

ISSUE 01 • THE ORIGIN ARC



**BREATH OF THE ANCESTORS**





# IIJAYA

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

IT WASN'T JUST A DREAM.

THE DREAM HAD FELT REAL, TOO REAL TO IGNORE.

SEEKING SOLACE IN THE COOL NIGHT AIR...

COLD NIGHT.

BUT BENEATH THE STILLNESS...  
SOMETHING STIRRED.



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



FWOOOOOSH

FWOOOOOSH

WHAT  
ABOMINATION  
IS THAT?

?!

THERE'S NO TIME TO RUN—ONLY TO FIGHT.

ORÚNMÌLÀ,  
GUIDE MY HAND...



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

OPE LERU  
KÍ EMÍ INÚ MI  
LÈ BÀ...



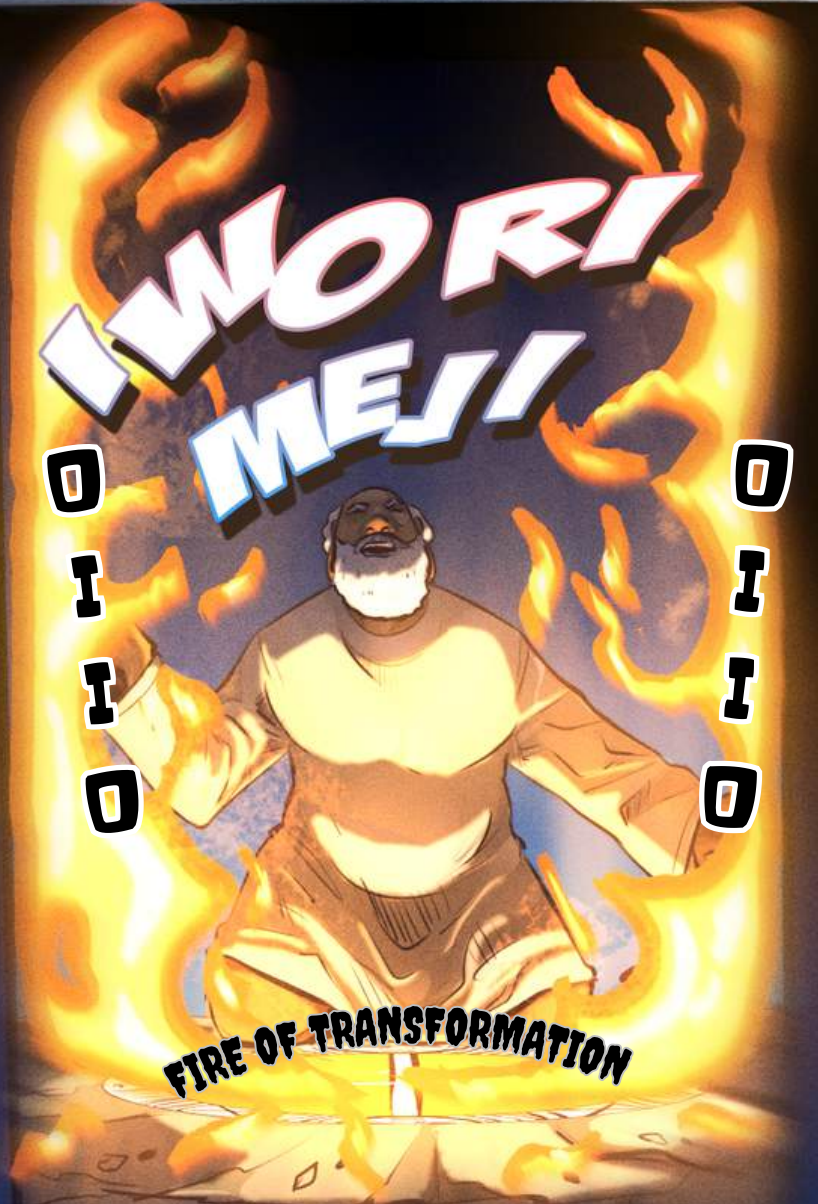
GRATITUDE BEARS THE BURDEN, MAY THE  
SPIRIT WITHIN ME NOT FALTER...

IWORI  
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FIRE OF TRANSFORMATION



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.

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.

WHAT WAS THAT?!

A LOUD CRASH SNAPPED HIM BACK TO REALITY.



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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