

I.R.I.A.
PART ONE: THE INITIATE
EPISODE 8: THE REVELATION

Written by

Andrei Serban

Original script

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Email: andrei71serban@gmail.com

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY. COPYRIGHT: 0406/19.12.2024

Inside the Ash Grotto are Old Argument, sitting on the floor with his back to the wall, and Ayaju's Head, sitting in the niche in the wall in front of the entrance to the grotto. The two are talking.

AYAJU

I'm happy to sit with you, Old Argument.

ARGUMENT

I have a strange feeling, Grand Master. I am happy and feel the beneficial energy of this place, but at the same time I am in the presence of the Numerologist's greatest enemy.

AYAJU

I am not your enemy, Old Argument. Nor has the Order of Numbers ever been your enemy.

ARGUMENT

Your Order killed the Hidden Slave and segmented his body.

AYAJU

Not at all, Old Argument. The Order of Numbers did not kill your Grand Master.

ARGUMENT

You lie, Ayaju.

AYAJU

I'm not lying, it's just that we've never been able to clear up this false story.

ARGUMENT

It's not a fake, Grand Master.

AYAJU

I'm afraid it is, Old Argument.

ARGUMENT

Is it false that the master of the Hidden Slave was the Forgotten Blue Father?

AYAJU

No.

ARGUMENT

Is it false that the Forgotten Blue Father taught the First Son, the Numbers?

AYAJU

No, it is not wrong.

ARGUMENT

Is it true that when he caught the Hidden Slave spying on him, he got angry and wanted to kill him?

AYAJU

No, it is not true.

ARGUMENT

(not listening to Ayaju's answer)

Then it's true...

(Old Argument stops because he now understands what Ayaju said)

What did you say?

EXT. FORGOTTEN BLUE FATHER'S HOUSE. DAY.

The Hidden Slave is standing against the wall under the open window of the room where the Forgotten Blue Father is teaching the First Son the Numbers. The Forgotten Blue Father approaches the window and looks out, spotting the Hidden Slave, who gets up in fright. The Forgotten Blue Father grabs him by his clothes.

Ayaju's voice is heard in the off.

AYAJU

(off)

The Forgotten Blue Father did not resent the Hidden Slave, nor did he wish to kill him.

You can see the Forgotten Blue Father looking kindly at the Hidden Slave as they talk and the Forgotten Blue Father nods for him to come into the room. The Hidden Slave leaves and the Forgotten Blue Father returns to the room.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju and Old Argument talk.

ARGUMENT

But what did he want?

AYAJU

To teach him Numbers.

ARGUMENT

Lie, Grand Master. The Forgotten Blue Father did not want the Numbers to be known by a slave, a person inferior to the First Son. So he tried to kill the Hidden Slave, but he ran away.

INT. THE ROOM WHERE THE FIRST SON LEARNS NUMBERS. DAY.

The room now contains two wooden desks, like those used by the Scribes in the Great Hall of the House of Numbers, at which the First Son and the Hidden Slave sit, each holding scrolls and writing utensils in front of them. The Forgotten Blue Father hands them the Numbers.

Ayaju's voice is heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

Not true, Old Argument. The Forgotten Blue Father was pleased with his slave's interest and took him to the First Son to teach him Numbers.

ARGUMENT

(also off)

Not true, the Hidden Slave learnt the Numbers on his own, there was no way he could have been placed next to the First Son because he was inferior to him.

AYAJU

The Hidden Slave was no threat to the First Son precisely because he was superior to him.

ARGUMENT

You lie, Great Master, to cover up the crime.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju and Old Argument talk.

AYAJU

Who was the first Numerologist to
tell the legend of the Hidden
Slave?

ARGUMENT

Utin.

INT. A SHABBY ROOM. NIGHT.

In a small, shabby room, at a wooden table, sits a man, very fat, with a long white beard and long white hair. In the dim light of a candle, he is writing strings of Numbers on a piece of parchment.

Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

Old Argument, I hold the memories
of all the Grand Masters of the
Order of Numbers, including that of
Grand Master Ucreg, who, according
to the Numerologist Utin, segmented
the body of the Hidden Slave. Which
is false.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju and Old Argument talk.

ARGUMENT

It was Grand Master Ucreg, who
succeeded the Great Son as head of
the Order of Numbers, who found the
Hidden Slave here in the Ash Grotto
of the White World and segmented
his body, as commanded by the
Forgotten Blue Father. However, the
Hidden Slave was able to teach the
family members the numbers and thus
we, the Numerologists, were born.

AYAJU

The memories I have from Grand
Master Ucreg tell a different
story, Old Argument.

ARGUMENT

They are mere lies.

AYAJU

And why is the legend of the
numerologist Utin true and not a
lie?

ARGUMENT

(pauses for a moment, two,
three and thinks, then
says)

Because it is a synthesis of all
the legends that existed at that
time, all saying the same thing.

AYAJU

They all say the same thing?

ARGUMENT

(pauses, then says)

Yes, all of them.

AYAJU

My memories contain lived truths.

(Ayaju is silent for a
moment as a slight doubt
appears on Old Argument's
face. Ayaju continues)

Truths lived by the Grand Masters
who was before me.

ARGUMENT

Can these memories be false, even
if they are written on parchment?

AYAJU

I have the memories according to
the Sacred Numerological Ritual.
They are not written anywhere.

INT. TOMB OF THE GREAT MASTERS. DAY.

Ayaju kneels beside the marble table on which the body of
former Grand Master Okigbo lies. The Sacred Numerology Ritual
is in progress.

Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

When a Grand Master dies, he
chooses his successor.

(MORE)

AYAJU (CONT'D)

Then the Sacred Numerological Ritual takes place in which all the memories, feelings, sensations and thoughts of the old Grand Master are transferred to the new Grand Master. This is what happened when the First Son died and was succeeded by Grand Master Ucreg. So all the memories of all the Grand Masters of the Numerical Order were in Grand Master Okigbo, who transferred them to me when he died.

ARGUMENT

I don't know whether to believe it.

AYAJU

It's true that the Sacred Numerological Ritual is secret and only between the former and the future Grand Master, but I want to put an end once and for all to the hatred between us, invented by the Black Numerologists.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju and Old Argument talk.

ARGUMENT

I am a White Numerologist.

AYAJU

I know, Old Argument. And that is why we will be able to end this hatred, especially because when Amos and your friends return with my body parts, a miracle will happen.

ARGUMENT

(says nothing, but looks at Ayaju's head, one moment, two, three, then says)

I have a strange feeling that you are telling the truth about the miracle that is about to happen and in which we will both be involved. So I'm listening, Grand Master, what are your memories?

INT. A SECRET PASSAGEWAY IN THE HOUSE OF NUMBERS. DAY.

In this secret corridor, very dimly lit, Master Ugonna stands with his left ear pressed against the wall. He stands there listening. On the other side are the voices of the King, the Queen and Master Ijere.

At one point, Master Ugonna pulls the ear away from the wall and brings an eye close to a small hole.

Through the hole you can see Master Ijere's cell, where he's talking to Okot and Ukamaka.

Master Ugonna looks around the cell for a few moments.

INT. QUEEN MOM'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Halima is sitting on the terrace of her apartment, wrapped in a thick blanket, sipping hot coffee. She's sitting on a high-backed chair, and in front of her is a small table on which the coffee is placed. She is alone and thinking about something far away.

Her Captain approaches her, waiting to be seen.

After a moment or two, Halima turns to look at him.

CAPTAIN

Your Majesty, Master Ugonna wishes to see you.

HALIMA

Let him come in.

The Captain bows and leaves.

Halima remains alone, sipping from the steaming hot coffee.

After a moment or two, Maester Ugonna approaches Halima and stops beside her. Halima turns her head to face Ugonna, who bows deeply.

UGONNA

Your Majesty.

HALIMA

It is good to see you again, Master. Your face tells me you have news.

UGONNA

I do, Your Majesty.

HALIMA

I am listening.

UGONNA

Master Ijere is awake.

(Halima pays more
attention to what Ugonna
is saying)

And discussed with the King and
Queen what happened in the Tomb of
the Grand Masters in the Cemetery
of Numbers.

HALIMA

Interesting. Go on.

UGONNA

Master Ijere and King Okot took the
half-dead body of Grand Master
Ayaju to the Tomb of Grand Masters
in the Cemetery of Numbers so that
Master Ijere could perform the
Sacred Numerological Ritual and
become the new Grand Master. The
King left, but something happened
there and Master Ijere was found
more dead than alive, lying on the
floor of the Tomb. Today, Master
Ijere woke up.

HALIMA

What did Master Ijere say to the
King and Queen?

UGONNA

First of all, Master Ijere can no
longer see, he is blind.

HALIMA

Blind?

UGONNA

Blind, Your Majesty.

HALIMA

How did he become blind?

UGONNA

Master Ijere said that during the
Sacred Numerological Ritual, Amos,
the Grand Master's Apprentice, came
out of hiding and struck him hard
on the head. The blow apparently
caused him to lose his sight.

HALIMA

I see. And then?

UGONNA

Unfortunately, that's the end of Master Ijere's story, for he fainted and woke up today to find he could no longer see.

HALIMA

So my suspicion is confirmed that the Grand Master and his Apprentice acted together against Master Ijere to prevent him from becoming Grand Master in an improper way and without respecting the tradition of the Order of Numbers. Ok...

(Halima is silent for a moment, two, three, then turns to Master Ugonna)

Is there anything else?

UGONNA

No, Your Majesty. When I know more, I will tell you.

HALIMA

Has anything been learned about the Grand Master and his Apprentice?

UGONNA

Nothing, Your Majesty.

HALIMA

But are they still wanted?

UGONNA

They are wanted, Your Majesty. The King and Queen have ordered the soldiers to search for them, but each of them has secretly sent out scouts to look for them. But none have found anything.

HALIMA

Are they the only ones looking for them?

UGONNA

And our Order, Your Majesty, has its trained men searching for them. But so far nothing.

HALIMA

Thank you, Master.

Master Ugonna bows deeply and leaves.

Halima remains alone on the terrace, sipping her coffee. Her thoughts are far away. Suddenly Halima's face begins to move.

EXT. QUEEN MOM'S SLEIGH. DAY.

Halima is riding her sleigh through the streets of the Blue Fortress. In the background, on horseback, are the Queen Mother's Captain and 4 soldiers from her personal guard.

The Queen Mother's sleigh comes out of the Blue Fortress through a smaller gate than the main one, and heads out onto the snow-covered road. Behind her are soldiers and the Captain of the personal guard.

The Queen Mother's sleigh approaches the open gate of the Grand Duke's Palace and enters the gate, which closes behind her, pulled by the two servants guarding her.

The Queen Mother's sleigh crosses the large Palace courtyard and stops in front of the entrance. The Grand Duke and the Stone are waiting there. The Grand Duke helps Halima down from the sleigh and they all make their way to the Palace entrance.

INT. ALCHEMY LAB. DAY.

The lab door opens and Halima and the Grand Duke enter. The Grand Duke closes the door behind him.

HALIMA

Master Ijere is awake.

(Queen Mother looks at the
large wooden barrel in
the middle of the
laboratory)

What has the girl done?

GRAND DUKE

She has made the passage to the
White World, now I await her
return.

HALIMA

I hope she can come back.

GRAND DUKE

No doubt, the moment the mind and body take you to the White World, the return from there is natural. What about Master Ijere?

HALIMA

I'll tell you right now. Tell me about the girl.

(and the Queen Mother sits
on a wooden chair with a
very high back)

How did she adapt to the rite of passage?

GRAND DUKE

Perfect, she has something natural, innate, she is made to be an Alchemist and to move with the greatest ease between the White and the Blue worlds. I wait for her to come.

HALIMA

When will she return?

GRAND DUKE

She knows best when to return.

HALIMA

Call for me, quickly.

GRAND DUKE

My little sister, of course I'll call you right away to tell us what she's found out. Now tell me about Master Ijere.

HALIMA

Master Ijere is blind.

GRAND DUKE

How did it happen?

HALIMA

While performing the Sacred Numerological Ritual at the Tomb of the Grand Masters in the Cemetery of Numbers, Ayaju's disciple Amos came out of hiding and hit him on the head. Ijere fainted. When he woke up today, he could no longer see.

GRAND DUKE

Headbutt.

HALIMA

It seems so. It is certain that Ayaju and his Apprentice planned to prevent Ijere from completing the Sacred Numerological Ritual, so Ayaju is still essentially the Grand Master of the Order of Numbers.

GRAND DUKE

And they are both in the White World, having passed through the gate of the Tomb of the Grand Masters.

HALIMA

More proof that they are there and that they acted together. But what's Ayaju's condition? He was badly wounded. Can the Sacred Numerological Ritual be performed in the White World?

GRAND DUKE

Theoretically, yes. I don't see what would prevent the ritual from being performed in the White World. Could Ayaju have died and left everything to his Apprentice?

HALIMA

Is this possible?

GRAND DUKE

Yes, it is possible. Especially since the Grand Master chooses his successor when he feels he is dying.

HALIMA

Only by the Masters of the Order?

GRAND DUKE

I don't know, you must ask the Master you trust. What's his name?

HALIMA

Ugonna.

GRAND DUKE

There are two possibilities. Not to write that it is obligatory among the Masters, and then Ayaju is not breaking the law. Or to write that it is obligatory for the Masters to elect the successor, but Ayaju's situation is exceptional, and then, I think, he is allowed to disregard the rule.

HALIMA

OK, it's clear. I'll talk to Master Ugonna and you call me when the girl from the White World arrives.

GRAND DUKE

I love you, my little sister.
(and the Grand Duke kisses
Halima on the forehead)

HALIMA

Me too, my big brother.

And Halima hugs the Grand Duke.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju and Old Argument speak.

AYAJU

After learning the Numbers, the Hidden Slave returned to his village.

EXT. A VILLAGE STREET. DAY.

The Hidden Slave enters the village on foot, dragging a donkey with large sacks on it. He goes down the lane and children come out to meet him and follow him.

The Hidden Slave has arrived at a house, neither poor nor rich, ties the donkey to the wooden fence and enters the courtyard.

Two boys jump into his arms.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju continues the story for the Old Argument.

AYAJU

The Hidden Slave had two boys, Niac and Leba whom he taught Numbers. Leba proved to be very industrious and skilful, while Niac didn't like it and didn't learn it properly.

EXT. COURTYARD OF THE HOUSE OF THE HIDDEN SLAVE. DAILY

The courtyard was prepared for the wedding. There was a large table in the middle, around which many men and women, young and old, were sitting. There is food and cups with drinks on the table. On one side is Leba, next to a beautiful girl. Next to Leba is the Hidden Slave.

Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

The boys grew up, became men, and Leba married a village girl called Mira. The Hidden Slave beamed with happiness, for he loved his son Leba more than Niac.

ARGUMENT

(also off)

Which boy was older?

AYAJU

(off)

They were twins, the boys, but Niac was born first, so he was considered older than Leba.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju continues the story for the Old Argument.

AYAJU

The time has come for Niac to marry, but the Hidden Slave did not attend the wedding because he did not approve of the girl he was marrying.

ARGUMENT

Why not?

AYAJU

The girl's name was Mara and she was the daughter of the poorest and most numerous family in the village of the Hidden Slave. Both of the girl's parents were alcoholics, and Mara somehow managed to get pregnant with Niac, practically forcing him to marry her. But the Hidden Slave's greatest annoyance with his son was something else: Niac stopped studying Numbers and spent his time doing nothing.

EXT. A POOR HUT. NIGHT.

There is a big, round, very bright moon in the sky.

Two silhouettes enter the courtyard of the hut from the alley, it is not clear who they are, they approach the door of the hut and knock on it. The door opens, a faint beam of light shines from inside, the two silhouettes enter the hut, and the door closes behind them.

Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

Unfortunately, with the help of his wife Mara, Niac discovers Black Numerology and begins to practise it. Mara gets him clients who come to Niac and pay him quite well.

EXT. A BEAUTIFUL HUT. DAY.

The hut is beautifully coloured and Leba emerges from it, crossing the courtyard. Suddenly he stops, looks around and winces in pain. Leba falls to his knees and clutches his stomach. His face is pale with pain. He stays like that for a moment, two, three, then he begins to recover, slowly, slowly. He gets up and walks to the gate in the fence. He stops at it and looks down the lane.

AYAJU

(off)

Fortunately, Leba realises that something is going on and that there are negative forces that shouldn't exist. After a while he realises that his brother is practising Black Numerology.

INT. A ROOM. NIGHT.

It is a small room, lit by three candles. Leba is sitting on the floor with a numerological matrix in front of him. He is writing strings of numbers.

Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

So Leba began to destroy the negative forces produced by Niac and practised what would later be called White Numerology.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Ayaju continues the story for the Old Argument.

ARGUMENT

Unfortunately I am the last White Numerologist. I did not know that the Hidden Slave had two sons and that Leba is the one we White Numerologists are descended from. Sadly, we have lost the battle to the Black Numerologists. In the Blue World there are still 3 Black Numerologists and only one White, me, and as you can see, Grand Master, I am not well at all.

AYAJU

And who are the Black Numerologists?

ARGUMENT

Cinyra, his wife and daughter, Smyrna, and their son, Adonis.

AYAJU

Wife and daughter?

ARGUMENT

Yes, because Black Numerologists marry into their families, while we Whites marry other women. So our line is extinct... or has little left and is dying out...

AYJAU

But the battle between the White Numerology of Leba and the Black Numerology of Niac does not go unnoticed by the Hidden Slave, who decides to speak to his eldest son.

INT. A POOR ROOM. DAY.

In a very shabby room, the Hidden Slave and Niac are having a heated discussion. Suddenly, the Hidden Slave stands up and starts tearing up scrolls containing several numerological matrices and strings of numbers. Niac rushes towards him and tries to stop him, but the Hidden Slave pushes him hard and Niac falls backwards. Freed, he proceeds to destroy the tools Niac has around the room, ripping up scrolls of Numerological Matrices and Strings of Numbers. Niac crouches down, picks up a thick club from a corner and strikes the Hidden Slave hard on the head. He stops, turns his head towards Niac, looks at him, blood begins to flow from the wound on his head and he falls straight to the floor, where he remains motionless with his eyes open.

Ayaju's voice comes from off.

AYAJU

Niac has killed his father and goes in fear to his wife Mara.

(The Hidden Slave lies on the ground with his eyes open.)

She teaches him what to do.

Mara enters the room, followed by Niac. The woman approaches the Hidden Slave and checks that he is dead. She then removes her blouse and places it on the pool of blood dripping from his head to prevent it from spreading to the floor. Mara is naked from the waist up, and next to her left breast is a red mark, identical to the one Ema has in the same place.

AYAJU (CONT'D)

(off)

I don't know how, but Mara knew how to get to the White World.

EXT. BLUE FOREST. NIGHT.

Mara appears in a clearing, followed by Niac, pulling a donkey with a sack on it. Mara goes to a spot and lifts up a trapdoor made of twisted branches. Below it is a small pit. Niac and Mara take the sack from the donkey and throw it into the pit. Mara and Niac climb down.

There is a wooden door in the earthen wall of the pit, Mara opens it and the two of them pass through, carrying the sack.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. NIGHT.

It is difficult to see Niac and Mara entering the Ash Grotto with the sack they leave on the floor of the cave. Niac opens the sack to reveal the lifeless body of the Hidden Slave. The man takes an axe from his waist and begins to strike at the body, but it is not clear what he is doing.

Ayaju's voice comes from off.

AYAJU

(off)

Mara taught Niac to take the lifeless body of the Hidden Slave to the White World, to cut it into pieces and leave his head in the Ash Grotto, his arms in the walls of the Ice Cave, his trunk in the tree on the island in the middle of the Purple Lake and his legs at the bottom of the Red Cave.

ARGUMENT

(off)

I don't believe this story.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Old Argument is talking to Ayaju.

ARGUMENT

I don't believe your story, Grand Master. It is a fabrication so that the Order of Numbers will not be blamed for the death and dismemberment of the Hidden Slave's body.

AYAJU

I am sorry that you do not believe that everything I tell you is the memory of Grand Master Ucreg who lived at that time.

ARGUMENT

How can all this be memories? Ucreg saw it all with his own eyes?

AYAJU

No, but Leba began to search for his father without finding him. One night he dreams of his father, who tells him that he is in the White World, in the Ash Grotto. Because he didn't know how to get there, and because the Numerologists and the Order of Numbers were getting along at the time, Leba asked Grand Master Ucreg for help. The two of them entered the White World through the gate beneath the Tomb of the Grand Masters in the Cemetery of the House of Numbers.

ARGUMENT

And they came to the Ash Grotto, where they talked with the head of the Hidden Slave, who speaks like you from a niche.

AYAJU

Exactly.

ARGUMENT

But how can you speak?

AYAJU

I think the energy of the Hidden Slave keeps me alive because there is a very powerful energy centre here.

ARGUMENT

That's right, I feel that energy too.

(Old Argument is silent for a moment, then asks)

Have Leba and Ucreg collected the body parts of the Hidden Slave?

AYAJU

Yes, the two of them put the body parts together, but when they tried to reassemble them, Mara and Niac appeared.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. SOME LIGHT.

Mara and Niac appear in the Ash Grotto. Niac rushes to Leba and the two fight. Grand Master Ucreg immobilises Mara.

Leba and Niac draw their knives and plunge them into each other's hearts at the same time. The two brothers fall to the cave floor, dead.

Ayaju's voice comes from off.

AYAJU

(off)

The two brothers are dead. The Hidden Slave tells the Grand Master to let Mara go, and the woman runs back the way she came. The Hidden Slave tells Grand Master Ucreg that the Grand Master of the Order of Numbers, who is suffering his ordeal, will be able to find the pair of Numbers when his body is reassembled.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Old Argument is talking to Ayaju.

ARGUMENT

Is this what you hope will happen now?

AYAJU

Yes, I know that when Amos and his new friends come with my body parts and reassemble them, I will find the pair of Numbers. The Hidden Slave asked the Grand Master one more thing, to dig a pit in the middle of the Ash Grotto where he would throw the lifeless bodies of his sons, his body parts, including his head, and return in 3 days.

ARGUMENT

And so did Ucreg. But when he took the head from the niche, didn't the Hidden Slave die?

INT. ASH GROTTTO. SOME LIGHT.

There is a pit in the centre of the Ash Grotto containing the lifeless bodies of Leba and Niac, and the body parts of the Hidden Slave. Ucreg removes the Hidden Slave's head from the niche and closes his eyes. The Grand Master places the head in the pit.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Old Argument is talking to Ayaju.

ARGUMENT

And what happened after 3 days?

AYAJU

On his return, Grand Master Ucreg found a baby deer with white fur and strange black markings in the pit. He pulled it out of the pit and released it into the White Forest.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Grand Master Ucreg enters the Ash Grotto and sees a baby deer with white fur and strange black markings in the pit. As the Grand Master removes the white deer from the pit and carries it out of the Ash Grotto, Ayaju's voice can be heard from off.

AYAJU

(off)

Strangely enough, the White Deer survived here for many years, until I found it and told Amos to take it to graze on the grass where the Black Bull lived. And the deer became Yonah.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Old Argument is talking to Ayaju.

ARGUMENT

Yonah is a beautiful and strong girl. But what is the White World, Grand Master?

AYAJU

I don't know, it's a mysterious place I've been studying since I became a Grand Master. The strange thing is that here I understand everything without much explanation.

ARGUMENT

We came here on the road of fire.

AYAJU

What did you mean?

ARGUMENT

In the prison where we were imprisoned, great flames burst from the walls, and my friends Tasso and the White Fisherman and I broke through those cracks and made our way to the Diamond Cave. There the diamonds healed our burns. It's only in my chest that my wound won't heal.

AYAJU

We, the Great Masters, reach the White World through the Way of the Cross.

ARGUMENT

What is the Cross?

AYAJU

That's what we call the object made of two iron sticks joined in the middle that we put in the wall to open the gate to the White World.

ARGUMENT

But how did Queen Ukamaka get here?

AYAJU

Through the hole you can see in the wall of the Ash Grotto.

Old Argument turns, slightly, and looks in that direction. After a second, two says.

ARGUMENT

So Fire, Earth and Cross. The three roads that lead to the White World. But, after all, how did the legend of the Hidden Slave, which your Order says is false, come about?

AYAJU

Mara goes to Mira, Leba's wife, and tells her that her husband and the Hidden Slave have been kidnapped by Grand Master Ucreg and killed in the Ash Grotto in the White World.

(MORE)

AYAJU (CONT'D)

Mira doesn't believe her and chases Mara away, but after 4 days, when she sees that Leba hasn't returned home and the Hidden Slave is still missing, she goes to see Mara.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Mara and Mira enter the Ash Grotto and find only the clothes of Leba, Niac and the Hidden Slave, nothing else.

Ayaju's voice comes from off.

AYAJU

Mara and Mira arrive at the Ash Grotto, but find no bodies, only the clothes of Leba, Niac and the Hidden Slave. Mira is convinced by Mara's story.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Old Argument is talking to Ayaju.

ARGUMENT

I know the story here, Grand Master. Our Tradition speaks of two women, Mara and Mira, who practised Numerology after being taught by the Hidden Slave. But Mara practised Black Numerology while Mira practised White Numerology and both had dreams of confirmation. They teach Numerology to their children. They fall out when Mara suggests that they keep the blood in the family and have children with her sons and she with Mira's sons. Mira refuses and the two branches develop separately.

AYAJU

From Mira and Leba, you became the last White Numerologist, and from Mara and Niac there are 3 Black Numerologists.

ARGUMENT

Cinyra, Smyrna and Adonis.

At that moment, Queen Ukamaka enters the Ash Grotto. She is followed by her captain, Ash, and Cinyra, Adonis and Smyrna.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

The King is sitting on a wooden chair with a high backrest, next to a wooden table with a coffee set, sipping a cup of coffee and thinking about something far away. After a while, he gets up, goes to the desk, picks up the bell and rings it.

Lord Down enters the Royal Cabinet.

DOWN
Your Majesty.

OKOT
Close the door, Lord Down, and have some coffee.

Lord Down closes the door behind him, the King sits down in the chair by the coffee table, and Lord Down pours coffee into a fine white floral mug and sits down in the chair in front of the King. They drink their coffee without saying anything to each other. After a while, the King says:

OKOT (CONT'D)
We went with the Queen to Master Ijere's cell to find out what happened.

DOWN
Oh, I see. And?

OKOT
I'm confused.

DOWN
What do you mean, Your Majesty?

OKOT
Master Ijere told us that the Sacred Numerological Ritual of the transfer of knowledge from Ayaju to him had begun when the Apprentice of the Grand Master came out of a hiding place... the name of the Apprentice isâ€¦

OKOT (CONT'D)
Amos.

OKOT (CONT'D)
So Amos, who hit him hard on the head. He hasn't remembered anything since, except that he woke up in his cell and couldn't see.

DOWN
 (amazed)
 He can't see?

OKOT
 Yes, he's blind.

DOWN
 From the blow to the head.

OKOT
 Yes.

DOWN
 And he will not see forever?

OKOT
 Yes, the Scribes who look after him
 told me.

The two are silent, each with his own thoughts. After a while, the King continues.

OKOT (CONT'D)
 This means that Ayaju and his
 Apprentice have emerged from the
 Tomb of the Grand Masters in the
 Cemetery of Numbers.

DOWN
 It is clear that they left the
 Tomb. They did not go out either,
 because Chimananda, Master Ijere's
 Apprentice, was guarding the door
 and no one went out. So where are
 they?

OKOT
 If they're not in the Tomb. If they
 are not in the Blue Fortress, they
 are somewhere else.

DOWN
 Where?

OKOT
 I don't know. Let's call it
 Elsewhere.

DOWN
 So the Grand Master and his
 Apprentice live Elsewhere.

OKOT

Exactly.

DOWN

But how did they get to the
Elsewhere?

OKOT

Through the Tomb of the Great
Masters in the Cemetery of Numbers.

The two are silent and contemplative. After a second, two,
three, Okot continues.

OKOT (CONT'D)

So we have the Blue Fortress, the
Tomb and Elsewhere. This means that
the connection, the passage from
the Blue Fortress to Elsewhere is
through the Tomb of the Grand
Masters.

The two are silent, thinking. Then Lord Down says.

DOWN

This means we need to investigate
the Tomb more closely.

OKOT

That's right, but we must do it in
such a way as not to arouse the
Queen's suspicions.

DOWN

We must disguise ourselves.

EXT. NUMBER HOUSE CEMETERY. DAY.

The door to the House of Numbers opens and out comes the
Master with Gloves, followed by two Scribes with hoods pulled
over their heads to hide their faces. The last Scribe closes
the door behind him and the Master with Gloves, followed by
the Scribes, starts down the main avenue of the Cemetery of
Numbers. The three of them walk carefully, at a steady pace.
It is a beautiful winter's day, with a full sun in a clear
sky.

The thin layer of snow crunches under their heels. The 3
reach the Tomb of the Grand Masters, which has a string of
Numbers above the iron door. The Master with Gloves pulls out
a bunch of keys, uses one and opens the door. The two Scribes
enter the Tomb, while the Master with Gloves remains outside,
watching the surroundings.

INT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

The two scribes who accompanied the Master of the Gloves descend the stone stairs, and when they reach the bottom they remove their hoods. They are Okot and Lord Down.

OKOT

(whispering)

We need to search every inch of this damn Tomb. We're in no hurry, we have to find something. I'm not leaving until I find a clue.

Lord Down nods in agreement and they both begin to search. The two of them approach the walls of the Tomb, searching every millimetre of the interior with their hands.

EXT. NUMBER HOUSE CEMETERY. DAY.

Outside the Tomb of the Grand Masters, the Master with Gloves has found a spot in the sun and warms himself as he continues to carefully survey his surroundings.

A Scribe appears at the head of the main avenue, the Master with Gloves sees him and stares at him. The scribe passes him, greets him and continues on his way. The Master with Gloves stares at the scribe until he turns right into a side alley. From there, the Master with Gloves resumes his surveillance of the area.

INT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

Okot and Lord Down continue their search without finding anything. Okot makes a sign to the Lord as he approaches.

OKOT

I'm going mad. If we don't find anything by sunset, we'll have to get out of here.

DOWN

Maybe there's nothing here, Your Majesty.

OKOT

Impossible. Then nothing would make sense. This cursed tomb is the link between the Blue Fortress and Elsewhere. There must be something here, I feel something here. Search, come on, search harder.

And the two of them began to search again. They kneel down and pierce with their fingers the floor, the walls, the niches where the lids of the coffins with the lifeless bodies of the former Grand Masters are closed. Streams of Numbers everywhere. The two of them pressed their fingers on each Number, then they looked at the floor again, then they stood up and looked at the empty niches in the walls. They also looked carefully at the pies fastened to the iron supports. He squeezed everything to find hidden levers that could open doors not easily seen. But nothing, they found nothing.

EXT. NUMBER HOUSE CEMETERY. DAY.

The Master with Gloves is shivering with cold and is dancing on the spot to warm up. He slaps his palms over his body to get the blood moving. There's no traffic in the alleys of the cemetery.

In the sky, the Sun has begun to set, half below the horizon. Slowly, slowly, the Sun sets completely.

In front of the Tomb of the Grand Masters, the Master with Gloves is pacing to keep warm.

INT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

Okot is on his knees, his fingers probing the floor beside the large rectangular white marble table in the centre of the Tomb. Suddenly he feels something. Okot concentrates and carefully pokes a small hole in the floor.

OKOT

Lord Down, come quickly.

(Lord Down searches another spot, stops, turns to the King and sees him concentrating on the hole in the ground)

Come.

(Lord Down approaches the King and kneels down beside him)

Feel this place. It's perfectly round.

(Lord Down also feels the spot)

Do you feel it? It's perfectly round.

DOWN

Yes. Looks like it was specially made, not a hole in the ground.

OKOT

Where else have you seen dimples in this floor? Can't you see it's perfectly smooth?

DOWN

Almost all of it, not quite all of it.

OKOT

Can you feel it?

DOWN

It's very smooth and flat.

OKOT

It's smooth and deep enough to put anything in.

DOWN

What?

OKOT

I don't know.

DOWN

The sun must have gone down, Your Majesty. It is cold.

OKOT

Come, let's go. We're done here.

And the two of them get to their feet and walk towards the stone steps, climb up them, reach the iron door, open it and step out of it, then the door closes behind them.

The hole in the floor found by the King is where the Ebony Rod is inserted, allowing the large rectangular marble table to be moved and the stone steps below to be seen.

INT. KING'S CABINET. NIGHT.

The room is well lit. Candles are lit on the chandelier above.

Two Scribes enter and the Master with Gloves closes the door behind him. Okot and Lord Down take off their scribal robes and remain in their clothes. The robes are taken by the Master with Gloves, who bows and leaves the cabinet, closing the door behind him.

OKOT

We forgot something.

DOWN

What is it, Your Majesty?

OKOT

The Ebony Rod carried by the Grand Master. Do you know where it is?

DOWN

No.

OKOT

Has he disappeared too?

DOWN

I don't know.

OKOT

You won't sleep tonight. You will go to the House of Numbers and look for the Ebony Rod. Bring it to me in the morning.

DOWN

I understand, Your Majesty.

(starts to leave, but
changes his mind and asks
the King)

Do you think it has anything to do with the hole in the floor?

KING

I don't know, but I need to find out if this Rod will fit.

Lord Down bows and leaves, closing the door behind him. The King is left alone with his thoughts.

EXT. SQUARE IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE OF NUMBERS. NIGHT.

From outside you can see the windows of the House of Numbers lit up and hear the bustle inside. On the steps leading up to the door at the entrance to the House of Numbers, there are several horses guarded by 3 soldiers.

INT. THE STABLE OF THE HOUSE OF NUMBERS. NIGHT.

The interior is full of soldiers, Apprentices and Scribes, all with torches in their hands, searching every corner of the stable. Spring stands against a wall, watching the commotion. Scribe Nonso pauses beside him.

SPRING

What are you looking for?

NONSO

The Grand Master's Ebony Rod.

SPRING

I don't think...

NONSO

(rushes him)

Shut up!

And he turns away from Spring, who is silent and continues to watch the scroungers in the stable.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

The cabinet door opens and Lord Down enters, closing the door behind him. He approaches Okot who is at his desk and stops in front of him. He has a tired face and dark circles under his eyes. Okot lifts his eyes and looks at Lord Down.

OKOT

I can see that you are very tired.
You haven't found anything.

DOWN

Nothing, Your Majesty. The Ebony Rod is nowhere to be found in the House of Numbers, the stable or the graveyard. I have searched all night with every member of the Order of Numbers and Your Majesty's soldiers. Nothing. If you wish, we'll begin our search in the Blue Fortress.

OKOT

No, if we start searching the fortress, we will scare people, and so news of what happened in the House of Numbers tonight is already making the rounds of the Blue Fortress.

DOWN

Is this how you were informed?

OKOT

Yes. I think it's clear that the Ebony Rod is where Ayaju and his Apprentice are, that Elsewhere, and the connection to that place and the Blue Fortress is through the Tomb of the Grand Masters. I expected to find nothing, so I came up with a plan.

DOWN

I am listening, Your Majesty.

OKOT

First you go and rest. Then you have the task of finding the way the Ebony Rod was made and making one like it. All we need is for the bottom to be the same size as the hole in the floor so that it fits in there. And its weight must be the same as the original.

DOWN

What does it mean to "find out how the Ebony Rod was made"?

OKOT

What is not clear?

DOWN

I'm tired, Your Majesty, perhaps I don't understand so quickly.

OKOT

I want you to make a copy of the Ebony Rod. Is that clear?

DOWN

Yes, Your Majesty.

OKOT

To make a copy, you must know how the original Ebony Rod was constructed. Yeah?

DOWN

Yes, Your Majesty.

OKOT

You must find out the story, there may be a legend that tells how the Ebony Rod used by the Grand Masters was made. Find that legend and make a copy. Now do you understand?

DOWN

Yes, Your Majesty.

And Lord Down bows to the King, turns and leaves, opens the door, goes out and closes the door behind him.

Okot is left alone and stares for a long time at the door at the entrance to the King's Cabinet, thinking far away.

INT. DINING ROOM OF THE HOUSE OF NOBLE M. DAY.

Noble M. is sitting at the table, eating a rich lunch, a tray with a large roast turkey, another with baked vegetables, a bottle of wine and a bottle of water in front of him. Noble M. cuts the turkey into pieces, chooses the vegetables and puts them on the plate in front of him, fills his glass with wine and eats with great appetite, sipping the wine little by little.

A man dressed in black, with a sword on his left arm and a long knife on his right, wearing black boots and a black cloak with a large collar, enters the hall. He bends down and approaches Noble M. The man in black has a tattoo of an open mouth on the right side of his neck, with very red lips and a long, broad, green tongue sticking out.

M.

(talking to this man during the meal)

I'm listening, Tongue.

TONGUE

Last night there was a great commotion in the House of Numbers, in the cemetery and in the stable. The King's soldiers and all the members of the Order of Numbers were searching everywhere for the Ebony Rod.

M.

Why?

TONGUE
It seems to have disappeared.

M.

(slightly amused)

The Grand Master must have taken it.

TONGUE
The Grand Master who disappeared
with his Apprentice?

M.

What's this Apprentice's name?

TONGUE
Amos.

M.

Well, if it was the man's staff, they would have taken it
with them wherever they went, wouldn't they?

TONGUE
As you say, Master.

M.

But these two were found?

TONGUE
Who are they?

M.

Ayaju and the little one.

TONGUE
(understands who Noble M.
means)
The Grand Master and his Apprentice
have not yet been found.

M.

Nor the Ebony Rod?

TOUNGE

No, nor the Ebony Rod.

A servant enters the dining room, approaches Noble M., bows and says

THE SERVANT

Master, Lord Down has sent word
that you are to go to him at
midnight.

Noble M. stops eating, looks at his servant for a second or two, then nods his head in understanding. The servant bows, turns and leaves the dining room, closing the door behind him.

M.

What does Lord Down want?

(Tongue says nothing)

All night, you say, he's been looking for that Rod, and now he calls me to him. Why?

(Tongue still silent)

OK, you can go, I'll call you if I need you.

Tongue bows slightly, but remains where he is, Noble M. starts to eat again, but stops, looks at Tongue, realises what he wants, reaches into his arm, pulls out a blue gold coin and throws it to him. He catches it on the fly, bows to Noble M. and leaves, walking out of the dining room and closing the door behind him.

Noble M. eats with great appetite.

INT. LORD DOWN'S WORKS OFFICE. EVENING.

Lord Down sits on a high-backed wooden stool in front of the hearth where the fire burns. He is sipping wine from a tall stemmed glass, then placing it on the small table beside him, which contains another wine glass and a full bottle. There is a knock at the door.

Brown, Lord Down's personal secretary, enters the room and closes the door behind him. Brown approaches the Lord, bows and says.

BROWN

Noble M. awaits.

DOWN

(He does not answer immediately, but takes a sip from his wine glass, then places it on the small table beside him)

These are strange times, my dear Brown.

(Lord Down is silent, lost in thought for a few moments, then continues)

Bring Noble M.

Secretary Brown bows and goes to the door. He opens it.

BROWN

(looking out of the room)

Lord Down receives you.

Noble M. enters and Secretary Brown leaves, closing the door behind him. Noble M. approaches Lord Down and bows.

M.

Good evening, Lord Down.

DOWN

Good evening, Noble M. Thank you for coming.

M.

I will come whenever you call me, Lord Down.

DOWN

Thank you, sit beside me, please.

(and Lord Down beckons him to sit on the wooden chair next to him, in front of the glass where the fire is burning.

Noble M. sits down)

Pour a glass of wine. It's excellent, I think it's better than yours.

(Noble M. bows his head and pours into his glass, then tastes it)

M.

Exceptional wine, Lord Down.

DOWN

Thank you.

(the two are silent for a
moment, two, three, then
Lord Down continues)

That's why I wanted to talk to you.
As you may have heard, the Grand
Master's Ebony Rod is missing. It
seems to have disappeared with the
Grand Master. That means that Grand
Master Ayaju still has the Ebony
Rod somewhere. And where it is, no
one knows.

M.

All the Blue Fortress knows that the Ebony Rod was searched
for last night in the House of Numbers and was not found.

DOWN

That's right, the noise at the
House of Numbers couldn't have gone
unnoticed. That's why I called you.

M.

(interrupting Lord Down)

You want me to find the Ebony Rod.

DOWN

Yes and no.

M.

I do not understand.

DOWN

I want you to make a copy of the
Ebony Rod.

M.

(very surprised)

Me? How? I don't know how.

DOWN

Of course you don't, but you need to find out how the original Ebony Rod was made.

M.

(also surprised)

How should I know?

DOWN

You have to research very discreetly and find out the legend or the story or whatever about how the Ebony Rod that the Grand Masters have was made.

(Lord Down falls silent and looks at Noble M., he understands what is expected of him)

I see you understand.

M.

I understand what you want me to do. And now that I think about it, I think I know where to go.

DOWN

Be very careful, no one must know what you're looking for.

M.

Fear not, Lord Down, no one will find out, and I will come to you with the story as soon as I can.

DOWN

I await you, Noble M.

Noble M. rises from his chair, bows, and Lord Down answers him, then Noble M. walks to the door, opens it and walks out, closing it behind him.

Lord Down remains in his wooden chair, continuing to drink from the long-tailed wine glass.

INT. IJERE'S CELL. DAY.

Master Ijere is sitting on his bed with his back to the wall. A Scribe is helping him to eat. Master Ijere is sad and has a blind, vacant and directionless gaze.

The door to the cell opens and Chimananda, Master Ijere's Apprentice, enters, closing the door behind him. He approaches them and looks at Master Ijere. He senses a new presence and turns his vacant gaze to the Apprentice.

IJERE

Chimananda, is that you?

CHIMANANDA

Yes, Master, it is me.

Ijere becomes quiet, says nothing and continues to eat slowly. After a while, Chimananda turns to the Scribe.

CHIMANANDA (CONT'D)

Doctor Scribe, forgive me, but I thought Master Ijere must be resting. Perhaps we could let him sleep.

IJERE

(amazed)

I slept a long time, Chimananda, and have just awoken from my afternoon slumber.

CHIMANANDA

(subtly emphasises)

Master, coma is not rest, you must sleep now, I think you have eaten enough.

(and the Apprentice turns to the Scribe)

Scribe, with indulgence, but the Master must rest, I will guide you and let you know when he wakes up and what the Master wants.

Just as gently but firmly, Chimananda takes the Scribe by the arm, lifts him from Master Ijere's bed and leads him to the cell door, which he opens and through which they both leave. But Chimananda leaves the door ajar.

Ijere glances in the direction of the door, not understanding what has seized his apprentice, but he has sensed something in his voice, so his face is now turned towards the door.

After a moment or two, through the door of the cell, a silhouette in a black cloak, the hood pulled down completely over his head, without showing his face.

Ijere flinches when he hears the noise that this silhouette makes when it enters the room.

IJERE

Hello?

M.

Hello, Master.

(The silhouette takes off his hood, it is Noble M.)

It is me, Noble M.

(Ijere winces and wants to get up from the bed, but Noble M. stops him)

No need, you're sitting there fine. I came to see how you are, my friend.

IJERE

(is disturbed by this
visit)

Noble M., I apologise, I am still
weak. I am sorry.

M.

No need, look, I'm sitting on the edge of the bed.

(and Noble M. sits on the edge of the bed)

How are you, Master?

IJERE

Better. I'm out of the coma
and...only my vision...that's what
I'm having trouble with. Otherwise,
I seem to be fine.

M.

I hear you don't see, my friend.

IJERE

I can't see at all.

M.

Will it always be so?

IJERE

It seems so, Noble M.

M.

I'm sorry to hear that, Master. I think your blindness will affect your work in the Order of Numbers.

IJERE

This is the first time in our Order that something like this has happened, that a Master who could see has become blind as a result of... an accident.

M.

But how did it happen?

(Ijere does not answer immediately, he seems reluctant to say what happened in the Tomb of the Grand Masters. Seeing this, Noble M. insists)

You can tell me, my friend, I will not forget how you helped me, and now I have a moral duty to try to help you in return. But I need to know what happened to know how best to help you.

(Ijere doesn't look very convinced and remains silent. M. wants to convince Ijere)

Ah, I forgot, I brought a bag of blue gold coins, it's a small gift to start with, to cover the expenses that will arise now, with your new condition.

(and Noble M. takes out a leather bag and puts it into Master Ijere's hand. He shudders, pricks the pouch with his fingers and seems to be persuaded to talk, so Noble M. encourages him)

You can trust me, my friend, we can help each other.

IJERE

I tried to perform the Sacred Numerology Ritual in the Tomb of the Grand Masters, but I was prevented by Grand Master Ayaju's Apprentice, who hit me on the head.

M.

What happened?

IJERE

The Apprentice was hiding somewhere in the Tomb of Grand Masters, I'm sure on Grand Master Ayaju's orders. I saw him too late to dodge, and he hit me on the head, hard. Then I lost consciousness and woke up here.

M.

And the Grand Master and his Apprentice, what did they do?

IJERE

I don't know anything, but my Apprentice told me that they disappeared and no one knows where they are.

M.

What about the Ebony Rod?

IJERE

(surprised)
What about it?

M.

Where is it?

JERE

(still amazed)
I don't understand, where is it? In the Tomb of the Grand Masters in the Cemetery of Numbers, that's where we used it to perform the Sacred Numerological Ritual. That's where it must be. Isn't it there?

M.

No.

JERE
(still surprised)
Since it's not there, is it gone?

M.

Yes, he disappeared with the Grand Master and his Apprentice.

JERE
(realizes what has
happened and is no longer
surprised)
It means that the Grand Master
ordered his Apprentice to strike me
and interrupt the Sacred
Numerological Ritual, then they
took the Ebony Rod and disappeared.

M.

You don't know where they can all be...3 so to speak?

IJERE
No, I don't.

M.

There's another problem with this Ebony Rod.

IJERE
I don't know what the problem is,
it's with the Grand Master.

M.

I want you to help me with something.

IJERE
With what, Noble M.?

M.

I would like to know how this Rod was constructed.

IJERE
(astonished)
Why?

M.

(not very convincing)

So that I can reach the Grand Master.

JERE

I don't see the connection.

M.

If you don't want to help, I understand, that's fine, but friends help each other without asking too many questions.

IJERE

If it's important to you, Noble M., I'll try to help you, but it'll be hard for me in the state I'm in now.

M.

Why?

IJERE

I can't see or read.

M.

What would you like to read?

IJERE

There is a scroll that tells the legend of the construction of the Ebony Rod.

M.

And where can I find that scroll?

IJERE

In the library of the House of Numbers. But I must give you a clue as to where this scroll can be found. I do not remember exactly where it is, but I know where to look for it. I must go to the Writing Table.

Master Ijere is helped out of bed by Noble M. Ijere is trembling, but he reaches the table and sits down on the chair. Noble M. helps him to find an empty sheet of paper and a pen. Ijere dipped the pen in ink and began to write a few strings of Numbers. His hand is shaking slightly and the Numbers are not in perfectly parallel rows, but they are clearly visible. When he has finished writing, Ijere puts the pen down on the table and hands the paper to Noble M.

IJERE (CONT'D)

This is where this scroll might be found. I can't remember exactly where, but it's in the area I noted.

M.

(takes the paper and looks at the Numbers without understanding anything, but he is kind to Ijere)

Thank you, Master. You are a true friend. I will come and visit you often to talk. Help you back to bed.

IJERE

No thanks, I want to stay here, I'm tired of lying in bed. And thank you, Noble M., for everything you do for me.

M.

Goodbye, Master.

IJERE

Goodbye, Noble M.

And Noble M. goes to the door, opens it, walks out and closes the door behind him. Ijere remains on the wooden chair at the desk. After a moment or two, the door opens and Chimananda enters, closing the door behind him.

CHIMANANDA

It's me, Master.
(Ijere nods)
Let me help you into bed.

IJERE

No, help me take a few steps across the room.

CHIMANANDA

Noble M. wanted to see you. So I chased the Scribe away and let him in. I don't know if I did the right thing.

IJERE

You have done well, we need friends as rich and strong as possible, especially as I am now a blind Master who can no longer read Numbers.

CHIMANANDA

Stop talking like that.

IJERE

From now on I'll have to get used to talking more and more convincingly, it's all I have left.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

The King is at the work table, in front of him is the Master with Gloves, and next to him is Lord Down. The Master with Gloves is reading the strings of Numbers that Master Ijere has written. The King stares at him, as does Lord Down. After some time of studying the strings of Numbers very carefully, the Master with Gloves places the paper on the table in front of the King. The King asked him.

OKOT

What can you say?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

(does not answer immediately, but continues to think. The King waits, but it is clear that he is impatient and wants an answer from the Master with Gloves. Finally he says)

I have not personally seen this ancient scroll. But I have heard of it, especially since the Ebony Rod is the sceptre of power in the Order of Numbers. So this legend does exist.

(MORE)

MASTER WITH GLOVES (CONT'D)

Then there are two mistakes in Master Ijere's strings of Numbers, but considering the state he's in, they're perfectly understandable. I can also say that I know where the sector described by Master Ijere is in our library.

OKOT

(suddenly very pleased,
almost happy)

Perfect, very good, Master with Gloves. You will now go and look for the scroll. But very carefully, Master, in all seriousness I want to tell you one thing.

(and Okot stops and stares
into the eyes of the
Master with Gloves, who
is intimidated and looks
down)

Look into my eyes, Master with Gloves.

(with difficulty, the
Master with Gloves looks
into Okot's eyes)

Everything you are about to do is very, very, very, very secret. If word of this scroll or the Ebony Rod or whatever gets out, I will have you killed.

(and Okot stops and looks
into the Master's
frightened eyes)

Only I, you and Lord Down know our plan. I cannot be killed, but you can. I mean it, Master of the Gloves. And Lord Down's life is at your discretion. Save your lives.

DOWN

I will go with the Master to the Library in the House of Numbers.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

No, Lord Down. With respect, Your Lordship's presence there will arouse suspicion, questions will be asked and answers will be sought.

(MORE)

MASTER WITH GLOVES (CONT'D)

You've never been to our library,
and now that the Grand Master and
his Apprentice have disappeared,
when you've been up all night
searching for the Ebony Rod in the
House of Numbers, you're going to
the library? Then, Your Majesty,
kill us now so that we waste no
more time.

OKOT

He's right, Master with Gloves. You
have no choice, Lord Down, but to
trust our Master. I wish you
success, Master.

The Master with Gloves bows, turns, walks to the door, opens
it, walks out and closes the door behind him.

The King and Lord Down remain in the cabinet.

OKOT (CONT'D)

Who did you say was visiting Master
Ijere?

DOWN

Noble M.

OKOT

This name sounds familiar.

DOWN

He's the former Royal Treasurer.

OKOT

That ox again? He ripped me off
like an asshole when the whole
Royal Council found out. And the
Queen made me bail him out.

DOWN

He is a trustworthy man.

OKOT

I'm not saying he's not
trustworthy, I'm just saying he's a
big asshole.

DOWN

This time he won't be wrong, I'll
check him personally.

OKOT
 (ironically)
 Very good.

Lord Down is confused because he doesn't know how to interpret the King's words, whether they are favourable or unfavourable to him. Finally, the King says

OKOT (CONT'D)
 When the Master with Gloves
 returns, come to me immediately.

Lord Down bows and leaves. The King remains alone at his desk, uninterestedly looking at the papers before him.

INT. HOUSE OF NUMBERS LIBRARY. DAY.

The Master with Gloves walks down the corridors of the Library, looking at the strings of Numbers above the entrances to the various corridors. The Master moves with the ease of someone accustomed to walking through the Library.

The Master with Gloves passes through various doors and moves along various corridors until he reaches a place where he pauses. He carefully scans the strings of Numbers on the top of the shelves, on the wooden edges, and begins to search through the scrolls, which are in the form of tubes. The Master finds one, takes it from the shelf, unfolds it, reads it and puts it back. He continues searching, unfolding the corners of the scrolls and putting them back. He moves on to another shelf, then the one below, and so on. The Master with Gloves gets down on his knees and searches the floor, pulling out a scroll, unfolding it and reading it. He's pleased with what he's found, so he gets up and leaves.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

The Master with Gloves is at his wooden desk, parchment unrolled in front of him, Lord Down standing beside him, while Okot walks around the Royal Cabinet listening to what the Master with Gloves is saying.

MASTER WITH GLOVES
 This is very clumsy writing, Your Majesty. The Numbers are oddly placed. It's the imprint of old, very old writing, from the time of the Great Son who was the first Grand Master.

OKOT
 Does it take a long time?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

There are two solutions, either give me 3 days to rewrite the text, or be patient and don't interrupt me and try to read now

OKOT

Now, we wait without saying anything. Go, Master, go.

EXT. AN ISLAND. DAY.

It is an island, sunburned. There are some tall, black trees on it.

The voice of the Master with Gloves can be heard off.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

It seems that on a small island in the South Sea there lived a man with slanted eyes, called the Slant-Eyed Shaman.

(a man dressed in shaman's clothes of leather, with shoes also of leather, with long hair but shaved beard, with some bird feathers in his hair, with many bracelets on his wrists, with 3 strings of stones on his chest with amulets at the ends, is walking along a path to a hut built among the ebony trees. The shaman has some fish on a stick. The Master with Gloves continues)

Either I don't understand how this shaman ended up on this island, or it's not written here, but he lived there for many years, I don't know how many. In summer the sun would scorch this very small island, surrounded by salt water, in winter it was completely covered in snow.

(a heavy snowfall begins and the sky darkens, covering the entire island and the small hut where the Slant-Eyed Shaman had entered.

(MORE)

MASTER WITH GLOVES (CONT'D)

Master with Gloves
continues)

And during storms, powerful waves
hit the small island.

(suddenly a large wave
rises from the water and
hits the small island
hard. The Slant-Eyed
Shaman's hut is hit hard
by the water and almost
falls apart. Beneath the
debris you can see the
shaman surviving the
storm)

But the Slant-Eyed Shaman had
learned to face all the furies of
nature.

(the sky clears and the
sun shines brightly. On
the island, the shaman's
hut is back among the
ebony trees. The Slant-
Eyed Shaman comes out of
the hut with the Shaman's
Drum and begins to beat
it and move around in a
special dance. Master
with Gloves continues
from off)

After every storm that destroyed
his hut, and after he had managed
to put it back together again, the
Slant-Eyed Shaman danced
ritualistically so that the Island,
the Sky, the Sun and the Trees of
Abanos would continue to protect
him. But one day, I don't know
when, the shaman suddenly stopped
dancing and looked up at a rock on
the edge of the island. He could
see something on it.

(the shaman drops the drum
and walks towards the
spot. When he reaches the
small rock, he discovers
the body of a man)

INT. SLANT-EYED SHAMAN'S HUT. NIGHT.

In his hut, the shaman stands beside a body lying on the
ground. This body, that of a young man, is surrounded by many
piles of smoldering, thick smoke. The shaman is sitting cross-
legged beneath him.

Fires burn in two small ebony stalks, casting shadows and light around the hut. The shaman is in a trance, chanting some incantations in a low voice.

The voice of the Master with Gloves can be heard from off.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

The Forgotten Blue Father was sent on a long sea voyage by his wealthy family to learn trade and master the art of sailing. It was also how a young man became a man. But a terrible storm sank the ship, and the entire crew was swallowed by the waters. Only the Forgotten Blue Father survived. The sea washed his body onto the island where the Slant-Eyed Shaman lived. He took it back to his hut and set out to find his soul in order to heal his body.

EXT. WHITE WORLD. DAY.

The Slant-Eyed Shaman is in the White Forest, wandering around the White Lake. The shaman searches but finds nothing. He walks along the stream that flows into the White Lake and reaches its source, where the sword with the glowing blade and ivory hilt lies at the bottom of the thin water. The shaman looks around carefully, but sees absolutely nothing, so he leaves.

The edge of the Red Cliff. The Slant-Eyed Shaman approaches it. He looks around carefully, but sees no one.

The shore of the Purple Lake. The Slant-Eyed Shaman approaches it and looks around carefully, but does not see the soul of the young Blue Forgotten Father.

Ice Cave entrance. The Slant-Eyed Shaman emerges from the White Forest and approaches the cave entrance. He looks around carefully and enters the cave. The suns in the sky are side by side. The Slant-Eyed Shaman emerges from the Ice Cave and makes his way towards the White Forest.

On a mountain ridge lies the entrance to the Diamond Cave. The Slant-Eyed Shaman emerges from the White Forest, looks around carefully, sees nothing unusual, and enters the cave.

The White Forest. The Slant-Eyed Shaman walks cautiously and looks around. He sees nothing but the usual white vegetation.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

The Slant-Eyed Shaman enters the Ash Grotto. The interior is empty, the shaman looks around and comes out.

EXT. THE PATCH OF GRASS ON WHICH THE BLACK BULL IS STANDING. DAY.

On his patch of bright green grass, the Black Bull grazes peacefully. Beside him, sitting in a circle, legs crossed, are the Forgotten Blue Father, the Cold Hermaphrodite, the Red Dwarf, the Purple Woman and the Diamond Albino.

The Slant-Eyed Shaman approaches them. The Forgotten Blue Father is happy to see him and stands up.
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INT. SLANT-EYED SHAMAN'S HUT. DAY.

The Slant-Eyed Shaman stands beside the outstretched body of the Forgotten Blue Ffather. He opens his eyes and looks at the shaman, who also opens his eyes. They look at each other.

FORGOTTEN BLUE FATHER

Thank you.

SLANT-EYED SHAMAN

Good to see you awake, young man.

(The two look at each other for a few moments, then the Slant-Eyed Shaman continues)

But you are not quite back from the White World. Something calls you there.

FORGOTTEN BLUE FATHER

Curiosity. I made new friends there. They teach me very interesting things. I must meet them again.

(the two are silent and look at each other, after a few moments the Forgotten Blue Father continues)

Please help me.

The shaman says nothing, stands and leaves the hut.

EXT. WHITE WORLD. DAY.

On his little meadow, a very, very bright green, the Black Bull sleeps peacefully. Next to him, also sitting in a circle with their feet under them, are the Cold Hermaphrodite, the Red Dwarf, the Purple Woman and the Diamond Albino. They are approached by the Forgotten Blue Father, who carries his Ebony Rod.

The voice of the Master with Gloves can be heard from off.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

The Slant-Eyed Shaman has searched long and hard for the soul of the Forgotten Blue Father. But I don't understand where. In a world... I don't understand this string of Numbers. It's strangely written.

(the Forgotten Blue Father is greeted happily by the 4 and sits down beside them. They all begin to speak without being heard. The voice of the Master in the Gloves is heard in off)

I don't understand what's written here, it's a world...

OKOT

(also off)

Get over it, one world, that's all. The shaman was looking for the soul of the Forgotten Blue Father in this world. And? Did he find it?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

(off)

Yes, he found it eventually, but I still don't understand why the Forgotten Blue Father wanted to go there. Then, to be able to go whenever he wanted... I don't understand this world...

OKOT

(off)

Another world, another part, never mind. Did he find his soul or not?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

(off)

Yes, the Slant-Eyed Shaman made the Ebony Rod that the Forgotten Blue Father used to travel to this world and return to the island where his body lay in the shaman's hut whenever he wished.

OKOT

(off)

What did the Rod do?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

(off)

From a piece of ebony he tore from a tree on the island. But I don't understand this world...

INT. KING'S CABINET. NIGHT.

The Royal Cabinet is lit by burning candles. At the wooden lectern, the Master with Gloves reads from parchment, and on the wooden chairs sit Okot and Lord Down.

OKOT

Okay, let's review. The Forgotten Blue Father was sent on a long sea voyage to learn trading and sailing. A storm sank his ship and killed all the crew, only he escaped with his life. Good. He is found on an island by the Slant-Eyed Shaman, who heals him and brings his soul back from an unknown world. To do this, the shaman made the Ebony Rod with which the Forgotten Blue Father travels back from the unknown world to the Shaman's island. Is that all?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

Yes, in the end, the Forgotten Blue Father is cured, his soul no longer wants to travel to that unknown world, and his body becomes strong again.

OKOT

And he leaves the island with the Ebony Rod.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

It doesn't say so in the parchment,
but that's pretty much what
happened. After the Forgotten Blue
Father learned something.

OKOT

What is it?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I don't understand what. Could it
have been... the Numbers? I don't
know.

OKOT

Well, I'm not interested in that
now. The Rod, did he take with him?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

The legend ends here. But
considering that the Ebony Rod is
the Grand Master's sceptre, yes, he
took it with him.

OKOT

Where is this island?

There is a hush in the Royal Cabinet. The Master with Gloves
studies the parchment before him, Lord Down can't even hear
himself breathe, while Okot waits for an answer. No one
speaks for a few seconds, then the King can't stand it any
longer and says.

OKOT (CONT'D)

Isn't it written on parchment?

(The Master with Gloves
shakes his head no)

Do you understand everything it
writes?

(The Master with Gloves
shakes his head no)

Perhaps he is writing in the
passages that you don't understand.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

Maybe, I don't even know what to
say.

OKOT

You said the South Sea.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I said, but I don't understand very well what is written here, I don't understand how the numbers are placed in these strings. "Sea" is written because we met the lines for "salt water" below, but I told the South that way more so as not to get bogged down with the story.

OKOT

So it doesn't say South?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I'm not so sure now. Yes... the South Sea, rather the South than anything else.

OKOT

And where in the South Sea?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I don't know.

OKOT

(turns to Lord Down)

How do we find the Slant-Eye Shaman's island in the South Sea?

Lord Down stares at the King and says absolutely nothing. Suddenly, Okot rises from his chair and thumps the table in front of him. It rolls noisily.

OKOT (CONT'D)

(very nervous)

I found out nothing, absolutely nothing. We have returned to the place from which we came, but our heads are full of useless stories.

Lord Down and the Master with Gloves say nothing, while Okot sits down nervously at his desk.

Suddenly there is a discreet knocking on the door of the Royal Cabinet. Lord Down rises from his chair, goes to the door, opens it, walks out and closes the door behind him.

After a moment the door opens, Lord Down enters, closes the door behind him and approaches the King's office. He stops and waits to be questioned. Okot looks up at Lord Down.

DOWN

(he is very surprised)
Your Majesty, something very
strange is happening.
(Okot asks with his eyes,
"What is it?")
Counts Gamma and Delta wish to see
Your Majesty.

OKOT

(he didn't understand who
wanted to speak to him)
Who?

DOWN

Count Gamma and Count Delta.

OKOT

What else do they want?

DOWN

They have something urgent to tell
you.

OKOT

What do they want?

DOWN

I don't know. They say it's urgent.

Okotie

OK, tomorrow at lunchtime.

DOWN (CONT'D)

Your Majesty, I humbly beg you.
Their faces are distorted with fear
and they say it is urgent.

OKOT

(feels like he's about to
explode, but holds
himself back with
difficulty)
Tell them to come in, but I'll kill
them if they start fooling around.

Lord Down bows, goes to the door, opens it and walks out.
After a few moments he comes back and stands by the door.

DOWN

Count Gamma and Count Delta.

The Count of Gamma enters first, followed by the Count of Delтта, they walk in front of the King and bow.

OKOT

(without looking at them)
Speak quickly and clearly. If you
fool around, I order you to be
flogged.

GAMMA

Your Majesty, thank you for seeing
us.

DELTTA

For 3 nights we have shared the
same dream.

GAMMA

An isolated island in the sea.

Okot suddenly lifts his head. Lord Down and the Master with
Gloves listen intently. The counts are afraid of the king's
reaction and remain silent.

OKOT

I listen to you.

GAMMA

We both have the same dream.

DELTTA

That ends with a string of Numbers.

OKOT

Which Numbers?

GAMMA AND DELTTA

pause 34 pause 23 pause 2.

For a few moments no one spoke. Then Okot looked at the
Master with Gloves.

OKOT

Have you noticed?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

Yes. 18 break 34 break 23 break 2.

OKOT

(looks at the two counts)
Is that so?

GAMMA AND DELTTA

That is correct.

Okotie

Anything else?

GAMMA

Nothing.

OKOT

You can go.

The two bow and leave the Royal Cabinet. Lord Down closes the door behind them.

OKOT (CONT'D)

(looks at the Master with
Gloves)

What is this?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

They appear to be geographical
coordinates.

OKOT

(he is very surprised)

That is not possible. I don't
believe it. Were these idiots
dreaming about the island we were
looking for?

The Master with Gloves hurries to a shelf against the wall of the Royal Cabinet, looks for something and takes a large roll of paper. He goes to the King's desk and unfolds the roll. It's a sea chart. Okot and Lord Down approach the map. With the string of Numbers in his hand, the Master with Gloves searches the map. After a while, he finds the place and shows it to them.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

The coordinates show this point.

Lord Down and Okot say nothing. After a moment, two, three of astonishment, the King says.

OKOT

You will go there.
(and the King looks at the
Master in Gloves, who
bows his head)

EXT. BLUE HARBOR. DAY.

On a ship are Noble M. and the Master with Gloves. Beside them is Lord Down.

DOWN

I wish you fair winds and calm seas.

(both bow to Lord Down)

It's fine weather today.

The sun is high in the clear sky. There are only a few small piles of snow in the harbour, everything else is dry. The sea is also calm.

Lord Down steps off the ship onto the wooden bridge. He reaches the shore and returns to the ship. The bridge is lifted and placed on the deck of the ship. The sailors manoeuvre to sail. Those on the pier take off the thick ropes that held the ship in place and throw them into the water. The sailors pick them up on deck as the ship slowly, slowly pulls away from the shore. Lord Down watches as the ship pulls away, turns and sails away.

At sea, the ship is moving slowly, slowly away, on the main deck can be seen Master with Gloves and Noble M. At the helm is a helmsman.

EXT. THE DECK OF NOBLE M.'S SHIP. DAY.

On the command deck are Noble M. and Master with Gloves.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

(to Noble M.)

There are few sailors.

M.

It is a precautionary method to maintain secrecy.

(two sailors speak in sign language)

And they are deaf and dumb from birth.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

But not blind.

M.

If they were blind, did anyone else sail with them?

MASTER WITH GLOVES
That's also true.
(and smiles)

M.

How far is our destination?

MASTER WITH GLOVES
(looks at the helmsman)
Is he deaf too?

The helmsman is Tongue, Noble M's henchman.

M.

Not him. He's my henchman. I'll kill him if I have to.

The Master with Gloves is a little frightened by this statement and looks at the Noble M. He is very serious, then the Master with Gloves looks at the Tongue, whose face does not move a muscle.

M.

I ask you, Master, if we sail much.

MASTER WITH GLOVES
(he is surprised by Noble
M.'s words, so he clears
his voice a little and
says)
It doesn't fit very well. It also
depends on the wind. Let's say
three, four days, maybe a day more.
But what I do know is that there
are no surprises waiting for us,
because the sea in this area is
well known and the chart I have is
very detailed.

M.

As you say, Master.

And the two are silent, looking ahead. The Master with Gloves looks back, the Blue Harbor is visibly receding, the wind is fair and the sea is calm.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Inside the grotto are Old Argument, sitting on the floor with his back to the cave wall, Ayaju and Ukamaka, Cinyra, Adonis and Smyrna. The last four have just entered the Ash Grotto and are looking at the old White Numerologist. Cinyra takes a step and stops in front of the Old Argument. The two look at each other, a moment, two, three.

CINYRA

How could I not know him, my
Mistress. He is Old Argument.
(Old Argument looks at
Ukamaka without saying
anything)

UKAMAKA

Are you related?

CINYRA

Sort of related, yes. We come from
two common ancestors, he from Mira
and I from Mara.

UKAMAKA

So he's a Numerologist too.

CINYRA

Let's say he's a Numerologist, if
fools can be Numerologists without
having the Dream of Confirmation.

ARGUMENT

(irritated and passionate)
I also have the Dream of
Confirmation.

CINYRA

If the Hidden Slave does not speak
to you, it is not the Dream of
Confirmation.

ARGUMENT

(equally passionate)
The Hidden Slave also speaks to me.

UKAMAKA

(intervenes in the
discussion)
We seem to be in the middle of a
doctrinal dispute. Who has the
Dream of Confirmation and who does
not.

(MORE)

UKAMAKA (CONT'D)
 (Cinyra and Old Argument
 say nothing)
 What is this all about?

CINYRA
 The Hidden Slave is the one who
 secretly learned the Numbers from
 the Forgotten Blue Father and ran
 away from him.

UKAMAKA
 Yes, I know the story.

CINYRA
 After death, the Hidden Slave is
 shown to us in dreams to help us
 make the right choices. We of the
 Mara branch have retained the
 ability to have the Dream of
 Confirmation, while the scum of the
 Mira branch have lost this ability.

ARGUMENT
 (stubborn)
 I haven't lost it at all. And I
 have proof.

CINYRA
 You're lying.

UKAMAKA
 All right, we'll leave the
 Numerology argument for later. Now
 I've come to find Ayaju's
 Apprentice.
 (The Queen approaches Old
 Argument and leans
 towards him)
 What was your name again?

ARGUMENT
 (looks at the Queen for a
 moment or two, then says)
 Old Argument.

UKAMAKA
 So, old man, do you know Amos, the
 Apprentice of the head of the
 niche, Ayaju?

Old Argument says nothing. He looks at Ukamaka and remains
 silent. They make eye contact, but when the Queen wants to
 ask again, Ayaju's voice comes from the niche where his head
 is.

AYAJU

You're late, Ukamaka.

The effect is strong, and Ukamaka suddenly turns towards the niche where Ayjau's head is. Cinyra, Adonis and Smyrna are also startled and take two steps back, looking at Ayjau in horror. He is wide-eyed and speaks to Ukamaka.

AYAJU (CONT'D)

He has gone to collect the parts of my body that you have so skilfully divided and will soon reunite them. Then I will see what you do, Queen.

UKAMAKA

(says nothing, but comes to her senses and asks)
How can you speak?

AYAJU

It seems to be the energy still in the Ash Grotto that belongs to the Hidden Slave.

UKAMAKA

I've had enough of the Hidden Slave.

AYAJU

From here begins the Dream of Confirmation for the White Numerologists of the Mira branch and for the Black ones of the Mara branch.

UKAMAKA

And if I take this miserable head of the former Grand Master.

(and the Queen goes to the niche where Ayjau's head is and takes it from there)

And take it out of this stinking grotto and see what this Hidden Slave will do.

And Ukamaka, with Ayaju's head in her hand, goes to the entrance of the Ash Grotto, but just as she is about to come out, she stops in her tracks as Yonah, Amos the White Fisherman, Tasso and Ema enter the grotto.

Ukamaka takes a step back, Cinyra, Adonis and Smyrna sit next to her, and Yonah, Amos, White Fisherman, Tasso and Ema sit in front of them. Ayaju's head is turned towards Amos.

Just then, Ash, Captain Ukamaka, enters the Ash Grotto. Seeing the four of them, he draws his sword from its scabbard and sits down next to the Queen. The two groups look at each other.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

In the room, the King is sitting in a wooden chair by the side table, sipping a cup of coffee.

The cabinet door opens and Lord Down enters, introducing the two Earls.

DOWN
Gamma and Deltta Counts.

The two Counts enter the Royal Cabinet, arrange themselves and bow to the King. They are both dressed very extravagantly, in very flamboyant colours, wearing many rings on all their fingers, bracelets on their hands, their lips are bright red and they have a lot of white blush on their faces.

When he sees them, Okot purses his lips and wants to shout at them, but he restrains himself. He even forces himself to be friendly.

OKOT
Counts, thank you for coming.
(the counts bow to the King)
Be seated.
(the Counts scramble among themselves, unable to decide which chair to sit in; finally they choose one. The King looks at them and can barely contain himself)
Serve the coffee.
(the Counts giggle, Gamma checks the corners of his mouth with his little finger, Deltta immediately does the same. Then they both help themselves to the coffee, making a mess of it. The King, who has been watching the whole scene nervously, can't hold back any longer and shouts)

(MORE)

OKOT (CONT'D)

Enough!!! Enough!!! I'll break your heads if you don't stop... !!!!

(Suddenly the two Counts become serious and remain standing with the coffee cups in their hands. The King recovers and says)

I have summoned you because I want to know the story of the common dream and why you have come to me.

GAMMA

(sips from his cup and speaks calmly and seriously)

Count Delтта and I shared a dream. The small island in the South Sea where the black trees are.

DELTTA

(sips and says)

We told the dream to our wives, who are very wise.

GAMMA

And they realised that these trees are ebony. For Your Majesty, through Lord Down, is searching for the missing Ebony Rod.

DELTTA

Our wives said we must come to Your Majesty to tell of this dream. Perhaps it will help.

GAMMA

And we have come.

DELTTA

And it seems to have helped, for the Master with Gloves has gone out to sea.

And the two earls both sip from their coffee cups. They like the drink and they look at each other and giggle.

OKOT

How simple. Clever women you have.

(the two counts nod)

The story ends here?

(the two counts nod)

But where does your common dream come from?

(MORE)

OKOT (CONT'D)

(the two counts shake
their heads, they don't
know)

Have you told this story to anyone
else? Apart from your wives.

(the two earls shake their
heads no)

What is known in the Blue Fortress
about the departure of the Master
with Gloves?

GAMMA

Nothing, Your Majesty. It's just
that he's gone off on some mission,
no one knows what, on some shady
character's ship.

OKOT

What character?

DELTTA

Noble M., of whom we know much,
Your Majesty. We have spoken of him
before.

OKOT

So?

DELTTA AND GAMMA

And?

OKOT

(screams)

What do people say?

GAMMA

It's no use getting angry, Your
Majesty. All that is known in the
fortress is that the Master with
Gloves has gone, presumably on a
mission for Your Majesty, and
because we know about the ebony
trees of our shared dreamâ€|

DELTTA

We know he went for the ebony.
That's all.

GAMMA

That's all.

DOWN

(intervenes)

It is so, Your Majesty, that much is known. No one has made any connection with the Ebony Rod.

Okot is silent, thinking.

EXT. MAIN DECK OF THE SHIP OF THE NOBLE M.. DAY.

On the main deck are Noble M. and the Master with Gloves. The two of them are looking out at the horizon.

M.

Are we still far away?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

According to my calculations, we should have arrived this morning. But we still don't see an island.

M.

Have we passed it?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I don't think it's so small that we can't see it.

(the Master looks up and sees a sailor at the top of the mast, scanning the horizon)

Is the sailor up there any good?

M.

As good as he can be.

The sailor whistles from the top of the mast. Noble M. and Master with Gloves look at him. The sailor points with his right arm in one direction. Noble M. puts the spyglass to his eyes and looks in that direction. After a moment or two, he hands the spyglass to the Master with Gloves, who looks through it. After a moment or two, the Master with Gloves hands the spyglass back to Noble M. He hands it to the helmsman and points in that direction. The helmsman looks through the telescope, then hands it to Noble M and turns the helm in the desired direction.

Noble M looks through the telescope in the direction indicated by the sailor at the top of the mast.

EXT. SLANT-EYED SHAMAN ISLET. DAY.

It is a small island. The Noble M.'s ship can be seen in the open sea, and on the water a boat is approaching the island.

The boat comes to a halt on a small rocky shore. Two sailors jump out of the boat and take it ashore. Noble M. gets out of the boat, followed by the Master with Gloves and two other sailors. The group walks ashore towards the small forest of fir trees.

In the middle of the trees the group finds debris, mostly covered with sand and vegetation. Noble M. signals to the 4 martiners to clear the debris. They set to work.

The sun is alone and bright in the sky. The sea is calm, and small waves crash against the shore of the small island.

The sailors have cleared away some of the sand and vegetation, and the Master with Gloves is stripping himself of the debris he has discovered. He bends down and pulls out a drum with a stick strapped to it. The Master with Gloves cleans the drum and studies it. He takes the stick and beats the drum. The Master with Gloves is startled by the sound. He shakes and drops the drum. Noble M. notices this gesture and approaches the Master with Gloves.

M.

Something wrong, Master?

The Master with Gloves does not react immediately, he stands for a moment, two, then shakes his head as if nothing has happened, picks up the drum, picks up the stick and beats it again. The sound produced by the drum is accompanied by another flash of lightning that the Master with Gloves has, this time he is not frightened and he sees, for a moment, the Slant-Eyed Shaman with the drum in one hand, the stick in the other, and a very long crown of feathers on his head that reaches down to his knees. The Master with Gloves looks at Noble M, who continues to look at him.

M.

Is it really nothing?

MASTER WITH GLOVES
It's not a big deal.

And the Master with Gloves beats the drum three times with his stick. The sounds are accompanied by 3 very short flashes of the Slant-Eyed Shaman dancing and beating the drum with his stick. The Master with Gloves then looks around and sees part of the shaman's feather crown buried in the sand.

MASTER WITH GLOVES (CONT'D)
 (points towards the
 feather crown and speaks
 to a sailor beside him)
 Pull the crown out of the sand.

The sailor looks in the direction the finger is pointing and makes signs to ask if it is the object. The Master with Gloves also signs that it is, and the sailor starts to remove the sand and pulls out the feather crown. He shakes it and hands it to the Master with Gloves. He takes it and waits to see if he will be shown another flash of the Slant-Eyed Shaman. But this time nothing happens. The Master with Gloves looks on and signals the sailor to continue clearing the area of sand and vegetation. The sailor begins to clear the area and is joined by two other sailors, but nothing is found.

MASTER WITH GLOVES (CONT'D)
 I'd like the drum and the feather
 crown.

M.

If you need them, we'll take them. Shall we take the piece of ebony?

MASTER WITH GLOVES
 That's why we came here.

M.

(totally unconcerned)

Very well, Master.

And Noble M. is waving at the sailors to follow him.

INT. MASTER WITH GLOVES'S CABIN ON NOBLE M.'S SHIP. NIGHT.

The hut is well lit by many candles. On the floor are the feather crown and the drum with the stick tied to it that belonged to Slant-Eyed Shaman.

The Master with Gloves is kneeling, studying the Slant-Eyed Shaman's crown very carefully.

He has a ruler with which he measures each feather in the crown, carefully noting them on a piece of white parchment.
Enter Noble M.

M.

Good evening. How are you?

MASTER WITH GLOVES
(without looking at Noble
M.)

I am fine, thank you for your
question.

On the bed, Noble M. sees the tray of food from which the Master with Gloves has eaten a little. Then he asks the Master.

M.

Are you feeling well? I see you haven't eaten.

MASTER WITH GLOVES
I'm fine. I'm not hungry.

M.

If you need anything, please call me.

MASTER WITH GLOVES
Sure, yes. Thank you very much.

Before leaving the room, Noble M. looks carefully at the Master with Gloves, who is measuring each feather of the Slant-Eyed Shaman's crown with a ruler and writing the measurements on the white parchment next to him.

After inspecting everything, Noble M's eyes stop as the Master with Gloves looks at him. The Master looks at him and asks if there is anything else.

M.

Oh no, there's nothing. I was just looking, like this. Good evening.

MASTER WITH GLOVES
Good evening.

And Noble M. turns around, opens the cabin door, gets out and closes the door behind him. Master with Gloves goes back to studying Slant-Eyed Shaman's crown of feathers.

EXT. BLUE FORTRESS HARBOR. NIGHT.

Noble M.'s ship is anchored at a berth, from which the Master with Gloves and two sailors carrying a wooden crate descend onto the wooden bridge. The Master with Gloves is holding the piece of ebony wrapped in a cloth. Behind the crate is the Noble M.

The wooden crate is placed behind a carriage and strapped down. The Master with Gloves, climbs into the carriage with the piece of ebony. Noble M. stays outside, and the carriage drives away.

Hidden behind some crates stacked in the harbour is a black soldier of the Queen, who has watched as the Master with Gloves gets off the ship, gets into the carriage and leaves. The carriage pulls away and leaves the harbour. The Noble M. gets on a horse and leaves the harbour. The sailors return to the ship, from which Tongue disembarks. He looks around carefully and makes his way to the Blue Harbour exit.

All these movements were seen by the black soldier of Queen Ukamaka's personal guard. No one saw him.

INT. JOINER'S WORKSHOP IN THE HOUSE OF NUMBERS. NIGHT.

The Master with Gloves is in the well-lit workshop talking to his Apprentice, named Adem.

MASTER WITH GLOVES

You will stand guard outside the door and let no one in at any time. I don't think anyone will bother me, but just in case.

Apprentice Adem bows and leaves, closing the door behind him.

Left alone, the Master with Gloves removes the cloth from around the piece of ebony and places it on the workbench. He takes a ruler and measures the piece. He makes a mark where he is going to cut it, takes a peep-hole, checks the teeth, sharpens them with a file, arranges them with a metal tool, then takes another small file and begins to cut the ebony.

INT. KING'S CABINET. DAY.

Okot enters the Royal Cabinet, followed by Lord Down. Lord Down closes the door behind him.

OKOT

I'm listening.

(and the King sits down on a high backed chair in front of the glass where the fire is burning and begins to drink from the coffee cup on the small table next to him)

DOWN

The Master with Gloves has been working all night. He should be here any minute.

OKOT

Have they found the island?

DOWN

Noble M. reports that they have found the island and taken a piece big enough to make a new ebony rod.

OKOT

We will see if it is thick enough when we check it in the hole in the ground. Anything else?

DOWN

No big deal, except that the Master with Gloves got a drum and something weird with lots of feathers.

OKOT

Not interested.

Lord Down bows his head and leaves, but as he closes the door behind him, he turns and walks back to the King.

DOWN

Master with Gloves is waiting to be received.

The King waves him in, Lord Down opens the door to the Royal Cabinet, where the Master with Gloves enters, carrying an object wrapped in a black cloth. The Master bows and hands the object to the King. The King rises from his chair, takes the object and removes the black cloth.

A new ebony staff has been constructed by the Master with Gloves. The King examines it carefully, it appears to be identical to the original.

OKOT

You didn't happen to find the original, did you, Master?

The Master with Gloves is very tired, says nothing, just smiles and bows his head in respect. Okot examines the Ebony Rod, especially the lower end.

OKOT (CONT'D)

Is this the right thickness?

MASTER WITH GLOVES

I'd say I respected all the dimensions of the original Ebony Rod. I don't think the lower end is very important, especially its thickness, I can't say it's fixed with the original, but proportionally it's as it should be.

OKOT

Sure, yeah.
(addressing Lord Down)
Lord Down, I want to go now.

EXT. NUMBER HOUSE CEMETERY. DAY.

The door of the House of Numbers leading to the graveyard opens and the Master with Gloves comes out, followed by two figures in black robes with hoods on their heads. The robes are dark, floor length, and the figures wear black leather boots. One of them is holding an object wrapped in black cloth. The Master with Gloves closes the door behind them and the three of them walk down the main avenue of the graveyard.

The 3 pass a group of 4 Apprentices cleaning a tomb, who stop their work and bow respectfully.

The Master with Gloves and the two silhouettes continue down the main avenue of the graveyard and reach the Tomb of the Grand Master of the Order of Numbers. The Master with Gloves pulls out a key and opens the metal door, and the two silhouettes enter, after which the Master closes the door behind them and stands outside the door.

INT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

The two figures, dressed in black robes with hoods over their heads, descend the stone steps and reach the bottom.

They remove their hoods. They are the King and Lord Down. Okot takes the new Ebony Rod from its black sheath, throws it to the ground and walks over to the large white marble table in the shape of a rectangle. He kneels down and searches for the hole in the floor with the palm of his hand. He finds it, takes the new Ebony Rod and tries to fix it in the hole, but the stick is too thick.

Lord Down watches everything the King does very carefully, and when he sees that the new Ebony Rod doesn't fit, he pulls out a pile from under his black robe. The King gives him the end of the new Ebony Rod and Down begins to stack it.

EXT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

The Master with Gloves stands guard outside the metal door at the entrance to the Tomb of the Grand Masters. Passing him are 2 Scribes and an Apprentice who bow respectfully to him. The Master with Gloves responds with a brief nod, and the three continue on their way.

Behind a tomb, hidden well out of sight, a soldier of the Queen's personal guard is spying on the Master with Gloves. At the iron door of the tomb, the Master with Gloves looks around carefully, but doesn't see the soldier of the Queen's personal guard spying on him.

INT. TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS. DAY.

Lord Down has just finished filing the bottom end of the new Ebony Rod, and the King is fixing it into the small hole in the stone floor. This time, the new Ebony Rod fits perfectly.

The King stands up. The large rectangular white marble table begins to move, revealing the stone steps beneath it. The King and Lord Down look at each other. The Lord takes a torch from the stand on the wall and hands it to the King. The King takes it and the Lord takes two flints from under his robes, strikes them and produces sparks which light the torch. Then the Lord takes another torch and lights it from the one already burning. Carrying the two torches, the King and Lord Down descend the steps beneath the rectangular marble table.

INT. THE AISLES UNDER THE TOMB OF THE GRAND MASTERS.
TORCHLIGHT.

The King and Lord Down descend the stone steps below the Tomb of the Grand Masters with the two torches in their hands. They reach the chamber where the Iron Cross is set into the wall and see the opening that leads to the White World.

The King walks towards the opening, but Lord Down grabs his arm. The King turns to face him.

DOWN

Don't be dangerous, Your Majesty.

Okot turns back to the entrance and steps through it into the White World. Lord Down follows the King in fear and also steps through the door into the White World.

EXT. WHITE WORLD. DAY.

Okot and Lord Down are up on the ridge of the mountain, standing by the gate through which they have passed and looking around. Below them is the White Forest, and the whole of the mountain wall and the path leading down are white. In the clear sky are the two Suns. Okot and Lord Down watch without speaking.

The King makes his way slowly and cautiously down the carriage. He is followed by Lord Down. Okot takes only a few steps and then stops. He looks back, all white. Behind him, Lord Down has also stopped and is looking out at the White World.

OKOT

We'll be back. We'll come another time.

And the King turns around, walks up the path, reaches the gate and enters the Blue World. He is followed by Lord Down, who also goes through the gate into the Blue World.

Everything is white in the white world. The two suns are in the clear sky.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

In the grotto, 2 groups are looking at each other, Yonah at Ukamaka, Ash at Amos, Smyrna at Emma, Adonis at Tasso and Cinyra at the White Fisherman.

The White Fisherman draws his knife from his arm, as does Cinyra, who draws a dagger from her high boot. Amos draws his flaming sword and points it at Ash.

Suddenly, Ukamaka sends powerful vibrations towards Yonah, which spread like airwaves.

Ash rushes towards Amos, who fights back, and the two of them strike hard with their swords.

Cinyra and the White Fisherman are moving towards each other. Their knives are stuck in each other.

Smyrna and Ema walk towards each other empty-handed.

Tasso pulls the pickaxe from behind his back and looks to hit Adonis, but Adonis dodges in time and the pickaxe goes past his head. Tasso is thrown off balance, Adonis trips him and Tasso falls face down. Adonis rushes up and strangles him by the throat.

Amos and Ash face each other. Amos raises his sword and strikes Ash hard to the right, Ash parries the blow, then Amos strikes the soldier to the left, who also parries the blow. The two turn and strike hard with their swords. Each seems to strike the other.

Yonah paces, palms open, the shockwave sent by Ukamaka. The Queen concentrates and sends another wave of energy. By the time it reaches Yonah, the energy wave has hit the others who have fallen, Smyrna with Ema, Amos with Ash and White Fisherman with Cinyra.

When the wave of energy reaches Yonah, she again parries it with open palms, and the wave does not touch her, but passes by her, shaking the walls of the Ash Grotto.

Uakamaka and Yonah hate each other.

The White Fisherman and Cinyra rise from the ground and throw themselves at each other, their knives striking each other, sparks flying from the blows.

Ash is on his feet and strikes hard with his sword at Amos, who appears to strike with his sword. The Apprentice is on his knees.

Ema gets up from the floor and throws herself at Smyrna, grabbing her by the hair. Smyrna grabs Ema's hair as well, and the two fall, spinning on the ground.

Yonah and Ukamaka look at each other, both of them stone.

Amos is on his knees with his sword raised above his head. Ash is leaning hard on the Apprentice, his sword over the Apprentice's glowing sword.

From his niche, Ayaju's head watches the whole scene, and Old Argument watches helplessly from below.

Suddenly, Amos spins in place and releases Ash's sword, causing Ash to fall and plunge belly first into the Apprentice's glowing blade.

Yonah throws a wave of energy at Ukamaka. The wave vibrates in the air.

The White Fisherman and Cinyra fall.

Ash digs into Amos's glowing sword and stands still.

Tasso is strangled by Adonis at the throat and, with the last of his strength, sticks two fingers in his eyes. Adonis gets to his feet and is hit by a wave of energy from Yonah. Rolling his fists to his eyes, Adonis screams, gets to his feet and starts running towards the bottom of the Ash Grotto, disappearing through the passage leading to the Blue World.

Ukamaka tries to parry Yonah's energy wave with open palms, but she can't hold on for long and slides back a few metres. Yonah sends another energy wave.

It passes through Ash's body as she falls to the ground. Amos is also shaken and collapses on top of Ukamaka's captain.

Smyrna sees Adonis run away and pulls herself out of Ema's arms, Ema stands up and Yonah's energy wave knocks them both down.

The energy wave also knocks down Cinyra and the White Fisherman, but the latter manages to wriggle free and slash the Numerologist's right arm.

Smyrna gets up and runs off, disappearing through the passage leading to the Blue World. Ema gets up and runs after her, but stops at the passage. Cinyra runs past her, pushing her violently, and the girl smashes her face into the wall of the Ash Grotto.

The White Fisherman runs after Cinyra, but stops near Emma. Tasso reaches them.

Amos rises from below and pulls the flaming sword from Ash's lifeless body.

Ukamaka has been left alone in the grotto. She is surrounded by Yonah, Tasso, the White Fisherman, Emma and Amos. The apprentice slowly approaches the queen with his flaming sword pointed at her. Ukamaka sends a wave of energy at him, but Amos is shielded by his ivory-hilt flaming sword. The queen is startled and looks at Yonah, who stares at her, then at Tasso, who points the pickaxe at her. And the White Fisherman points the diamond knife at her. Ema stares at Ukamaka. Yonah holds her arms down and looks at the Queen. She is cornered and looks at everyone with fear and anger.

Ayajū speaks.

AYAJU

You may go, Queen.

From his place in the niche, Ayaju's head looks at the Queen.

Then Old Argument's voice is heard.

ARGUMENT

And never forget this day, Queen
Ukamaka.

For a moment, no one moves. Then the White Fisherman and Tasso step aside, slowly, cautiously, their weapons aimed at Ukamaka. Ema remains where she is and continues to stare at the queen. She takes a step, two, three, slowly and carefully, looking at each of them in turn. The Queen stands next to Ema, walks past her and, before heading for the passage leading to the Blue World, looks at Ash's body lying dead on the ground and says.

UKAMAKA

I will never forget this day. And
I'll make sure that you don't
forget it either.

And the Queen turns abruptly and disappears into the passage leading to the Blue World.

There is a moment of silence. Then everyone looks at each other to see if they're all right. They're all fine. Ash's body lies on the floor.

AMOS

We must bury Ash. But where, in the
White World?
(and the Apprentice looks
at Yonah)

YONAH

What to say. The White World has
already been unbalanced by the
beings the Queen has created to
guard the places where the Grand
Master's body parts have been
placed. And the energies of that
body will join the others.

AMOS

Is it good for the white world?

YONAH

I honestly don't know.

ARGUMENT

Not good, but the White World, as you call it, will know how to destroy them. So you can bury this black soldier's body here in the White World.

AYAJU

(from his niche, the head of the Grand Master speaks)

I ask your friends, Old Argument, to bury the body of Captain Ash near my little hut by the White Lake.

TASSO

We know where he is, Grand Master.

AYAJU

Thank you kindly, young man.

YONAH

I will fetch your body parts, Grand Master.

And Yonah comes out, followed by Amos. Tasso and the White Fisherman pick up Ash's lifeless body from the ground and also leave. Ema bows to the niche where Ayaju's head is, bows to Old Argument and leaves. Ayaju and Old Argument remain in the Ash Grotto.

ARGUMENT

And now...
(Old Argument leaves the sentence unfinished)

AYAJU

The prophecy will come true.

Yonah and Amos enter the cave with the segmented body parts of Grand Master Ayaju. They place them in the centre of the cave. Everyone is silent. One second, two, three. First Yonah speaks.

YONAH

I've waited for this moment...
(and Yonah's voice changes radically, from female to male)
...hundreds of years.

Yonah's bearded voice shocks the others, who look at her in surprise.

Ayaju's eyes are staring at her from his head in the niche in the cave wall. Amos suddenly turns to face her. Old Argument looks at her too, then closes his eyes and a look comes over his face that seems to say, yes, he understands, he knows whose voice it is. So he says.

ARGUMENT

Hidden Slave, Mighty and Eternal
Master, I recognise You and... I
offer myself to You in peace.

YONAH

(turns his head towards
Ayaju and speaks in the
same voice)

Grand Master Ayaju, I have followed
you since you were born. Out of
human sin and pure energy.

(then Yonah turns his head
towards the Old Argument)

I have also waited for you, my
faithful child, with your pure
Numerological White Power.

(then Yonah looks at Amos,
who looks at her with
wide eyes in which fear
mixes with curiosity)

You, Apprentice, do not fear, for
you too are ready, even before you
are born, to receive the coming
revelation to which you will
worship with your life and death.

Next, Yonah looks at the segmented body parts of Ayaju on the floor. She bends down and places them in order, the body in the middle, the hands up, left and right in their places, and the legs, left and right in their places.

Then Yonah goes over and helps Old Argument to get up from his seat. He has a happy face, his eyes are wet and huge tears are streaming down his cheeks. Argument gathers all his strength to help Yonah lift him up. Amos overcomes his fear and goes to help old Argument to get up as well. He looks happily at both the apprentice and Yonah and cries, large tears streaming down his cheeks in unusually large droplets. Yonah carries Old Argument and places him on the ground to the right of Ayaju's segmented body. Argument is so happy that his heart is beating so hard that you can see the veins in his neck throbbing, and he weeps continuously, large tears falling to the grey earth of the Ash Grotto.

Yonah places Amos on his knees at Ayaju's feet.

Yonah then walks to the niche where Ayaju's head rests.

AYAJU

My spirit tells me that I am a dragonfly that has found its mate.

YONAH

(also in male voice)

Your mind tells you nothing, Grand Master. All the energy here has nourished your soul, Ayaju. I am very happy that you are here and that the Revelation will take place during your mentorship as Grand Master of the Order of Numbers. And this is because my energy and the wisdom of the Forgotten Blue Father, who never disappeared and who are the parallel pair of the White World, have so well and so carefully guided your infallification in the Blue World.

(and Yonah is silent for a moment, two, three, then says in the same male voice)

And now we will begin the Revelation. Thank you, Grand Master.

AYAJU

I love you...Dad.

Yonah lifts her arms and takes Ayaju's head from the niche in the grey wall, and Ayaju closes his eyes. With the head in her hands, Yonah kneels on the left side of Ayaju's segmented body and closes her eyes. Amos, who is at Ayaju's feet, looks at her and at the head of the Grand Master, whose eyes are closed. Old Argument, sitting on Ayaju's right hand, does not stop crying, huge tears trickling from his eyes and spilling down his temples onto the grey earth of the cave.

YONAH

(in the same male voice)

I am the white rose that grows without thorns. I am the green reed with a brown tip that grows by the water's edge...

(and stops)

ARGUMENT

(continues Yonah sentence)

...green that formed the delta of the White World.

(MORE)

ARGUMENT (CONT'D)

I am the little green frog, master
of the autumn ponds, I am the brown-
bodied insect with transparent
wings and a long tail, flying...
(and stops)

AMOS

(without knowing where his
words come from, he says)
...from flower to flower, filling
the White World with colours taken
from the rainbow of infinite and
essentially delicate suns.

YONAH, ARGUMENT AND AMOS

(Yonah still in her male
voice, Argument and Amos
speak together)
So that everything takes essence,
so that everything becomes
fundamental, because the green...
(and the grotto becomes
green)
the red...
(the grotto becomes red)
and the blue
(the grotto becomes blue)
to create the foundation of this
World
(and the grotto becomes
white)
White.

The former Ash Grotto is now white, a strong, pure white that
glows very brightly. Yonah places Ayaju's head where it
belongs, on the shoulders of his body on the white ground.
Old Argument is no longer crying, only absolute happiness on
his face. Yonah closes his eyes and places his hands on his
calves. Amos, on the other hand, has his eyes wide open and
is watching with great attention.

The Grand Master's body turns red, Yonah's blue and Old
Argument's green. The colours, pale at first, slowly become
very strong, so strong that they glow. Ayaju, Yonah and Old
Argument have their eyes closed and there is an unusual
serenity and fulfilment on their faces.

auras of red, blue and green slowly rose from the bodies of
Grand Master, Yonah and Old Argument towards Amos, like a
wisp of vapor on the perfect and bright white of the grotto.
The Apprentice stands still, watching the three colors come
towards him. Thin wisps of steam drift gently and calmly
towards Amos, their tips touching the Apprentice's body
slowly, delicately and subtly.

The blue touches his heart, piercing it like the tip of a spear. Amos blinks, as if his heart felt his touch. The red thread touches his forehead and the Apprentice closes his eyes for two seconds, then opens them again. At the same time, the green thread touches his stomach and all three colored threads penetrate deep into the Apprentice's body. Amos closes his eyes, throws his head back and receives the three colors as the three bodies disintegrate into streams of red, green and blue energy.

The Apprentice sits with his eyes closed, head back, palms flat on his calves, on his knees and with his heels under him. And the 3 streams of energy in the colours blue, red and green enter his heart, head and stomach. As the bodies of Ayaju, Yonah and Old Argument disappear.

EXT. WHITE LAKE. DAY.

Tasso is filling a hole with white earth. The hole is on the shore of the White Lake and has a small mound of white earth.

Next to him, Ema sits on a stone and looks at him, then at the two suns in the sky of the White World.

Tasso has finished piling the white earth over the pit and approaches Ema. He sits down beside her. They are silent for a moment, two, three. Tasso speaks first.

TASSO

I didn't know if you were still
alive.

(the girl turns her head
and smiles at him)

I was shocked when I saw you coming
out of the water in the Purple
Lake, and my joy paralysed me.

EMA

It's, not quite, complete.

TASSO

Not laughing, the heart has stopped
beating.

EMA

(the girl puts her hand on
Tasso's chest and quickly
withdraws it)

Liar.

(and laughs amused)

TASSO

How did you escape?

EMA

(does not answer
immediately, then turns
his head towards Tasso)
You first, how did you escape?

TASSO

Lieutenant Beginning captured me.
(Ema turns her head when
she hears this name)
He took me to the tribunal and
sentenced me to hard labour in the
salt mine. There I met the White
Fisherman and Old Argument and we
became friends. The Old Argument is
the White Numerologist and he
helped us escape from the mine and
come here.

EMA

(still not looking at
Tasso)
How did you escape from the salt
mine?

TASSO

Well, simple. There was an
earthquake and it cracked the walls
of the mine. We walked through the
fire and into a diamond cave. There
the diamonds healed our burns,
well, Old Argument's chest wound
wouldn't heal, so he wanted to die
in the Ash Grotto. He has a long
and complicated history with that
grotto. And there we found the
Grand Master's talking head, his
Apprentice and Yonah, and went to
retrieve his body parts.

EMA

And at Purple Lake?

TASSO

Well, that's where his body was,
put in the tree on the island, then
his arms in the Ice Cave and his
feet, you know where. That's my
story. Now tell me, how did you
escape?

EMA

(does not answer
immediately, says after a
moment of silence)

I too was captured by Lieutenant
Beginning.

(Tasso shudders and
approaches Emma. He takes
her arm)

But he let me go in the end.

(Tasso puts an arm around
her shoulders)

And we ended up in an inn. We
stayed there for a while and...

(girl stops)

TASSO

(is very concerned)

Has he done anything to you,
Lieutenant Beginning?

(girl looks at him and
smiles)

Did he rape you?

(and there is a hatred in
Tasso's face that he
tries hard to hide)

EMA

(Ema observes the state
Tasso is in and tries to
minimise the history she
has lived through)

What was, was.

TASSO

(he is very angry and
doesn't want to leave it
at that)

No, tell me, this asshole, this
stinking pig, did he touch you?

EMA

(She wants the story to
end and to reassure
Tasso, so she clings to
him and caresses his
face. She looks him
straight in the eye and
says in a calm, gentle,
beautiful, sweet voice,
pleasantly surprised by
Tasso's reaction)

(MORE)

EMA (CONT'D)

What was, was, I want to forget everything, because now I am only interested in the present... only in this moment... only in this moment... only... you...

For a moment, two, they look each other intensely in the eyes, then Tasso grabs her by the waist and holds her against him, the girl lays her body next to his and they kiss, hard, passionate. Tasso squeezes her slender midsection with both hands and the girl clutches him tightly to her chest. After the kiss, they look at each other.

TASSO

I loved you from the first moment I saw you. Through the window of Mrs Cristina's dressmaking shop, when I brought bread and pretzels from the bakery. When I saw you every morning, my heart stopped.

EMA

(laughs)

Again with the story of the beating heart. You're such a liar, I can feel it exploding out of your chest.

TASSO

I feel only you, only your kiss, only your lips, only your perfectly slender centre.

Ema looks into Tasso's eyes and kisses him, again, pathetically. Then she hugs him tightly again.

EMA

You used to get on my nerves because you didn't say anything. That you didn't invite me for a coffee, a cup of tea, a beer, a walk, a... I don't know, I wanted you to invent something, to take me with you. And that's why, when you suggested we build the barricade, I immediately agreed, and nothing in the world could stop me.

TASSO

I also wanted to protect you. Not to let you fight on the barricade.

EMA

I wanted to beat you, what, not to be with you?

And they kiss again. But suddenly Ema pulls her head back and looks into Tasso's eyes. For a moment, two, three, they say nothing. Then Ema says.

EMA (CONT'D)

I've loved you from the first moment I saw you, even before you saw me. Ever since Old Chickpea put you in the Blue Fortress. I was on a business trip with Mrs Cristina and saw our baker bringing in a new apprentice.

TASSO

I didn't see you then.

EMA

But now I have something to tell you. I must go back to the blue world.

TASSO

You're leaving me again.

EMA

Not if you swear you'll wait for me here.

TASSO

Every day.

EMA

I'm serious. I have to go back to the Blue World. I'll be back in 5 days, I promise. Wait for me here in 5 days. Until then, go back to the Ash Grotto and see if they need you, White Fisherman and Old Argument and Amos. And if Grand Master Ayaju's body has been restored.

TASSO

Where will you return to the Blue World?

EMA

I'm very well taken care of now.
(Tasso looks down at her
clothes and nods his
head, that's about right)
In this lake I will open a gate to
the Blue World and through it I
will return to the White World. Can
you still walk through fire?

TASSO

No, the fire doors are closed.

EMA

I can open the Water Gate whenever
I want. Then wait for me in five
days.

TASSO

I swear it.

EMA

And I swear I'll come back.

They kiss intensely and hold each other tightly. Suddenly, Ema pulls herself out of Tasso's arms and approaches the shore of the White Lake. She takes the bottle of special liquid from her pocket and pours a drop into the water. The girl spills the liquid. Ema comes down and sits in the middle of the ripples, closes her eyes, mumbles something softly, the water around her begins to swirl harder and harder.

On the shore, Tasso watches Emma.

In the water, the girl disappears into the depths.

INT. ALCHEMY LAB. DAY.

In his laboratory, the Grand Duke is conducting an experiment, pouring a solution into a test tube. But he doesn't pay much attention to what he's doing, he keeps looking up at the water in the big wooden barrel, which is clear. Then he looks back down at what he's working on.

Circles of waves appear in the barrel and begin to rotate, the Grand Duke jumps from his seat and climbs up the wooden ladder. In the middle of the water, Ema comes out and takes a deep breath, then opens her eyes. The Grand Duke is on the edge of the barrel and they look at each other. Suddenly, the Grand Duke applauds ecstatically.

GRAND DUKE

Bravo, Ema!!! Perfect, you are
sensational, unique, bravo!!!!

Ema approaches the edge of the barrel and exits through the stairs inside. The Grand Duke descends, followed by Ema. The Grand Duke quickly picks up a fur coat and puts it on Ema's shoulders.

Then the lab door opens and Stone walks in.

THE GRAND DUKE

Hurry up to your room and get changed. We'll talk over dinner.

EMA

I have something to tell you.

THE GRAND DUKE

I know, I know, I've been there so many times. But now you go and change, dry yourself off, and I'll wait for you at dinner to talk quietly.

Ema comes out of the lab and walks past Stone. They both smile. Before Stone leaves the lab, the Grand Duke says to him.

GRAND DUKE

Stone.

(and the servant returns)

Invite the Queen Mother to dinner
and tell her Ema is here.

(Stone bows to the Grand
Duke and leaves, closing
the door behind him)

EXT. THE STREETS OF THE BLUE FORTRESS. NIGHT.

At night, the Blue Fortress is not well lit, but the Queen Mother's royal carriage has its own lights and is sure to make its way through the streets. In the back is the Queen Mother's captain, followed by 3 riders armed with spears, swords at the ready and rifles in sheaths on the saddles of the horses.

EXT. THE ROAD LEADING TO THE GRAND DUKE'S PALACE. NIGHT.

The Queen Mother's carriage is on the road leading to the palace. She is followed by her soldiers.

EXT. COURTYARD OF THE GRAND DUKE'S PALACE. NIGHT.

The courtyard and entrance to the palace are brightly lit by torches of various sizes. The Queen Mother's carriage enters the courtyard and the Grand Duke emerges from the palace, followed by Emma and Stone.

The carriage stops in front of the steps leading up to the palace. The Grand Duke hurries to open the door and helps Halima down. Ema greets Halima solemnly.

HALIMA

I'm so happy to see you, my dear.
(and takes the girl in her
arms)

THE GRAND DUKE

Let's eat, I'm hungry.

They all laugh and head for the palace entrance. Stone and the Captain shake hands as Halima, the Grand Duke and Emma enter the palace.

INT. GRAND DUKE'S PALACE DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

The doors open and Halima enters, followed by the Grand Duke and Ema, then the Queen Mother's Captain and the Stone. They all take their usual places, the Captain and the Stone remain standing.

GRAND DUKE

First we eat, then we talk.

The side doors open. Servants enter with trays of food and bottles of wine.

GRAND DUKE (CONT'D)

Sit down at the table.
(and waves to Captain and
Stone)
Today we celebrate.

And the Grand Duke laughs happily, while Halima smiles at Ema, who is overwhelmed by the attention she is receiving.

The fire in the hearth was burning brightly, two large logs blazing with high flames.

Leftovers and empty bottles lay on the table. Everyone has a glass of wine in front of them and listens to Ema as she tells her story.

EMA

And then I left, from the White Lake near the White House. But I have to come back in five days. That's what I promised, especially to see if Grand Master Ayaju has been restored.

A deep silence falls. Halima thinks, the Grand Duke takes a sip from his wine glass and is far away with his thoughts. The Captain and Stone look at each other and are silent. Finally, the Grand Duke says.

THE GRAND DUKE

OK, let's review. The Grand Master's body was segmented by Queen Ukamaka, and his parts were hidden in 3 places, guarded by monsters created by Ukamaka.

EMA

There.

GRAND DUKE

And they were collected by Ayaju's Apprentice.

EMA

Amos.

GRAND DUKE

By a spirit from the White World and two men from the Blue World.

EMA

And I must return in five days to see what condition the Grand Master is in.

THE GRAND DUKE

Of course, you'll have to come back to let us know he's all right.

And once again there is silence, a moment, two, three.

GRAND DUKE

I understand. Give us a moment
alone, please.

EMA

I'm going to bed, I'm tired.

The girl stands and bows to the Queen Mother, the Captain and the Stone stand and greet Halima and the Grand Duke, then Ema comes out first, followed by the Captain and the Stone, who close the door behind them.

For a moment, two, the Grand Duke and Halima do not speak, each in thought. The Grand Duke begins first.

GRAND DUKE

The Queen is more dangerous than I
thought, my little sister.

HALIMA

She is, my older brother. And it
frightens me, frankly, because the
safety of the Royal Blue Family and
the Blue Fortress is in great
danger. A very great danger.

THE GRAND DUKE

The White World can be entered through several gates. One is under the Tomb of the Grand Masters in the graveyard of Numbers, used by Ayaju and his Apprentice. Another is through the water, used by Ema.

HALIMA

Another by the fire, but it is
closed.

GRAND DUKE

Are open, the one through the Tomb
of the Grand Masters, through the
water and where the Queen and her
men enter and leave.

HALIMA

I'm waiting to ask the Queen where
her Captain is. I will say that I
have noticed that he has
disappeared. I'll see what face
she'll make and how she'll lie.

GRAND DUKE

I think you'd better keep quiet and pretend not to notice her captain's disappearance.

(Halima looks at the Grand Duke in surprise)

She will soon realise that you know something, that you know about their struggle and about the White World.

HALIMA

Yes, you are right.

GRAND DUKE

Pretend that you don't notice anything, but follow the Queen carefully and see what she does and, in particular, where she goes when she leaves the Royal Palace. It is imperative that you find out if she is going somewhere inside or outside the Blue Fortress. That's where the Queen has to meet her people. The two men, the young and the old, and the woman they fought in the Ash Grotto. And there, I think, is the place of passage to the White World.

The two of them are silent and lost in their own thoughts.

EXT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Tasso and the White Fisherman sit around a glass with a burning fire.

TASSO

Three days have passed and no one has come out of the Ash Grotto.

(The White Fisherman looks at Tasso. They look at each other for a moment, two, three, then Tasso stands up)

I'll go and see what's going on.

The White Fisherman also gets up and follows Tasso. They both enter the Ash Grotto.

INT. ASH GROTTTO. DAY.

Tasso and the White Fisherman enter the Ash Grotto. Amos is lying on his back, motionless, alone. There is no sign of Yonah, Ayaju or Old Argument.

Tasso leans over the body of the Apprentice and checks to see if he is alive.

TASSO

(to the white fisherman)
He is breathing and his heart is beating. Rarely, but it beats. What shall we do?

WHITE FISHERMAN

(he does not answer immediately, he looks around, the Ash Grotto is empty, then his gaze stops at the corridor leading to the Blue World, he looks in that direction for a moment, then turns his head to Tasso)
It's safest to take him from here. I'll get the stretcher.

TASSO

(as the White Fisherman comes out, he asks)
Where are the others?

WHITE FISHERMAN

(stops and looks back into the Ash Grotto)
I don't know, but since everything in this world is strange, they must have gone somewhere. Maybe they passed this way.
(and points to the passage leading to the Blue World)

And the White Fisherman comes out. Tasso is left alone and he gets up, goes to the corridor that leads to the Blue World and takes a few steps into it. But he sees nothing and stops. Behind him, entering the Ash Grotto, is the White Fisherman with the stretcher. Hearing him, Tasso turns and approaches him.

WHITE FISHERMAN (CONT'D)
Can you see anything?

TASSO
No, it's very dark.

WHITE FISHERMAN
This is the way to the Blue World.

TASSO.

I think so.

WHITE FISHERMAN
One day we should see what this is
all about.

TASSO
We'll meet these freaks, if not the
Queen.

WHITE FISHERMAN
(says nothing, looks back
towards the passage, then
says)
Let's get Amos out of here.

TASSO
(as he picks up the
Apprentice and puts him
on the stretcher)
Where shall we take him?

THE WHITE FISHERMAN

Where we met him, at the White House.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE. DAY.

The White Fisherman comes out of the trees of the White
Forest with his arms full of large white fruits. He passes
the White Lake and enters the White House.

INT. WHITE HOUSE. DAY.

In the chair at the table, looking at the papers with the
strings of Numbers, is Tasso, who turns round when he hears
the White Fisherman enter. He gets up from the chair, walks
over to him and picks up a large fruit.

TASSO
I'm starving.

Tasso puts the fruit on the ground, takes the pickaxe and strikes the fruit hard with the sharp point. It cracked and a thick, blood-red juice came out. Tasso rushes to the fruit, picks it up from the ground, breaks it in two, the red liquid oozes out and the boy begins to eat greedily from the red flesh of the fruit as the liquid runs down it.

The White Fisherman looks at Tasso, smiles, puts the fruits down, picks one and sticks the knife into it. He makes a small hole, lifts the fruit, tilts his head back and carefully begins to drink the red, bloody liquid from the fruit.

Tasso stops eating and turns to the White Fisherman.

TASSO (CONT'D)
Have you looked around?

WHITE FISHERMAN
Yes, there's nobody. At least for now. How's Amos?

TASSO
(turns his head towards
the Apprentice)
The same. Sometimes he lifts an arm, then drops it, sometimes he stands on his butt and falls back down again. All with his eyes closed.

Amos is lying face up on the bed. Suddenly he moves the fingers of his left hand. He stops. His face is calm, but behind his closed eyelids you can see his eyeballs moving restlessly in all directions.

AMOS' ONIRIC REVELATION

It is broad daylight. Yonah, Ayaju, Old Argument and, behind the Grand Master, Amos are standing at the foot of a hill, smooth and not very high.

Everyone is looking at this hill, which has very green grass, as dark as the grass on which the black bull stood. The grass is very short and very thick. Up this hill, from the bottom to the top, there are 3 paths, neatly marked and filled with black pebbles. These paths run parallel to 3 small streams that come down from the top of the hill.

From place to place, over the 3 streams, there are small white footbridges connecting the 3 paths. You can walk up these paths, parallel to the small streams that come down from the top of the hill.

There are also two houses and a windmill on this hill. The first house has walls of wooden planks laid horizontally and painted green. The roof is made of black reed and the house is built on a foundation of white river stones. The entrance is through a blue wooden door with a blue wooden casement window on the left. To the left is another blue door, and to the right is a 3-compartment window, also with blue wooden sashes. Below this window is a brown wooden bench attached to the outside wall of the house.

Yonah, Ayaju and Old Argument look at each other. The first to speak is Old Argument.

ARGUMENT

My journey begins and ends in the
Green House.

YONAH

There you will calm down and your
energies will be balanced.

Old Argument makes his way towards the Green House, followed by the other two and Amos, who is walking two paces behind them. Apprentice doesn't say anything, just looks at everything that's going on.

Old Argument approaches the green house and goes to the blue door on the left. He opens it and looks inside. It is a storage room containing wooden and iron farming tools: a rake, a three-legged pitchfork, a large sickle, two hand sickles with iron blades and wooden handles, a plough with iron nails, a decorative white pumpkin, a mill for crushing seeds, and a large wooden box with iron edges and legs for storing seeds.

Old Argument closes the door, goes to the front door, opens it and enters.

Old Argument enters a small room with white walls and a beaten earthen floor covered with a carpet of woven papyrus. To the right is another room, much larger, with a long, wide bed against the front wall, covered with white sheets. On the left wall, there is a white stove as long as the wall. There are blankets and cushions on it. On the left, there is another room, as large as the one on the right, in which there is a large rectangular wooden box stuck to the wall, green in colour, with three flowers painted on it, two white and one red.

On another wall is a green-painted wooden cupboard with 3 shelves, on which are several clay pots, forks and wooden spoons. On the wall with the window below is a table and chair, also painted green. All the walls in the rooms are white. The Hidden Slave is sitting on a chair, holding a very wide, green-coloured belt. Old Argument approaches him. The Hidden Slave looks at him affectionately and ties the belt around Old Argument's middle. On the belt are drawn a cross, a 6-p

ointed star, a tree with long and very branched branches, the lifeline (Greek meander), a white flower with 5 white petals and a red centre, an animal with a lion's body, a woman's head and eagle's wings, a square, a circle and a triangle. Old Argument looks at the wide green belt, smiles, turns and leaves the room.

Standing outside the Green House are Yonah, Ayaju and, behind him, Amos. Old Argument comes out of the Green House and walks over to Amos. Yonah and Ayaju don't look at Old Argument, they look at the Green House to see what he looks like. Old Argument takes off his green belt and puts it on Amos. When he is finished, Old Argument bends down and kisses the Green Belt in the middle of Amos' navel. Then Old Argument turns and enters the Green House. Old Argument disintegrates until there is nothing left of him.

Then Yonah and Ayaju leave from near the green house and start climbing towards the blue house. Amos follows them two paces behind. They cross some small white bridges and arrive in front of the Blue House. This is the same as the Green House, it has walls made of horizontally laid pieces of wood, the roof is made of black reed and the house stands on a foundation of white river stones. The main door in the middle of the house is white. So is the window on the right, which has 3 parts and the sashes are white. On the left is another door, also white. Ayaju goes to it and opens it. It is a storeroom with wooden and iron tools for the shepherds: an iron scissors for shearing sheep, two pots, one small and one large, for making cream and butter, a bell to hang around the goats' necks, a cowbell, a wooden stick for the shepherd and two large brass pots with a wooden support to be placed on the shoulders to carry the pots.

Ayaju closes the door and goes to the main entrance. He opens the white door and enters the Blue House.

The interior of the Blue House is identical to that of the Green House. The walls are white, the floor is of beaten earth covered with a carpet of papyrus stalks, and in the room on the right is a long, wide bed with white sheets. On another wall is a stove with a small wood-burning door and on it are blankets, tightly packed on top of each other, and a pillow. Ayaju enters the room on the left.

There is a large blue wooden box with two flowers with white and red petals on it. There is also a red wooden cupboard with clay pots, spoons and white wooden forks on the shelves. There is a table under the window of the room, and on the chair next to it sits the Forgotten Blue Father. He looks at Ayaju and smiles.

FORGOTTEN BLUE FATHER

It's very nice to meet you, my son.

AYAJU

I love you very much, father.

The Forgotten Blue Father extends his right hand, which holds a scroll. Ayaju sits with his right knee on the ground and kisses the Forgotten Blue Father's hand, then takes the scroll and opens it. There are Numbers and strings of Numbers on it. Ayaju turns and leaves the room.

Outside, in front of the Blue House, there is only Yonah and behind her, just a step behind her, is Amos. Ayaju comes out of the Blue House, passing Yonah who is not looking at him, but looking up somewhere beyond the Blue House. Ayaju approaches his Apprentice and hands him the scroll. Amos drops to his right knee, kisses Ayaju's hand and takes the scroll. As the Apprentice stands up, Ayaju turns, walks past Yonah, enters the Blue House and dissolves and disappears completely.

Yonah sets off, followed by Amos, passes the Blue House and begins to climb the small black stone path that runs parallel to a small stream that flows down from the top of the hill. They cross 3 small white bridges and arrive at the White Windmill. The mill is made of white wood. It has two large cross-shaped blades. On the right side is an open door. Yonah reaches the door, turns to Amos and beckons him to follow her. The two of them enter the White Windmill.

Inside, there is a bed against the wall and a potter's wheel in the middle. A Slant-Eyed Shaman is sitting on it, spinning the wheel with his left foot. The shaman is modelling a clay figure in the shape of the letter Z. When the shaman has finished the figure, he takes a piece of string from beside him, removes the figure, picks it up and stretches Yonah.

The girl takes the figure. Next to the shaman, on two long white boards, are figures representing the letters of the alphabet. Yonah places the letter Z in a row with other clay letters and raises the chisel from below. Amos goes and picks up the other wooden plank on which the rest of the clay letters are resting: A, B, C, D, D, E, F, etc. They carefully leave the Wind White Mill with the two planks.

Outside, behind the White Windmill, there is a clay oven and a pile of wood next to it. The two of them go to the oven, and Yonah carefully places the clay letters inside. When she is finished, Amos starts to put the wood in the bottom of the oven, and it starts to burn brightly, with a big flame. Amos continues to add wood to the fire, which quickly turns to ashes. The Apprentice has no time to do anything else, he carries the parchment with the Numbers in his Green Belt and works hard to keep the fire burning, a fire that burns the wood at a very fast rate. Yonah looks at Amos and smiles, turns and walks towards the White Windmill, entering it and quickly disintegrating until there is nothing left.

At the oven, Amos continues to work quickly until the pile of wood is finished and the fire in the oven has gone out. No more smoke comes out of the chimney. Amos opens the door and looks at the letters. He starts to take them out one by one. They are perfectly dry. Amos finds a sack by the woodpile and puts the letters in it. He lifts it on his shoulders and starts walking downhill, passing the White Windmill, he hears a noise behind him, turns around and sees the water rushing down from the top of the hill. The Apprentice starts to run downhill, but the water catches up with him and covers him completely.

INT. WHITE HOUSE. DAY.

Amos wakes up. His whole body is covered in sweat and his clothes are soaked, as if he had fallen into a lake. The Apprentice looks around, sees Tasso and the White Fisherman looking at him, and Amos loses consciousness and passes out.

EXT. HOUSE OF NUMEROLOGISTS. DAY.

There are 5 horses guarded by soldiers from Queen Ukamaka's personal guard in front of the House of Numerologists.

INT. HOUSE OF NUMEROLOGISTS. DAY.

Halima is sitting in her high-backed wooden chair at the long table in the house. Next to her are Cinyra, Adonis and Smyrna.

UKAMAKA

I have to stay calm and control the situation. Who was that demon?

(No one answers because no one knows who the Queen is talking about.)

(MORE)

UKAMAKA (CONT'D)

Ukamaka understands, she gets angry, but she's in control, so she explains) That treacherous creature who dared to defy me.

Now the 3 of them understand that it's Yonah, but they don't know who she is. So Cinyra speaks.

CINYRA

My mistress, we don't know who she was. We were also astonished by this demon, this beast, but we had never seen it before. We noticed that it had very white skin and strange markings tattooed on it.

Ukamaka looks at Smyrna. She is as confused as Cinyra and shrugs her shoulders.

SMYRNA

I've never seen tattoos like that before, mistress. I don't know what they are, I'm sorry.

UKAMAKA

Was she a witch?

SMYRNA

Of course she was a witch, and a particularly dangerous one, with very powerful negative energies that I could see in the air.

UKAMAKA

What kind of witch is she exactly?

SMYRNA

(she is even more confused, she doesn't know what to say, so she forces herself to be honest)

Mistress, I'm sorry, I've never seen anything like this before. I don't know what kind of tattoos the witch had on her, I've never seen such powerful energies before. I don't know, nothing, Mistress, please forgive me.

And Smyrna lowers her head and puts her chin to her chest. Ukamaka looks at Adonis who also looks down. Then Cinyra speaks.

CINYRA

Mistress, we must recognise that our powers are limited where this witch is concerned. We have tried to use our Black and White Numerology. We waited for the Dream of Confirmation from the Hidden Slave. But we got nothing. We have found nothing. We know nothing, Mistress.

(and Cinyra looks down for a second or two, then continues)

But...

(and the old man stops, afraid of Ukamaka. She looks at him. Cinyra looks up slowly, shyly and obediently)

Your Majesty, I saw you fight the witch as an equal and dominate her.

UKAMAKA

(screams)

You annoy me with your licking. After the three of you ran away like cowards, leaving me alone with them, after I didn't even have Captain Ash's support, you call me a witch?

CINYRA

(frightened)

No, Mistress, no.

UKAMAKA

That's what you suggested and if so...

(Queen raises her voice a lot)

Then let me put you in your place.

Startled, the three get up and kneel before the Queen without saying a word. They sit there while Ukamaka looks at each of them nervously. After a while she calms down and says.

UKAMAKA (CONT'D)

Sit down at the table. I need slaves like you.

The 3 rise from the floor and sit down at the table beside the Queen.

UKAMAKA (CONT'D)
Here's the plan...

INT. KING'S CABINET. NIGHT.

The King and Lord Down are talking in the cabinet, dimly lit by 3 candles.

OKOT
It's a completely white world
underneath the Blue Fortress.

DOWN
I don't know if it's really under
the fortress, but that's how I got
there.

OKOT
Has it been known to the Order of
Numbers for a long time?

DOWN
I don't know if the Order of
Numbers is aware of this. Master
with Gloves really doesn't seem to
understand why we keep going there.

OKOT
Should only the Grand Masters know?

DOWN
I have no way of knowing for sure,
but if that's the case, it wouldn't
surprise me at all.

OKOT
Yes, it is not impossible that only
the Grand Masters and their
Apprentices know. That's where the
Grand Master disappeared.

DOWN
And I think so, because I have
searched all over the Blue Fortress
and the thousand villages for him,
and I have not found him or his
Apprentice.

OKOT
Clearly, that is where we must look
for him.

DOWN

Don't be dangerous. Who knows what the White World is hiding.

OKOT

But we can't take the army there, it would be like a conquering expedition and we'd open the way for everyone to go there. There'd be looting and who knows what else.

DOWN

I wonder, is the gate under the Tomb of the Grand Masters the only entrance to the White World, or are there other entrances?

OKOT

We don't know, but I wouldn't be surprised if we find out there are others.

DOWN

Does the Queen know a pass?

There is silence in the Royal Cabinet. The two sit and think. After a while, Okot says.

OKOT

We must take things one step at a time. First, explore the White World and find Ayaju and his Apprentice.

Suddenly, the door to the Royal Cabinet opens and Ukamaka enters. She addresses the King without any introduction.

UKAMAKA

I found Ayaju.

Okot and Lord Down are stunned and say nothing.
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END OF EPISODE 8 END OF PART ONE: THE INITIATE