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Broken Chain

Ifediora Okiche

Department of English Studies
University of Port Harcourt,
Port Harcourt,
Rivers State,
Nigeria.

The scorching sun smiled at Onyeka and Obinna when they were working on the farm, the people of Adamaha were known for their cultivation of large tubers of yam and the rearing of animals. It was on the fifth day of the third month of the year and the market day for the people of Adamaha, the four villages took their goods to the market for sale. The palm wine, meat, and vegetable sellers all went to the market. People from the neighboring towns came to buy food stuffs in large quantities. Onyeka and Obinna were not left out either; they took their yams to the market in baskets. The smiling sun hid her bright face while the dark cloud covered the sky, these were signs of an unwelcomed visitor. In a twinkling of an eye, it started raining, the traders ran like lions all in the bid to save their perishable goods from the devouring nature of the heavy down pour. "Oh! What a heavy down pour" said Adaoma an old woman who sold plantain in the market. Okonkwo, an outcast from the neighboring village of Ekwueme resides in Adamaha, his shop became the beehive of numerous activities whenever there was a heavy down pour in the market. The traders threw their foodstuffs into Okonkwo's shop quickly, and they ran to their various houses, it rained till dusk. Fate brought Obinna and Onyeka together and the bond of their friendship became very strong. On a particular Tuesday night in the splendor of the full moon Onyeka was on his way to the forest of Okomoko for his weekly ritual. Hunting for what was popularly known to him and his peers as "bush meat". He walked along the bush path that led to the forest holding his catapult in his left hand while he held his trap in his right hand, optimistic that he would kill an animal, he was told by his ageing father that he was the reincarnation of his grandfather who died long before he was given birth to, this was evident in the birth mark on his face. He called on his "CHI" to wish him good luck as he embarked on another trip into the forest.

Emeka the only son of Akana-aku the chief priest of Adamaha informs Onyeka of his newest catch in the wild, Onyeka went through the side of the sacred cave which remained the only root to the forest also referred to as Atani. While he was in the forest, he heard his name thrice and he realized that it was Ajale the evil spirit who made men who answered her call go dumb for a period of three market days. Nobody doubted its powers as many hunters in the past have been victims. Like a flash of lightning, an antelope ran from an imaginary pillar all in a desperate attempt to escape from its ugly fate but luck ran out for the antelope as it veered into a death trap set by Onyeka. The young hunter's joy knew no bound as he lipped for joy, he ran as

fast as Nwaeze's dog in order not to miss his game. The forest of Okomoko is in the ancestral home of Onyeka's maternal uncle parents. How he overcame the evil spirits that ruled the forest became the topic of discussion among hunters that were closer to their graves. Lost in the bitter sweet passion of hunting in the forest, he lay beside a tree and slept like a log of wood. While in his dream, two sea monsters appeared to him, a male and a female offering him a book and a white cloth, mid-way to his collecting them, he suddenly woke and he realized it was all a dream. "A book and a white piece of cloth, what could this mean?"

Onyeka ran like a castrated he-goat without looking back in order not to be lured by Agaerima the evil spirit which lures male hunters to her kingdom. The elders of Adamaha believe that the spirit came all the way from the across the river many years ago. She often disguised like a beautiful maiden and lured men to her kingdom. By the break of dawn, Onyeka was back from the forest to behold a new day; he was just like any other young man, except that he exhibits extra ordinary powers. Onyeka the only son of his parents was brought up to say the truth at all times no matter the situation; many villagers envied him because he was different. Ofuoja the famous palm wine taper tried poisoning him but he was unfortunate as his plan did not materialize. The Umu-ada rumored that Onyeka's bravery and ability to do extra ordinary things was as a result of his virginity. Onyeka met Obinna in one of their hunting expedition in a neighboring town; it was his first time and was optimistic of a catch, dead or alive. Luck ran out for Onyeka during their hunting expedition in the forest, he was short by a hunter who mistook him for a prey, the hooting of an owl the night before Onyeka embarked on his hunting expedition with his friend was a potent sign that all would not be well. Obodozie a short, fat young man with a potbelly like that of a pregnant woman ran from his hideout when he heard the screaming of Onyeka who was bleeding extremely. He quickly carried Onyeka on his shoulder and made way out of the forest with Obinna following them behind. Midway home, he stopped, put the wondered victim down and brought out what looked like a cocoyam leaf which he extracted its liquid and put it on the affected area. At the break of a new dawn in the household of the Amadi's there was an ocean of tears from Onyeka's grandmother not excluding those who came to sympathize with the victim. It took the wondered man two months to recover from the gun shot that affected his left hand under the care of his parents, grandmother and his friend Obinna.

The people of Adamaha, and its environs were known for cultivation of large tubers of yam and the preservation of their cultural heritage through the production of various art works such as sculpture, woodcarving and trinket making, they traded with many towns which contributed to the perseveration of the cultural heritage of the people of Adamaha. It was often said that if one does not find any art work in the house of an Adamaha it simply means the household must be a strangers living in Adamaha. Onyeka has his "CHI" which was in the form of a small craved wooding object. He kept the wooden object in the hut his father built for him when he became of age. There was a mad man who lived in the market place, it is said that when

a mad man is seen in the market place his madness becomes incurable, this was the fate of Ishiaki who ate the sacrifice meant for the gods during Akaba festival that was celebrated by the people of Adamaha annually in order to avoid an outbreak of plague in their land. Just as the monkey learns to jump from tree to tree without falling so have the birds of a feather Onyeka and Obinnaleart to kill their game without missing. They were very close friends until the day hell was let loose. Obinna died in the prime of his life, he fell from a tree top while tapping palm wine and he never stood again, people rumored that Ofuoja had a hand in Obinna's death.

There were rumours that strangers would invade the land of Adamaha, three weeks after Onyeka had recovered from his accident; the sea monsters appeared to him in a trance. When Akana-aku died not even Ataka the chief priest who took over from Akana-aku after his demise was unable to unravel the mystery surrounding his death. He was said to have died a mysterious death and his corpse was thrown into the evil forest. This was the tradition of the people of Adamaha. The maidens on their way to the stream saw a white man and woman, they threw away their earthen pots and ran for their dear lives; one does not tell the blind that the war has started. The only son of Ekene Amadi recollected seeing two sea monsters in his dream now in their land. Until the rotten tooth is pulled out from the mouth, the mouth must chew with caution, he told his parents Emeka and Nne Amadi of his dream, not even Ataka was able to unravel the puzzle. Rev. Johnson and Lady Margaret Williams were the missionaries who came all the way from England for missionary work and preaching the word of God to the people of Adamaha. They were not welcomed but as events unfolded the people of Adamaha woke up to behold a new dawn. The Williams had succeeded in the conversion of the people of Adamaha to accepting their religion which people referred to as the God of the sea monsters to abandoning of their god (Ofija). Isiaki the village drunkard had warned the villagers of the white man's magic on Eke market day. There was a twist of fate and Onyeka became the errand boy for the Williams and on the death bed of Rev. Johnson Williams he opened a box and brought out a book and a white cloth. The book which Onyeka leant was the Holy Bible while the white cloth represents the rope of a missionary. Onyeka's "CHI" died the day he embraced the white man's religion, his parents also died the same day of an unknown ailment. In the evening of Onyeka's life, he broke the chain with a crucifix the late Rev. Williams gave him when he was alive. Onyeka returned to the god of his cosmic past and embraced his "CHI" once again, to be reunited in the land of the spirits in order to complete another inevitable circle.