THE VILLAGE IS SAVED. BUT THE COST IS A SILENT, SPIRITUAL EROSION. YOU ARE NOW A GHOST IN YOUR OWN HOME. THE VILLAGERS' GRATITUDE IS TINGED WITH PITY. YOU ARE THE HEALER WHO WAS RENDERED OBSOLETE.

DR. O'REILLY FINDS YOU PACKING YOUR RITUAL GOURDS. "WE'RE LEAVING TOMORROW," HE SAYS. "THE IMMEDIATE CRISIS IS OVER." HE PAUSES, UNCHARACTERISTICALLY HESITANT. "YOU. YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE PEOPLE WAS. USEFUL." IT IS THE CLOSEST HE WILL COME TO AN APOLOGY OR ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

LIMBANI APPROACHES, HIS POSTURE CONFIDENT, HIS CLOTHES A MIX OF TRADITIONAL FABRIC AND A CLINIC VOLUNTEER'S SHIRT. "MWAYI," HE SAYS, HIS VOICE FIRM. "SINDIKUDZERA. NDIPITA NAWO." (MWAYI, I AM NOT STAYING. I AM GOING WITH THEM.)

HE IS LEAVING. THE SON OF YOUR HEART IS NOT JUST CHOOSING A DIFFERENT PATH. HE IS LEAVING THE VERY SOIL THAT DEFINES YOU.

FORGIVE HIM AND LET HIM GO WITH LOVE.
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PUNISH HIM, ENSURING YOUR FINAL WORDS ARE WEAPONS.
GO TO PAGE 12

A BITTERSWEET FAREWELL

YOU LOOK AT HIM, THE MAN HE HAS BECOME, FULL OF A PURPOSE YOU DO NOT SHARE BUT CAN, IN THIS MOMENT, FINALLY UNDERSTAND. YOU CANNOT CHAIN HIM TO YOUR SINKING WORLD. TO DO SO WOULD BE THE MOST PROFOUND FAILURE OF A MOTHER'S LOVE. "PITA," (GO) YOU WHISPER, THE WORD COSTING YOU A PIECE OF YOUR SOUL. "GO AND HEAL. TAKE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM BOTH WORLDS AND BE A BETTER HEALER THAN I COULD BE. AND. REMEMBER ME."

YOU WATCH HIM WALK TOWARDS THE TRUCKS, HIS BACK STRAIGHT, NOT LOOKING BACK. IT IS THE BRAVEST THING YOU HAVE EVER DONE. THE VILLAGE SURVIVES, SAVED BY SCIENCE. BUT THE TRADITION YOU EMBODIED, THE DEEP, SPIRITUAL CONNECTION TO THE LAND AND ANCESTORS, HAS FADED LIKE A WHISPER ON THE WIND. YOU ARE ITS LAST KEEPER, A LIVING RELIC IN A WORLD THAT HAS MOVED ON.

SCIENCE PREVAILS
(BITTERSWEET SURVIVAL)

BACK COVER

BLURB:

WHEN CHOLERA STRIKES A REMOTE MALAWIAN VILLAGE, MWAYI, THE COMMUNITY'S TRADITIONAL HEALER, FINDS HER FAITH AND AUTHORITY CHALLENGED BY THE ARRIVAL OF WESTERN DOCTORS. AS DEATH LOOMS, SHE MUST NAVIGATE THE TURBULENT WATERS BETWEEN ANCESTRAL TRADITION AND MODERN SCIENCE. WILL SHE RESIST, COOPERATE, OR FIND A NEW PATH ENTIRELY? IN THIS EMOTIONALLY CHARGED INTERACTIVE STORY, EVERY CHOICE CARRIES THE WEIGHT OF LIFE, DEATH, AND THE VERY SOUL OF A CULTURE. THE POWER TO HEAL IS IN YOUR HANDS.

PUZZLE SOLUTION

THE RIDDLE FROM PAGE 9 WAS:

"I AM THE BEGINNING OF THE END, THE START OF EVERY ETERNITY, THE FINISH OF EVERY RACE. WHAT AM I?"

THE ANSWER IS THE LETTER "E".

- IT IS THE FIRST LETTER OF "END".
- IT IS THE FIRST LETTER OF "ETERNITY".
- IT IS THE LAST LETTER OF "RACE".

THIS PUZZLE WAS DESIGNED TO INTEGRATE TRADITIONAL WISDOM INTO THE NARRATIVE, CHALLENGING THE PLAYER TO THINK SYMBOLICALLY AND FIND CONNECTIONS. JUST AS MWAYI MUST DO ON HER JOURNEY.