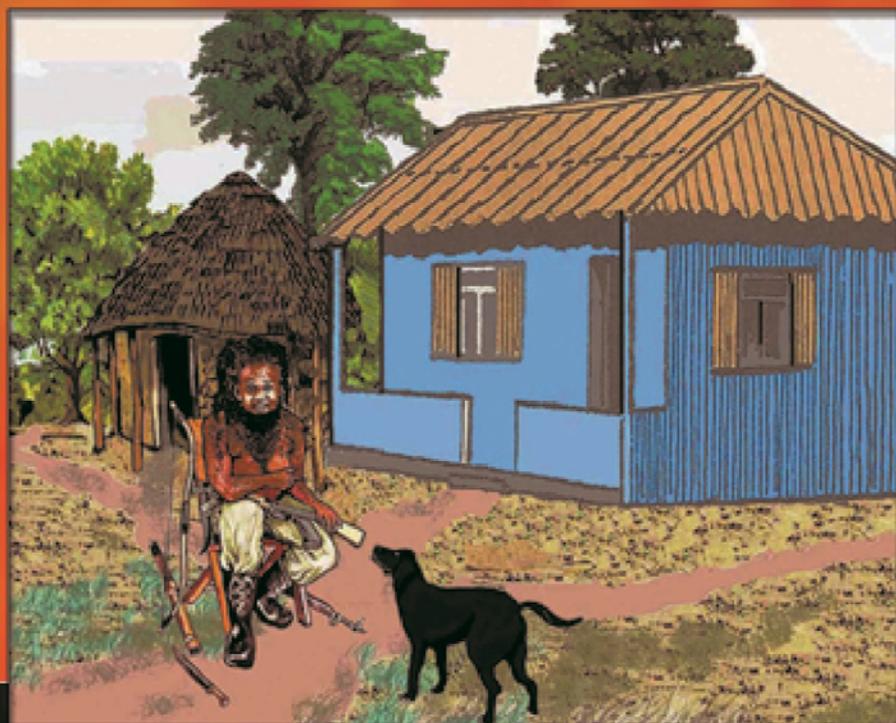


The Betrayal of Onama



Art by O'DU'BOA EDWARD NELSON

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THE BETRAYAL OF ONAMA

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This small book of fiction, *The Betrayal of Onama*, is specifically dedicated to my father, Drate Wilson Silvano, and my mother, Ocoru Sally Yada, who encouraged me to continue writing despite challenges, particularly the lack of funds to facilitate this manuscript into a book.

I also dedicate this book to my brothers Elema Paul, Lematia Bon, Amayo Wilfred; my sisters Fenia Barbra, Egaza Caroline Amviko Comfort, and Raya Christine; and other relatives and friends, who all offered me material and spiritual support.

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INTRODUCTION

Onama's hunting dog, Drakana, betrays his master. The animals in the jungle convene an emergency meeting to examine Onama's atrocities against them. Atamvaku, the mountain gorilla and leader, chairs the meeting to end Onama's activities and derive solutions to end his tyranny. Drakana, an ally to the animals, is involved in the meeting and gradually leads Onama to his fate.

PART ONE

A long time ago, in Maraca District, lived a great hunter by the name of Onama. Onama was so skilled in hunting that no animal in Oyooze Jungle ever survived the traps he set. His sharp arrows and spears and his nets never missed their targets. He was always successful in his hunting expeditions. Indeed, he was famous. There was no man of his equivalence.

One day the animals in the jungle became so rebellious about Onama's atrocities that Atamvaku, the mountain gorilla and their leader, decided to call a meeting. This was an emergency meeting meant to end Onama's activities in their homeland. The news of the meeting spread rapidly from mouth to ear. Each animal was willing to attend the meeting.

On the fixed day, towards early afternoon, the animals began to arrive for the meeting. They assembled under the large, cool shade of the biggest tree in the jungle. This tree was conveniently located far away from Onama's residence.

The first animals to arrive were the zebras and buffalos. They came driving flies with their long tails, left and right, scratching the

earth. They shook hands vigorously with their colleagues before taking their seats. Next, the leopards, lions, and cheetahs walked in without the slightest noise. The big cats sneaked in and settled down without uttering a word of greeting to their closest neighbors. The hyenas joined the gathering with uncontrolled laughter, drawing everyone's attention. Some animals grumbled and expressed their concern about the unpalatable behavior of the loud-mouthed hyenas when crucial matters were on table for discussion. The foxes, kobs, and antelopes trotted in to find places. The bats and birds settled on the lowest tree branches. The rhinoceroses and ostriches came and took positions at the rear. They could see the chairperson over those in front. Many other animals too numerous to mention were also present at the meeting.

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