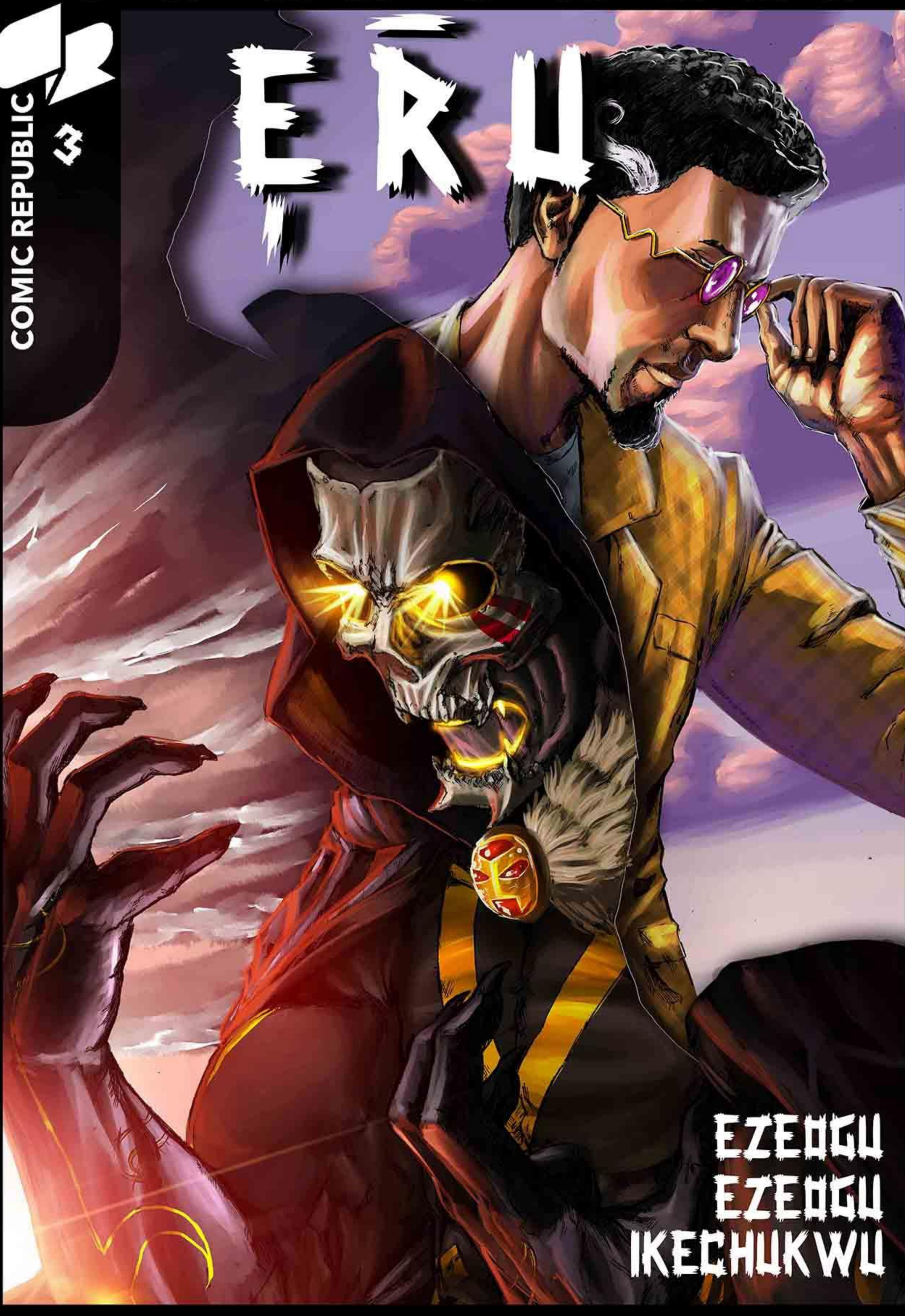


F O L K T A L E S

# FERU

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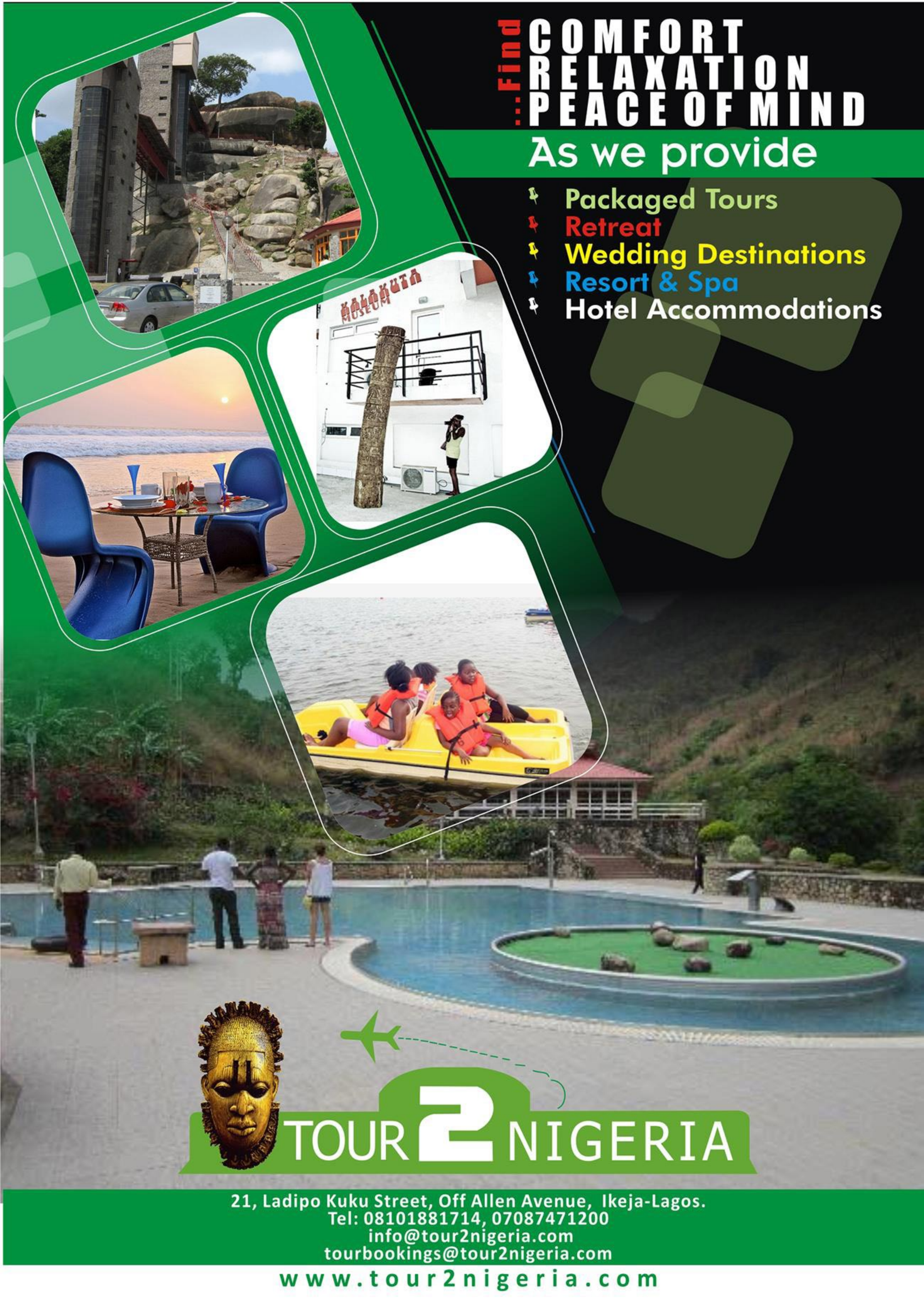
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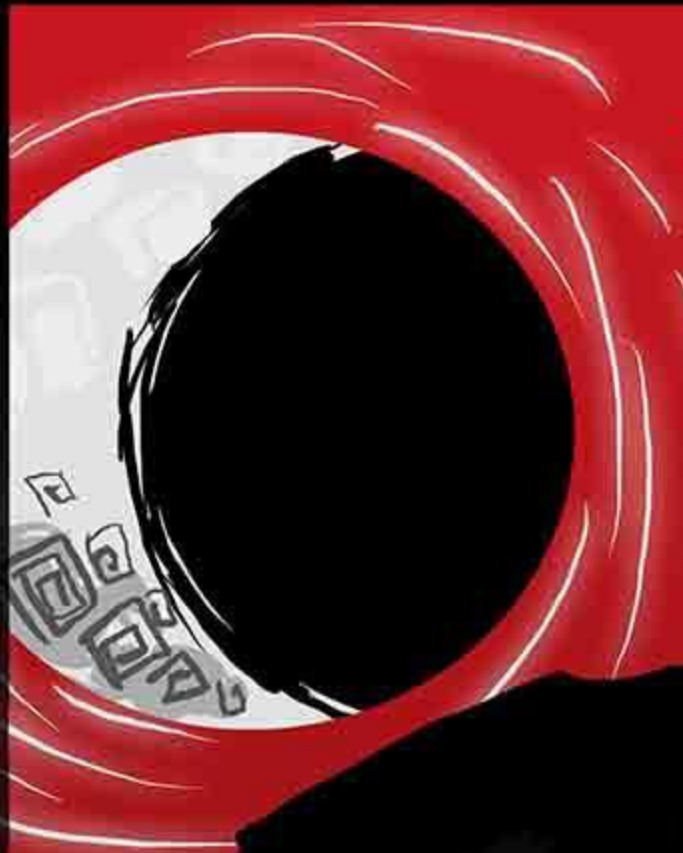
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3



# ERU



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# ERU

A TALE CRAFTED BY  
TOBE MAX EZEUGU

PENCILS BY OZO EZEUGU

COLOURS BY FRANKLIN IKECHUKWU

COLOURS BY TOBE MAX EZEUGU (COVER, GFX)

STORY BY TOBE EZEUGU

WRITTEN BY VERONICA CRAWFORD (CHAPTER1)

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# CHAPTER<sup>I</sup>

THE MONSTERS  
THAT HAUNT US ,  
LIVE NOT IN THE DARK,  
BUT IN OUR HEARTS

-TOBE MAX EZEUGU



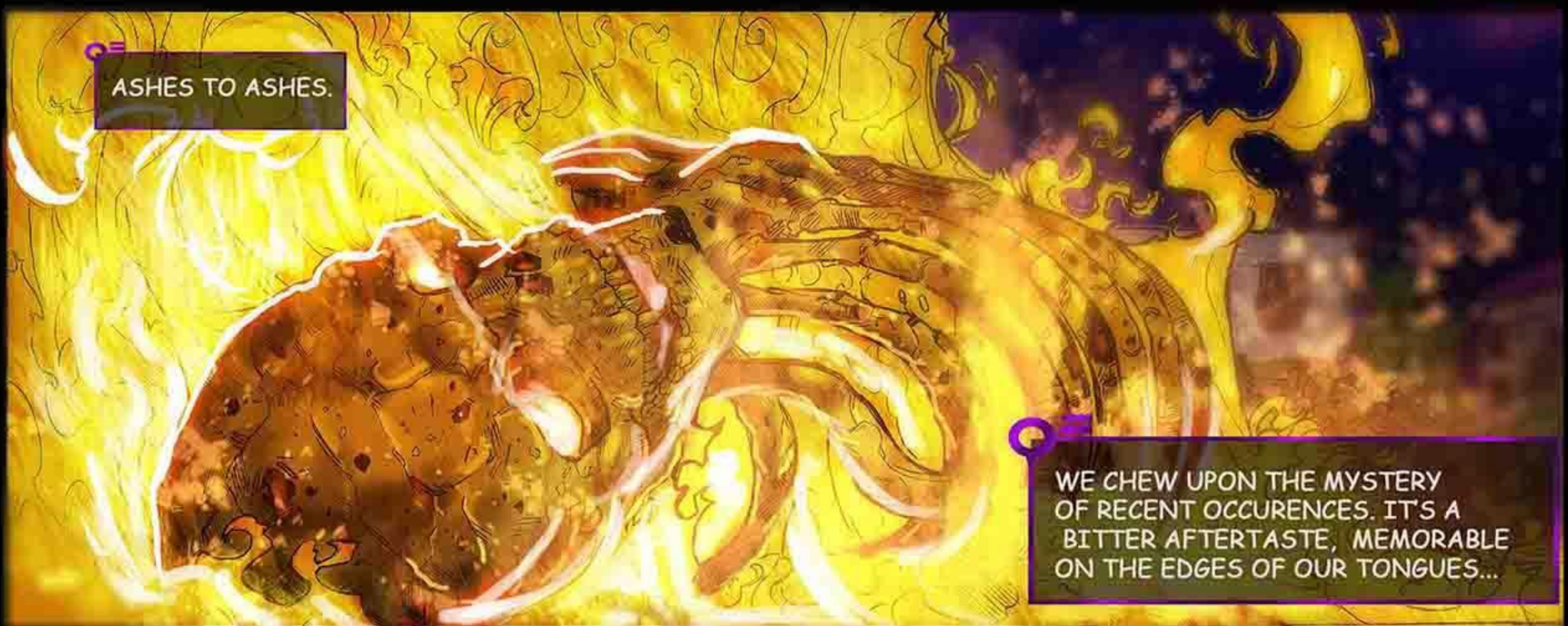




AN EYE FOR AN EYE.

DUST TO DUST.

A BONE FOR A BONE



ASHES TO ASHES.

WE CHEW UPON THE MYSTERY OF RECENT OCCURENCES. IT'S A BITTER AFTERTASTE, MEMORABLE ON THE EDGES OF OUR TONGUES...



...LIKE BITTER KOLA.

WHY WOULD ANYONE DELIBERATELY LIGHT HIS OWN FUNERAL PYRE, DOOMING HIMSELF TO THE FLAMES?



PERHAPS WE ARE LIKE HIS ADVESARY, RELYING ON OUR FIVE SENSES.





DOOMED TO THE  
ETERNAL ERROR OF OUR  
JUDGEMENTS.

NO!  
NO!  
NO!

AAAAAHHHHHHH!



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE  
THINKING. FORGIVE  
MY MANNERS BUT I HAD  
TO BUY TIME WITH A  
CHEAP ILLUSION.



EH?



EHEN,  
I WAS GOING TO  
KILL YOU ABIP  
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE  
IT IN ITS 'SHALLOW'  
SHELL!

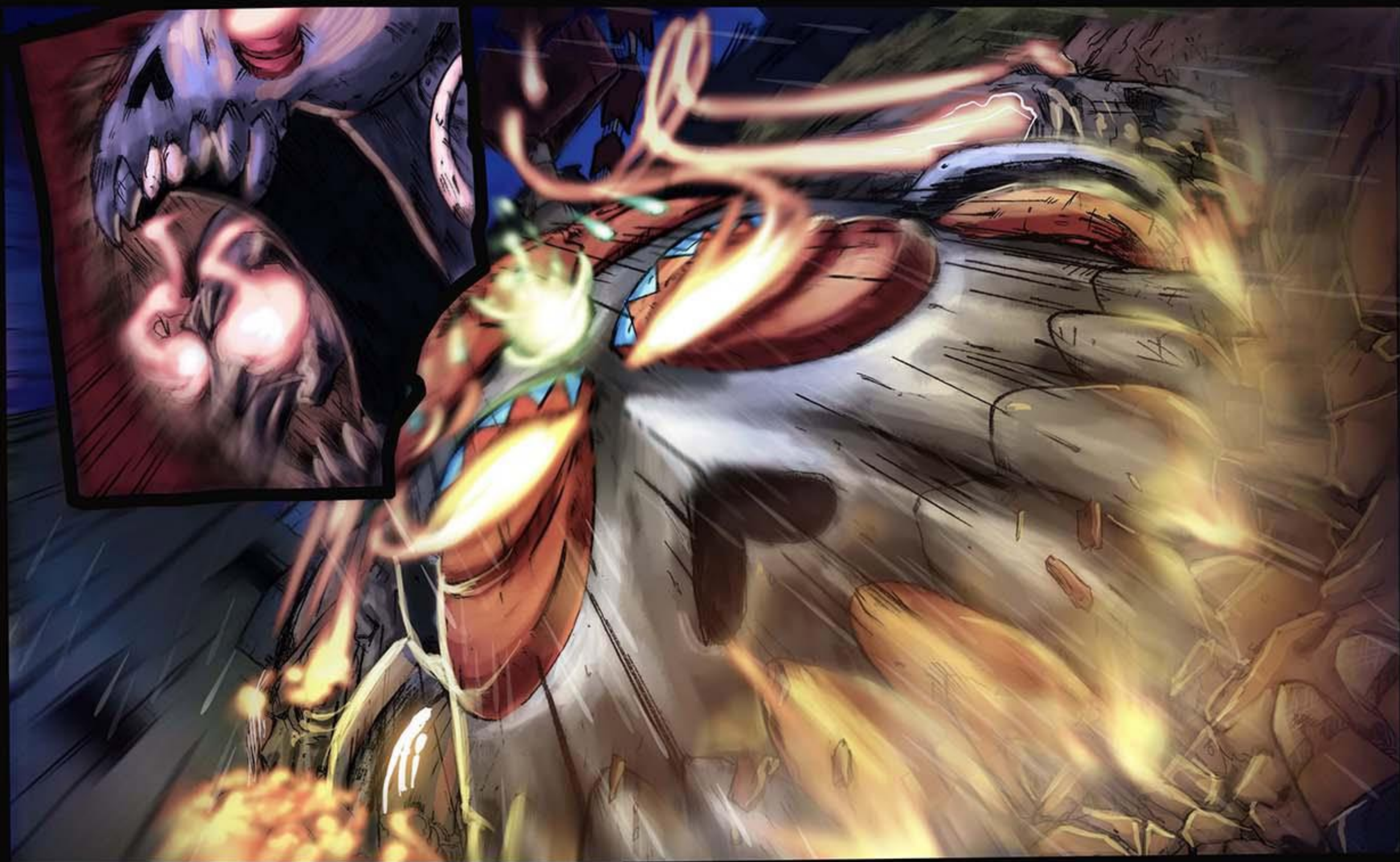
MY OLD FRIEND...  
**META OBA!**

IJIYA!

IDAJO!

GBESAN!







# CHAMPION OF DEMA

CO  
ALMIER



# K.I.R.U

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**\*SIGH\***  
**IN THE END**  
**YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER**  
**PUPPET TO TORMENT,**  
**WHAT A WASTE!**

**AS MUCH AS I**  
**WISH TO END YOU,**  
**I NEED ANSWERS.**



**ALL THAT TALK**  
**AND NO BITE, THIS WAS**  
**TOO EASY!**  
**§ 'HMM HMM LAGBAJA**  
**NOTHING FOR YOU'!**  
**♪**



**\*SOB\* \*SOB\***  
**OH MY G-**  
**GO-GO--**  
**GOD!**



**WHAT ARE YOU**  
**LOOKING AT?**



**OH, OH,**  
**DID I SCARE YOU?**  
**I CAN SMELL IT , THE FEAR,**  
**ITS STENCH CLOUDS**  
**YOU.**





ITS  
STENCH BECLOUDS  
YOUR CAPACITY TO  
WALK HEAD HIGH IN THE  
SUN; A LAMB TO  
SLAUGHTER.



RUN ALONG,  
I'M OUT OF CHARITY  
TONIGHT. IF YOU CHOOSE,  
KEEP YOUR HEAD BONED  
AND BENT ON YOUR  
LIFE'S PATH...



I DO HOPE TO SEE YOU  
AS A WOLF SOMEDAY, NOT SOME  
SHEEP IN NEED OF SAVING,  
UNTIL THEN REMEMBER...



REMEMBER THE ONE YOU  
FEAR THE MOST!



ADA'S DAIRY. OCTOBER 13TH, FRIDAY:

ITS BEEN FOUR MONTHS SINCE THE DAY  
I MET 'IT', ITS WORDS HAUNT ME,  
I'M FALLING TO PIECES, NIGHTMARES.



THERE ARE THINGS OUT THERE. I'VE TOLD  
MYSELF 'NO DARK CORNERS' 'DON'T ENTER MEN'S  
CARS'. I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF THEY'RE MEN  
SELF. NO ONE BELIEVES ME, NENE SAYS IT'S  
ALCOHOL. I'M FALLING APART. I'M AFRAID  
IT'S STILL OUT THERE.



HEH!  
HEHEEEH!  
HAHAHAA!

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!  
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!  
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!  
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

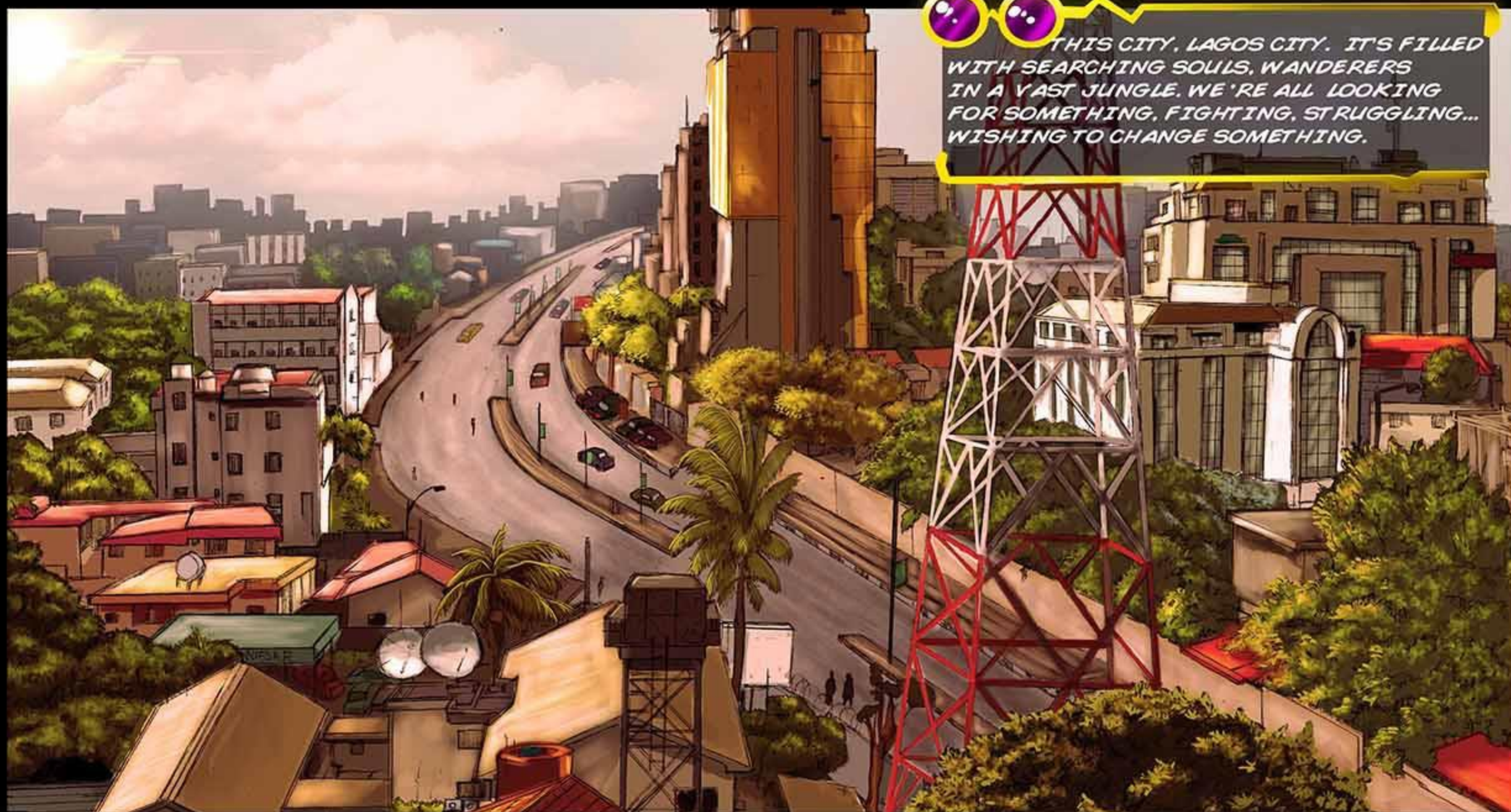




# CHAPTER II

WHOEVER FIGHTS MONSTERS  
SHOULD SEE TO IT THAT,  
IN THE PROCESS,  
HE DOES NOT BECOME  
A MONSTER...  
-FREIDRICH NIETZSCHE





THIS CITY, LAGOS CITY. IT'S FILLED WITH SEARCHING SOULS, WANDERERS IN A VAST JUNGLE. WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR SOMETHING, FIGHTING, STRUGGLING... WISHING TO CHANGE SOMETHING.

SOMETIMES WE FIGHT A WAR SO OLD WE LOSE SIGHT OF WHO WE ARE OR WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR. QUESTIONS OF DOUBT ARISE: 'WHO ARE WE OR WHY DO WE FIGHT.' 'IS IT WORTH IT?' THE ANSWERS ARE SIMPLISTIC AND VERY UNFULFILLING.



MY NAME IS ERIC KUKOYI. BY DAY I AM MANY THINGS: EITHER A PSYCHIATRIST OR LECTURER MOSTLY. BY NIGHT I BECOME ONE...I BECOME FEAR ITSELF.






I DECIDED NOT TO DRIVE TO WORK TODAY. A NAIVE THOUGHT. I ASSUMED THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT WOULD ALLOW ME TO CONNECT TO THE HUMANITY I FELT I WAS LOOSING, YOU KNOW. 'CONNECT WITH THE PEOPLE'. I REGRET THAT DECISION NOW.



I HAVE BEEN FEAR ITSELF FOR TWO DECADES NOW. I DON'T NEED SLEEP. I DON'T AGE ANYMORE. THE STREAK ON MY HAIR MAKES ME LOOK OLDER BUT LIKE MOST THINGS AROUND. IT'S AN ILLUSION OF TRUTH.




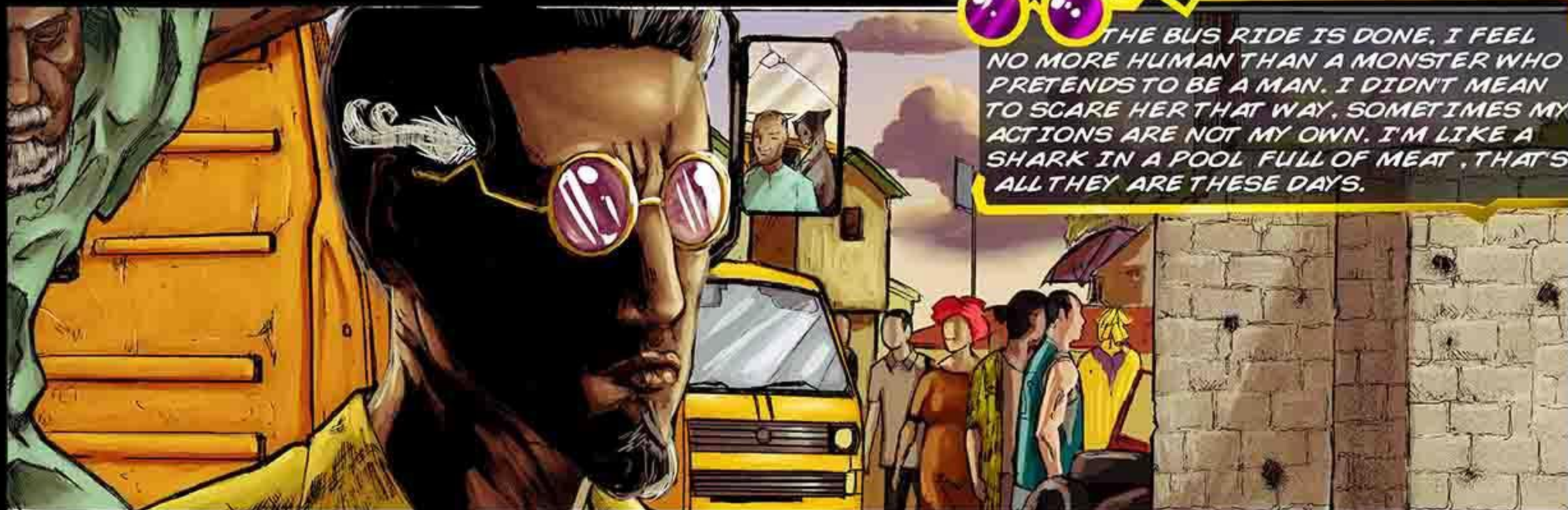





IN A FLASH SHE GOES THROUGH A YEAR OF HER WORST CHILDHOOD FEARS. I CAN SMELL HER FEARS. IT SMELLS LIKE GARLIC... YES, CLAUSTROPHOBIA. AND SHE CHOOSES TO BOARD A LAGOS BUS, HOW IRONIC!



THE BUS RIDE IS DONE. I FEEL NO MORE HUMAN THAN A MONSTER WHO PRETENDS TO BE A MAN. I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE HER THAT WAY. SOMETIMES MY ACTIONS ARE NOT MY OWN. I'M LIKE A SHARK IN A POOL FULL OF MEAT. THAT'S ALL THEY ARE THESE DAYS.



*\*SIGH\**  
I SAW YOUR ESSENCE OOZING BEFORE WE ENTERED THE BUS, ADIMU. YOU CANT HIDE FROM ME, NOTHING CAN..



THE OLD MAN'S BEEN TRAILING ME. THE ONLY ONE PERSON WHO HAS THE GUTS TO DO SO IS ADIMU, THE 'OBA EGUNGUN' THAT HAS BEEN BOUND TO SERVE AT THE SIDE OF ANY WHO BECOME FEAR ITSELF. I'VE KNOWN HIS SCENT SINCE I WAS A CHILD. EVEN SPIRITS HAVE FEAR IN THEM.

SHARP AS A SNAKE'S BITE. AS ALWAYS MY KING. MAY YOU LIVE MANY YEARS. "OLUWA-IBERU".







OUR  
THUNDER GOD  
FRIEND FROM THE  
EAST. HE WISHES TO  
MEET WITH YOU  
CONCERNING THIS  
"SCOURGE"  
MATTER. HE SAYS  
TIME IS —

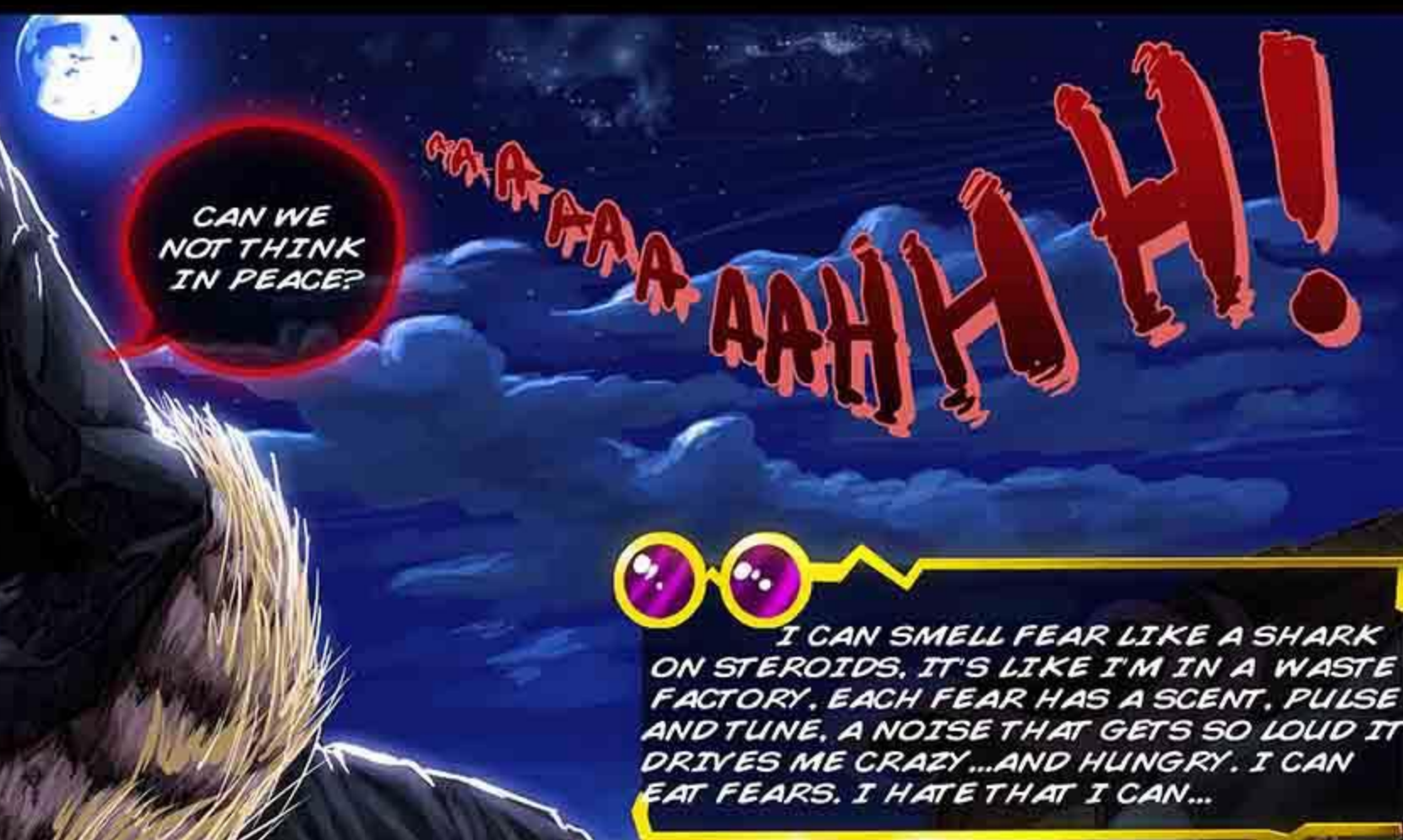


THUNDER GODS,  
CAPES, TEEN HEROES  
AND SCOURGES! I'M  
LOSING IT ADIMU. HAS  
THE WORLD GONE AS  
CRAZY AS I  
HAVE?

I'M GLAD YOU  
FINALLY  
ADMIT YOU'RE  
CRAZY.



I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY  
I DO WHAT I DO. THE REASON IS  
LOST TO ME. SOMEWHERE I JUST  
KNOW I'M BOUND TO THIS. TO BE  
FEAR. TO BE RETRIBUTION. BEEN  
THINKING TOO MUCH—



CAN WE  
NOT THINK  
IN PEACE?

AAAAA  
AAHHH!

I CAN SMELL FEAR LIKE A SHARK  
ON STEROIDS. IT'S LIKE I'M IN A WASTE  
FACTORY. EACH FEAR HAS A SCENT, PULSE  
AND TUNE, A NOISE THAT GETS SO LOUD IT  
DRIVES ME CRAZY...AND HUNGRY. I CAN  
EAT FEARS. I HATE THAT I CAN...





COME  
HERE JORR!  
YOUR FATHER DIED WITH  
NOTHING BUT DEBTS, NOW  
THEY'RE AFTER ME, YOU  
WILL NOT DRIVE ME POOR.  
I MUST USE YOU,  
YES, YES! I WILL SELL  
YOUR BODY  
PARTS.

I WATCH FROM AFAR, APATHY  
IN MY EYES. SHE'S BLIND, SHE'S SCARED,  
IRONICALLY I'M BLIND TO HER PAIN,  
HER FEARS. I CAN'T SEE THE REASON  
TO ACT. "I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A  
HERO!"

UNKU BODE  
EJO, EJO,  
E MA BI NU!

THE BLADE MEETS HER.  
HER FEARS CALL TO ME. LIKE  
IRON NEAR A MAGNET...

AAAHHHH!!!

WE ACT ON IMPULSE  
DRAGGING HIM INTO THE  
SHADOW REALM, OUR REALM.

BLOOD OF  
JACOB  
OO!!!

WE REMEMBER,  
WE ARE THE NIGHT,  
WE ARE THE SHADOWS.  
WE ARE RETRIBUTION...

\*GURK!\*



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#1

# GUARDIANPRIME

## GENESIS



MART  
IKECHUKWU  
ZWELLENJE



 THE SHADOW REALM  
AN INFINITE REALM WHERE  
FEAR IS SOVEREIGN. BY  
VIRTUE. WE ARE GODS HERE.



ODEBURUKU!  
SO YOU'D USE  
YOUR OWN KIN  
RATHER THAN  
WORK, EHN?



I BIND YOU,  
I BIND YOU! YOU  
DEMON I BI—



SHHHH!  
DONT WORRY I'M  
NOT GOING TO KILL  
YOU...NO, THAT  
WOULD BE EASY.









THE ARROGANCE OF LIGHT IS  
BELIEVING IT IS THE FASTEST  
THING IN THE UNIVERSE, BUT IT  
FINDS CONTINUALLY THAT  
EVERYWHERE IT GOES, DARKNESS  
IS ALREADY THERE, WAITING.

**Avonion**  
THE REALM WITHIN

ISSUE 3 | COMING SOON!









PLEASE, PLEASE  
UNKU BODE, PLEASE.  
I'M SORRY...  
PLEASE DONT KILL ME  
EJO!

IF SHE COULD SEE ME  
RIGHT NOW, SHE'D SCREAM. I'M NOT  
THE KIND OF HERO THAT RECIEVES  
PRAISES AND THANK YOU'S, THEN  
AGAIN, WHAT KIND'VE HERO AM I ?



I-I CAN SEE !  
I CAN SEE YOU,  
ARE YOU AN ANGEL?  
DID I ...DID I  
DIE?

NO ...NO YOU'RE  
NOT DEAD, WE'RE  
IN A SPECIAL  
PLACE, A WORLD OF  
OUR OWN, KIND'VE  
LIKE HEAVEN.

SO MUCH TRAUMA,  
SHE FALLS IN INSTANTLY.



LIKE HEAVEN!  
YOU'RE AN ANGEL ABI?  
CAN I HAVE ICE CREAM,  
POPCORN? CAN I BUY  
SUYA FOR FREE EHN?  
CAN I INVITE MUMMY  
AND AUNTY ADA?

HEHE! I'M NO  
ANGEL CHILD.  
HERE YOU CAN  
HAVE EVERYTHING  
YOU IMAGINE...

AN ILLUSION IN HER MIND,  
A DREAM TO SHOW HER PARADISE  
FAR FROM THE DARKNESS SHE'S  
DROWNED IN, THERE WE ESCAPE  
THE SHACKLES OF REALITY. HERE  
OUR IMAGINATION IS REALITY.





WE SHOW HIM HIS WORST FEARS, A SECOND FEELS LIKE DAYS TO HIM, WE FEED OFF IT; HIS FEARS.

I TRY TO REIGN HIM IN, TRY TO REMIND "FEAR ITSELF" WHO WE ARE, THE HUNGER IT'S HARD TO CONTROL, BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY TIME WE FEEL ALIVE.

WE PUSH FURTHER TILL HE BREAKS. HIS MIND FRACTURES AND WE ECHO INTO HIS NIGHTMARES "I AM FEAR, BREAKER OF WILLS".





WE SIT THERE FOR HOURS.  
SHE FALLS INTO DEEP SLEEP, AS  
THE HERBS I GIVE HER HEAL THE  
WOUNDS ON HER SKIN... JUST  
TWO TORTURED SOULS.

I STOPPED BELIEVING  
THERE WAS A REASON TO  
KEEP FIGHTING. EVER SO  
OFTEN I HAVE MOMENTS  
LIKE THESE.

IT REMINDS ME OF  
SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING FOR.  
THIS CITY FILLED WITH WANDER-  
ING SOULS. WE'RE ALL FIGHTING  
FOR SOMETHING...WHAT ARE YOU  
FIGHTING FOR?









THIS  
WILL BE ONE  
LONG NIGHT!

 " C'EST LA VIE ".





# FAN ART

TANIART IBRAHIMI



ADELEYE YUSUF



BOBBY ONI BALOGUN



ADELEYE YUSUF

JIBRI EBENEZER



KENSHIRO OLUWASEUN



ISSAC ESIDENE



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# TALKING

# DRUIT

## FAMOUS LAST WORDS

**F**amous last words, no? No one's dying, this isn't goodbye. It's 6:34 pm at the point where I'm writing this, staring at the sunset over Lagos city. Musing to myself, I decide to trail back to where it all began.

Truth be told it started out like a joke, and it became something more. In the beginning our fans complained of the lack of African themed heroes. I remember staring at a bunch of angry comments from our fans then telling the team you know what give me one night I'll cook up something. That night I tried and everything just didn't feel right. The ideas I drafted were just "not it", I heard the generator die out and the lights went off in my room, I pulled the candle from my desk quickly and lit it in a flash, didn't want to stay in the dark. You may think I'm afraid of the dark but far from it I embrace it in my ever constant melancholic air of black clothes and heavy metal, I wasn't afraid of the dark but what I felt was in it. The night grew onerous, I felt the need to look over my shoulder in a room where I was alone. I wasn't getting anywhere and this feeling was wrecking me (looking over my shoulder), I got tired my candle was low I turned my seat-

-and crumpled the sketched failures tossing it in the direction my mind so vehemently fixated upon. I resumed drawing with the little light I had left, the feeling grew a bit closer albeit my paranoia and fear had given it some life, I tried to shrug it off the uneasy feeling. Then it hit me a curve like a smile glowing in the dark (which I would later put on eru's face) I would make him "fear", not just a guy who made people scared, but living breathing "fear itself" such that if he was ever removed fear would cease to exist. The concept was a hard sell but it sounded cool yeah? The next morning I pitched it with the team at the table and we threw names out like phobia, nightmare man etc. Then I asked Jide Martin what fear was in Yoruba, 'ERU'. The name stuck I loved it. The first issue was a test in the water to see if it would float, truth be told I planned to kill the title off I wasn't satisfied yet, but the reaction the acceptance made me rethink it all. I went back to the board drafting and scheming then idea took shape in issue two and I decided to tell the story from each of the main characters in the story. We've gone through each one and

I THOUGHT BEING  
A NIGERIAN  
CHARACTER MEANT  
LESS ISSUES

JUST ASK  
GUARDIAN PRIME  
HE HAS A LOT OF  
ISSUES AND  
MORE!



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# TALKING DRUIT

## FAMOUS LAST WORDS

- Reached the end of our prologue and the story is about to begin as we will throw eric/eru into the worst the abyss has to offer a darkness of his own making.

as i finish my note here i play the song "my chemical romance -famous last words", remembering the struggle it took to get this issue out . juggling deadlines on diffrent projects and im grateful to the team for pushing me forward, all the love from the fans who drive me to push to push my limits further and further my family who let me chase my dream with thier blessings, the sleepless nights of cofee music and cranky lapto, and to the reason i keep moving,to those who chase dreams,to those facing fears...

"we are not afraid to keep on living,  
we will never walk this world alone"



UHMM. DOCTOR  
I THINK I HAVE  
SOME "ISSUES".

I'M AFRAID  
YOU'RE RIGHT  
SIR, YOU HAVE  
JUST **3**.



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## LETTERS TO DR.KUKOYI

DEAR DOCTOR KUKOYI, IN OUR PREVIOUS CLASS YOU SPOKE ABOUT HOW FEAR CONTROLS AND LIMITS US FROM ACHIEVING OUR TRUEST POTENTIAL, HOW IT CAN MOLD US OR BUILD US , OR EAT US TILL WE BECOME A SHADOW OF OURSELVES. I WAS ONCE THAT SHADOW, HIDING BEHIND THE LIGHT UP UNTIL A FEW DAYS AGO WHERE I CAME FACE TO FACE WITH WHAT I FEAR THE MOST . I STOOD ALONE, MICROPHONE IN FRONT OF ME.

MY HANDS WERE AT MY SIDES TREMBLING VIOLENTLY LIKE A DRIED LEAF ON A WINDY DAY. IN FRONT OF ME OVER A HUNDRED PROBING EYES THAT BORED HOLES IN ME WITH THEIR STARES. IT WAS THOSE SAME EYES THAT HAD SHUNNED ME EFFORTLESSLY OVER A YEAR AGO AS I STOOD ON THAT SAME PODIUM UNABLE TO SAY A WORD. I HAD STOOD THERE FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE HOURS, STARING BACK INTO THOSE EYES FEELING LIKE I HAD BEEN DOUSED WITH COLD WATER. IN THE END I HAD TO RUN AWAY FROM THERE AS THE CROWD BOOED AND SHOUTED WORDS THAT CUT ME DEEPER THAN ANY BLADE COULD. ONCE AGAIN, I STOOD ON THAT PODIUM TRYING TO BE WHO I WANTED TO BE. MY PALMS QUAKED AS MURMURS IN THE CROWD INCREASED. I TRIED TO SPEAK BUT NOTHING CAME OUT OF MY MOUTH BUT A THROATY SOUND. MY EYES CLASHED WITH THE NUMEROUS PIERCING EYES THAT HAD HAUNTED MY NIGHTMARES LEAVING ME A NERVOUS WRECK. THOSE EYES WERE FOREVER ON ME JUDGING ME. I THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT AND SAID 'SORRY' AS THE MURMURS INCREASED. I LOOKED DOWN AT MY SHOES AND LOOKED UP TO MEET THE SMILE OF A FAMILIAR FACE, HER GESTURES SEEMED TO SAY THERE WAS NOTHING TO FEAR, FEAR WAS THE COURAGE I NEEDED. I BREATHED IN SMILED AND AGAIN I TRIED , TO MY SURPRISE WORDS WERE FORMED AND THOSE WORDS TURNED INTO PHRASES, TEN MINUTES LATER IT WAS ALL OVER. THE RHYTHM OF MY BEATING HEART ECHOED THE APPLAUD. I FELT LIKE A THOUSAND FIREWORKS SET ALIGHT I WALKED AWAY THAT DAY, HAVING FACED MY FEAR AND IN ADMIRATION OF MY TRUE SELF. FEAR LIKE YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME IS A WEAKNESS A REASON FOR CAUTION, BUT TO THOSE WHO WISH TO STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS FEAR IS A SPARK THAT LEADS TO THE BIRTH OF A BLAZING FIRE OF WILL.

— ERHU ARMEYAN