

Copyright Page

AURORA – LET THE MORNING COME: A WHISPER OF HOPE AND PERSEVERANCE

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Author's Note

The cultural, historical, and linguistic elements of Nigeria—including Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa names, words, and proverbs—are used with respect and for artistic purposes with the aim of authenticity. While the town of Ijiko-Doko and the Arewa Rock are fictional creations, they are inspired by the very real and profound cultural heritage, resilience, and spirit of unity found across West Africa.

Abstract

Aurora – Let the Morning Come: A Whisper of Hope and Perseverance is a contemporary literary novel set in the cultural crossroads of Nigeria. It follows Aurora "Ijuanya" Ngozi, a celebrated but traumatized photojournalist who has silenced her camera after a professional failure costs a life. Haunted by the past, she retreats from the world until a cryptic letter from an elderly curator, Folashade "Shade," summons her to the historic town of Ijiko-Doko. Here, the monolithic Arewa Rock—a library of ancient, interwoven Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa petroglyphs—is threatened by a modern rail project. Ijuanya is drawn into a conflict between Braimah, a preservationist anthropologist, and her childhood friend Jioke, the project's idealistic architect. As she reluctantly lifts her camera again, she discovers a hidden celestial map on the rock that mirrors a mysterious scar on her own palm—a scar tied to her grandmother's erased research and a forgotten pact of unity forged centuries ago under a falling star. The novel is a layered exploration of memory, identity, and reconciliation. It intertwines a personal journey of healing with a communal fight to preserve heritage

against the engine of progress. Through a synthesis of art, science, botany, and community action, Ijuanya and her newfound allies must forge a different kind of truth—one that proves that hope is not the absence of darkness, but the decision to build a new dawn, together. This is a story about the courage to step into the frame of your own life and the enduring power of stories to mend what is broken.

Main Characters

Aurora "Ijuanya" Ngozi (Igbo): The protagonist. "Aurora" (the dawn) is the name given to her by her academic mother who loved the stars. She goes by "Ijuanya" (Igbo for "wonder"). Ngozi means "blessing," a testament to her family's fallen royalty status. She is a gifted but troubled photojournalist, haunted by a past tragedy, seeking the "morning" of her own spirit.

Ibrahim "Braimah" (Hausa/Fulani): The pragmatic yet deeply philosophical foil to Ijuanya. Ibrahim (the prophet). He goes by Braimah, a common nickname. A renowned cultural anthropologist and preservationist, he becomes Aurora's guide and unexpected anchor.

Folashade "Shade" (Yoruba): The catalyst and heart of the story. Folashade means "honor confers a crown." She is a brilliant, elderly curator and storyteller, the keeper of a community's history. She knows the secret that connects Aurora's past to a larger story of resilience.

Chijioke "Jioke" (Igbo): Aurora's childhood friend and unrequited love. Chijioke means "God holds the share." A successful architect in the city, he represents the life Ijuanya left behind—comfortable but unfulfilled. His steadfast loyalty is a quiet thread of hope.

Amina (Hausa): The resilient community leader. Amina, after the Warrior Queen of Zazzau. She runs a cooperative and is the practical backbone of the town where much of the story is set. Her strength is in her unwavering action.

Tunde "Babatunde" (Yoruba): The artist and spiritual compass. Babatunde means "father returns," signifying a reincarnation of wisdom. He is a blind sculptor who "sees" the true form of people and history. His art whispers of perseverance.

Nneka (Igbo): Aurora's stern but deeply loving mother. Nneka means "Mother is Supreme." A retired history professor, she holds the key family secret that she believes protects Aurora, but which actually keeps her in the dark.

Supporting Characters

Hassan (Hausa): A witty, resourceful taxi driver and musician who becomes Aurora and Braimah's driver and comic relief, offering folk wisdom through Hausa proverbs.

Ifeanyichukwu "Ify" (Igbo): Aurora's younger brother, a tech entrepreneur in Lagos. His modern optimism contrasts with the story's historical weight.

Adesuwa "Adé" (Yoruba): Folashade's vibrant granddaughter, a botanist reviving ancient herbal gardens. She represents the new generation embracing old ways.

Sarki (Hausa): The traditional ruler, a wise man who mediates between progress and tradition, between the personal conflicts of Braimah and his own family.

Prologue

The most important photograph of Aurora's life was one she never took.

It existed only in the high-contrast black and white of memory: the girl, a smudge of dust and defiance against the rust-colored earth; the tank, a monstrous, angular shadow swallowing the light; and the space between them, taut as a tripwire. Her finger had hovered over the shutter release, the Canon cold and familiar in her hands. She was waiting for the perfect composition, the one that would sear the truth onto the world's retina—the moment before.

But the moment before never came. Only the after.

The roar was not sound, but a vacuum. The dust rose in a cloud that blotted out the sun, and when it settled, the smudge of defiance was gone. All that remained was a single, small leather sandal, and the silence that followed was louder than any explosion.

Aurora had lowered her camera. The weight of it, once an extension of her own sight, suddenly felt like a corpse in her hands. She had