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Dedication

This book is dedicated to Peace, My mom and My siblings because without them, I'm nothing.

Acknowledgment

My acknowledgment goes to My mom, who never get tired of me even if I failed or do not meet up to her requirements. If there is one thing God granted me when I was coming to this world, it's My mother. A mother who always stays strong even when the world mocks her daughter in front of her. She is the only one I look up to when their is no one. She is the best mother ever in the whole world.

She is my helper, encourager, mentor, companion, role model. I love you Mom.

Your sincerely

Adefesobi Anne

Prologue

In heaven, before the baby girls were allowed to come to the world, ten out of ten thousand baby girls were chosen and are called the *royal babies*.

The royal babies have their own passage way which took them to the world. We, the *junior babies* were always eager to watch them as they head toward the world with the *destiner* at the entrance asking them “Choose among this boys” which all of us repeated after her because it was the same sentence she says anytime a royal baby is to pass the royal passage.

“I choose him” the girl will say, pointing to a boy among the thousands of boys pictures that shows immediately *destiner* stopped speaking.

“It shall be so” says the *destiner* after and all of us will clapped as she goes down and stopped when the next royal girl came to view.

The royal day is the most important day in heaven to we girls and every baby prayed to be one of the royal babies but me. I do not have any interest in being a royal baby but to cut the long story short I was selected as one of the royal babies.

When it was my turn, I walked toward the passage looking at the *destiner's* smiling face.

“Choose among these boys” she said and I looked up to checked out the pictures of thousands of boys.

It wasn't as easy as I thought it was going to be, checking out thousands of pictures at once but after a short period of time I said “I choose him” pointing to a boy that caught my attention but instead of *destiner* *it shall be so* which she says smiling at the girl, I saw her grabbed the frame of the passage and turned white in the face but I was oblivious to what had caused this strange behavior and after getting a grip on herself she said “You have to work to get him, you will be the one to divine your destiny, be an heroine and it must be so” with no grain of smile. Few clapped but I guess the rest were caught off guard as I was

and since I do not know what to say I slid down to the world, with my fate ringing in my ears.

Chapter 1

I saw myself walking towards a beautiful building the type have never entered before which seems to be our house. I took the steps one after the other and entered the house. The first room which seems to be the sitting room and the biggest room was decorated in black and white in a way I could not fully explain because it was more than beautiful. I was about to turn towards the stairs which I guess leads to my room when I noticed a figure in the sitting room. It was a girl and her back was to me, she wore a free yard white and black gown and her hair was twisted, its colour was also white and black.

“Who are you and what are you doing in my house?” I shouted my blood boiling but did not know why.

“It's my house as well as yours” she said calmly, not turning her face and I felt ashamed for shouting at her and not long after I woke up. I was seven when I had this dream, I don't know if it was my first dream but I knew it was the first dream I recollected and the reason why I can't forget this dream was unknown to me.

Even though the dream remain ever green in my memory I still couldn't make anything thing out of it than the girl being black, wearing black and white and her hair twisted until two years after, when I had another dream.

I was on my bicycle, the exact one my mom but for me about a year ago, riding it toward the grocery store not far from our house. What I was going there to do was not clear to me but it was as if I wanted to go and show the bicycle to one of my friends because I was peddling the bicycle really fast and slowed down when the grocery store came into view.

I rode my bicycle inside the store and started scanning for something I do not know and I was so engrossed in the scanning that I didn't realised I was about to hit someone until a woman called out to me.

“Thank you” I said to the woman before focusing my gaze on the girl in

front of me. She was the one I was about to hit and even though the woman shout could be heard at every angle of the store, it had little or no effect on the girl in front of me because she neither turned nor shifted from her position but what really drew my attention to her was her gown, her hair style, the way she packed it, and then her complexion. Which was a replica of the one I drew fourteen months ago, which I glazed in my room.

My drawings began after the first dream, although I couldn't make anything out of it at first I still didn't relent and after a lot of practices I could draw very well if not perfectly.

“Excuse me” I said out of curiosity but got no reply, so I touched her and said “Good afternoon, I'm Tao seo, what of you?”

“I know” she replied without turning and started walking toward the entrance. I wanted to ride toward her but couldn't summon enough courage due to the way she replied and so I stay rooted to where I was.

Chapter 2

That morning when I got to school, I told Chun jo about everything. Chun jo had been my friend since I was an infant and later graduated to being my best friend over the years, she knows about my first dream although at first I didn't plan on telling a soul until she came to my room one afternoon, saw the picture and pressed me until I explain how a black girl picture found it way to my room.

“You have been thinking much about her” she said “She is just dreams, nothing else”

“I didn't remember thinking about her before going to bed last night”

“I see”

“But I'm seriously curious about her, as in there are somethings bothering me, like why does she loves white and black and so on like that”

“That is what I'm telling you, you are the one making the dreams up” she said but I didn't argue with her because I knew I could never win such an argument and when I got home that afternoon I drew what I saw in the grocery“ store.

Two months before my eleventh birthday I was in the class trying my new pencil on my drawing book when Kim, the greatest bully in our class flung my drawing book across the class all of a sudden. It wasn't like I could take him but I'm not a coward when it comes to my drawing book so I stood up and threw a punch at him but realized it was a mistake because he hit me hard, hard and hand until I couldn't defend my self any longer.

After been helped home by Chun jo, My mom gave me the first aid treatment with the assurance that she will come down to my school the next day. Although I didn't like the idea but I wasn't in good shape to argue with her.

Before leaving my room that night my mom asked me if I was feeling OK and I said yes by nearly shaking of my head. I was in so much pain I wanted to cry but didn't have enough energy so I cursed Kim instead.

I rolled and rolled for hours before falling asleep and then I saw myself in my dream, I was back in the class. I knew it was my class with the arrangement of everything but the paint on the wall gave me a pause because it was white and black.

Then I saw myself drawing the same thing I drew that afternoon, then I saw Kim whispering to one of his bully mate, pointing at me, before coming to me to fling my drawing book.

Everything exactly the way it was that afternoon, it was as if it was recorded then I saw myself stood up angrily and punched Kim in the face and Kim punched back so many times I fell on my knees groaning but Kim persisted.

“Stop it” I heard a female voice said although it was softly spoken, the voice held some respect and Kim stopped immediately to look at the interrupter but didn't challenge.

I looked up to see a girl my age or younger than me I can't say, coming toward me from the class back door. She wore exactly the same gown that was in my room, her twisted white and black hair backed in a pony tail. She was black but the most beautiful girl I've ever seen. She was coming toward me and I scanned the class and saw all of them with their eyes wildly opened and some of them were covering their mouths with their hands.

“Oh” I heard some says and I knew they were as shocked as I was and when I looked toward the girl's direction, she was already in front of me, her right hand stretched toward me as if she wanted to help me up

“Are you alright” she said, blinking her barbie doll eye lashes

“I-mm o-k-a-y” I stammered and put my hand in her's, although i was in a dream, it was a moment I will never trade for anything, a moment for me alone.

“You should be more careful next time”

“Tao seo! Tao seo! aren't you going to school today, you are going to be late” it was my mom voice that was breaking through my dream, patting me gently on my thigh. “Tao seo! Tao seo!”

“Uhn uhn uhn mom, good morning“ I said irritatedly

”You are going to be late“

”Mom, I don't think I will be going to school today“

”Why? we have to see your teacher“

”Mom let us do that tomorrow, I need to regain my strength“

”Okay, I will see you in the afternoon“ and with that she pecked me and left.

I was just getting out of bed to check my battered face in the mirror when I heard my dad says ”What do you mean he is not going to school? he have to go to school, he is a man, he have to be strong, why couldn't he hit back when that boy was hitting him?, I remember when I was a kid, i...“

”Baby you have to give him sometime, he his still young and as time goes on, he too will be strong enough to defend himself“

”But he still have to go“

”Spare him today, let him rest and I assure that if something like this happens again he will go“ she said quietly.

When I brushed my teeth that morning it was so painful I had to stop after two minutes because of the pain each brush was sending into my brain, which makes my head ached five folds more than it normal aching accuracy and even though I wasn't all that healthy I was the happiest boy on earth. Because, at last I saw her face and after taking few spoons out of my cereal, I brought out my drawing book and pencils and drew out what I saw at the class back door in my dream, even though my hand protested movement.

Chapter 3

Going to bed that night, I prayed to see her again but she never came that night, the next night nor the one that follows until a year after, where I saw myself playing in our garden, hitting the ball at our building and then stopped feeling exhausted. So I sat down on the stairs, enjoying the cool breeze of our garden. When I sighted a kitten which sat quietly on the ground, looking directly at me. Its fur was white and black and that made my heart thud faster, it was as if I knew she was there.

I got up slowly toward the cat which went out of reach immediately I reached out to it and rushed toward a corner.

Without wasting any seconds I followed and that was when I saw a figure bending down to pet the kitten and raised her head when she realized they weren't alone.

It was her I thought “Hi” I said but got no reply “hello”

“It has been a long time Tao seo, I'm just here to check on you”

“I'm okay, what about you?”

“I'm always okay” and then everything was silent “I will be celebrating my eleventh birthday in three weeks time, it will be on Tuesday”

“Happy birthday in advance”

“Thank you ”

“How can I contact you for your birthday”

“No need, I just want to tell you, bye” and I woke up feeling really happy and immediately marked down her birthday on my calendar. I prayed that she should visit me the night of her birthday but she never came and I felt sad the next morning.

Two months after her birthday, My cousin - Tao oh

and his parents visited us for my parents wedding anniversary. It was not a

big party, just the two families and I was very happy to have Tao oh in the house until he started bombarding me with questions about the black girl with the cat that was in my room.

“WHO is that girl?”

“A friend”

“Why is your room so full of her pictures?”

“I use her to practice my drawings”

“Why her always? why not you, your mom or dad?” and so on like that until I was tempted to throw him out of my room which I knew was not going to sit well with my mom.

During breakfast the next morning, Tao oh was not still satisfied with my answers and so he threw another question about the black girl in my room but this time around the question was not directed to me but to my mom.

“Aunt, who is that black girl that Tao seo have in his room?”

“A girl in Tao seo's room?” dad asked, looking at me as if he wanted to swallow me.

“Dad, it pictures, I mean my drawing he is talking about” I said and that made him relaxed a little bit.

“Tao oh, I have no idea who that girl is and the only response I get as an answer is an additional drawing whenever I asked him” my mom said, smiling at Tao oh which made me more angry at Tao oh.

“HE told me she is his friend”

“Friend” dad sneered “WHO is she?”

“A friend”

“I've never seen you with any black girl” My dad said looking me straight in the eye in order to detect whether I was lying or not and I hate Tao oh more for diverting My dad's attention to my drawings because I knew nothing good was going to come out of it.

“I...I”

“You what?” but I didn't know what to say, so I bent my head and started twisting my hands on my knees “What is her name?”

“I...I don't know”

“So how come she is your friend”

“I...she is someone I use to see from afar”

“Someone you use to see from afar and your room is so full of her pictures, Tao seo have always known you as a coward but son, I didn't realize until now that you also possess the moron ability. Take down those stupid drawings of yours and I do not want to ever see it again in this house unless you want me to do it for you”

“Dad please”

“It's final” I cried and pleaded but I knew it was not going to work until I coarsed my mom to plead for me and I promised not to talk to tao oh again which I made sure I fulfilled for the rest of that week even though he said *sorry* before leaving.

I have been begging my mom for weeks but still haven't gotten a positive answer but to wait.

One afternoon on our way home Chun jo asked me what was wrong and I told her everything but she didn't even help the situation, it was as if she thought what my dad did was the right thing and I promised not to discuss the matter with her again which I didn't keep because she knew how to get words out of me.

Four months on dot after the anniversary was when I had another dream, I saw myself in my room sitting on my chair checking out the drawing as if I was confirming that they were still in the room when I heard a voice

“They are beautiful, I love them” she said coming toward me and I jumped out of the chair instantly because I was unaware that someone was in my room.

“Uhn, you love them, thank you”

“You're welcome, I've never seen such beautiful drawings”

“Do you want more? I can draw more”

"If you want to"

"I used to glaze them on the wall but my dad stopped me"

"It's okay, everything is going to be fine" she said touching my cheek the way no other person had and I turned red in the face.

"What is your name?" I asked, I didn't know why I asked but it was what came out of my mouth and the only answer I got after was that I woke up. At first I couldn't recalled what happened until everything came back in a flash and I got scared because it felt real, it felt too real. I could still feel her hand on my cheek and I was unable to go back to sleep that night.

Some weeks later, my mom told me I could now glaze them back and I was so happy I hugged her and told her I loved her

Chapter 4

Two bad things happened in grade 7. The first one was general, it was about my class mate, Bae kae, who was kidnapped and injured mercilessly and the second one deals with me and Chun jo. Few weeks after the first incidence I and Chun jo had a disagreement. It wasn't our first but it was the toughest, it was about the new boy in class, who Chun jo was desperate to befriend and that made me jealous *I don't know what they see in him, as if he is handsome*. I thought and even if that was my thought I knew it was the truth. Jeremy was the cutest in our class and I also would have wanted to be his friend, if not for Chun jo who was now slipping away from my finger. So I challenged her.

“I don't want you to be friend with that boy”

“Who?”

“Jeremy”

“Why?”

“He is not as good as he will make you people believe”

“What makes you say that?” she asked looking at me in a defensive manner and I knew the conversation was not going as expected.

“Just my instinct” I replied looking straight ahead.

“And you expect me to act on that, he is now one of us and shouldn't be treated as an outcast”

“That is not what I'm saying”

“I understand everything you have been saying it just that I least expected it from you” she said changing her direction and I regretted bringing it up because it made our relationship sour for the following semesters.

Jeremy and Chun jo were now friends in some kind of ways and I prayed for his downfall, which never came. Seeing them together, I knew it was not like the kind of friendship I had with Chun jo but I couldn't pinned out what was wrong

until I heard Kim discussing how he caught Jeremy and Chun jo at Jeremy's house one Saturday when he went there unannounced and that made me went red in the head, it was as if I was been cheated and I cursed Jeremy ten thousand times.

Few weeks before Christmas in grade 8 was when I had another dream. I saw myself in a park full of kids, mostly my school mate and everyone was happy or at least pretended to be. I saw Chun jo and Jeremy at one side of the park, Chun jo was smiling as Jeremy was whispering something into her ear and I instantly took my eyes of them and looked at another corner, which was not a good one either because it was Kim and his bullying mate that my eyes landed on and I took my eyes off them immediately because I knew staring at them is not always a good sign and that was when I saw a girl on white and black, the same pattern with the one in my room but this time around, it was not a gown but a winter suit on a black trouser and her hair was packed in a ponytail.

She is here I thought and started walking toward her when I heard a girl called Cynthia and she waved back, smiling wholeheartedly to the other girl. "Cynthia, so that is her name" I said quietly before reaching her.

"Hi" I said but this time around, it wasn't like I was in a dream, it was like I have power over my thought.

"Merry Christmas in advance" she said stretching her hand for an hand shake which I took with shaky hand.

"Same to you"

"Longest time"

"Same to you" I repeated because that hand in mine was making me unreasonable.

"It had been more than a year" she said releasing my hand from the handshake.

"Yeah, that is true. I thought you weren't coming back"

"Why will you think that way? I was just busy" she said smiling.

"So, are you now through with what you were doing?"

“Absolutely yes”

“That girl over there” I said pointing toward the girl “she called you Cynthia. Is that your name?”

“Yeah, it my name. My second name”

“So, what is your first name?”

“We have all the time to ourselves. So don't worry, I will tell you some other time. Your friend Chun jo, you miss her” she said Looking towards Chun jo's direction.

“Yes but I'm getting over it” I said as fast as I could, not wishing for the next topic to be Chun jo because saying her name made my mouth bitter.

“She likes you but she is not doing the right thing. Can we go and try that train?” she asked changing the topic which I was really grateful for.

“Yes of course” and so we found ourselves on the train, grinning at each other as the train was moving and then I woke up.

It had been in our school agenda that we were to go to a park two weeks before Christmas and because it was compulsory, My dad allowed me to go. It was my first time in that park but as soon as we went in, I realised it was the park I dreamt about few weeks earlier.

Everything was exactly the same, Chun jo and Jeremy smiling at each other. Kim and his bullying mate hitting a boy at a corner and I looked at other corners sharply trying to see if I could see a black girl with a twisted white and black hair packed in a ponytail but to no luck. So I went for an ice cream but stopped on my track when I saw a girl in white and black. I did not even check her out until it was almost too late because it wasn't Cynthia but grade 9 cruel So rim that I do not want to cross path with and with one step after another, I reversed my direction. Everyone was happy but me because I felt so lonely to the extent that I prayed for everything to be over soon.

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