

ISSUE 01 • THE ORIGIN ARC



BREATH OF THE ANCESTORS



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CENTURIES AFTER THE FALL OF OLD NIGERIA, THE SACRED MOUNTAINS OF ILE-IFE REMAINED UNTOUCHED BY TIME. IN THESE MOUNTAINS LIVED ISHANA, THE 65-YEAR-OLD CHIEF EIFA PRIEST—GUARDIAN OF ANCIENT WISDOM AND OVERSEER OF THE GRAND EIFA SHRINE.

SINCE THE FALL OF ÈXÙ, EIFA PRIESTS HAD BECOME THE LAST TRUE BRIDGE BETWEEN MAN AND THE DIVINE. AND ON THIS NIGHT, UNDER THE WATCHFUL GAZE OF THE MOON... ISHANA STIRRED.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

THE DREAM HAD FELT REAL, TOO REAL TO IGNORE.

THE HOUR CLOAKED IN AN UNNATURAL STILLNESS...
3:00 A.M.

IT WASN'T JUST A DREAM.

SEEKING SOLACE IN THE COOL NIGHT AIR...

COLD NIGHT.

BUT BENEATH THE STILLNESS...
SOMETHING STIRRED.

IT DESCENDED LIKE A SHADOW TORN FROM THE STARS...



THERE'S NO TIME TO RUN—ONLY TO FIGHT.



REACTING INSTINCTIVELY, HE REACHED FOR THE SIGILS—HIS ANCHOR BETWEEN REALMS.



GRATITUDE BEARS THE BURDEN, MAY THE SPIRIT WITHIN ME NOT FALTER...



A CIRCLE OF FLAME ROSE IN DEFIANCE, DRAWN BY SACRED GEOMETRY AND AN UNSHAKEN SPIRIT.

A YEAR HAD PASSED SINCE ISHANA'S ENCOUNTER IN THE MOUNTAINS. NOW, IN THE OMOLUABI ORPHANAGE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF AKAMARA, A BOY NAMED AARE SAT QUIETLY ON HIS SICKBED. THE CITY OUTSIDE BUZZED WITH ITS USUAL RHYTHM, BUT HIS WORLD FELT UNNATURALLY STILL.

WHAT COULD HAVE HIT ME THE OTHER TIME?

THE MEMORY WAS HAZY—LIKE SMOKE SLIPPING THROUGH HIS FINGERS.

I COULD SWEAR I SAW A BALL OF FIRE... IT CAME OUT OF NOWHERE. THAT'S THE LAST THING I REMEMBER BEFORE BLACKING OUT.

WHIRRRRR!

NO WARNING. NO VOICE. JUST HEAT—AND IMPACT.

THEN THE DREAM FOLLOWED—MORE VIVID THAN ANY NIGHTMARE.

...COULD THAT HAVE BEEN REAL?

A MONSTROUS FIGURE... EYES LIKE MOLTEN METAL... AND FLAMES—COMING FROM ME.

CRASH!

A LOUD CRASH SNAPPED HIM BACK TO REALITY.

WHAT WAS THAT?!

AARE SAT UP, STARTLED.
THE ROOM FELT HEAVIER...
THE AIR SMELLED WRONG.

WHAT WAS
THAT SOUND...

AND THIS
SMELL?

THIN GAS SEEPED IN FROM THE VENT—GREEN
AND SLOW, LIKE SOMETHING ALIVE.

HE MOVED TOWARD THE
WINDOW. THE SOUND HAD
COME FROM OUTSIDE,
NOT INSIDE.

PLEASE
LET IT BE
NOTHING...

MASKED INTRUDERS... SIX OF THEM. ONE WAS
FEEDING GREEN GAS INTO THE BUILDING'S VENTS.

WHO ARE
THEY?

WHY DO THEY
LOOK LIKE...

SOLDIERS?

TO BE CONTINUED...



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