

The Eye of an Eagle

Plight of An African Student in the United States

STAN ALLOTEY

The Eye of an Eagle. Copyright © 2009 Stanley Allotey

This book is a work of fiction. All names, characters and incidents are products of the author's imagination. The contents are, therefore, fictitious. Any resemblance to actual events, persons, living or dead is coincidental. The book is based on fact, but the names have been changed to protect the innocent.

All rights are reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions, including the right to reproduce the book or any portion thereof, in any form whatsoever, without prior written permission from the author.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN: 0-9774852-3-4

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. due publication data

Published by
Urban Classic Books
6245 Bristol PKWY # 245
Culver City, CA 90230
www.theeyeoftheeagle.com

PRINTED IN THE USA

Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to recognize my wonderful wife, Violet Allotey, for unending patience and devotion.

To the International Black Writer's Association for inspiration and support.

Especially, I am grateful to Ms. Travis Martin for typing the manuscript with diligence and constant encouragement.

Special thanks to Martha Tucker for developmental discussions, editing and proof reading the novel.

My gratitude goes to Dr. David Horne for early input and guidance.

Finally, I am indebted to my family and close friends who encouraged me to write a book to illuminate the tribulations that African students endure in their pursuit of educational goals in the United States, and the honor of having been born in the great country of Ghana. Long may she live, grow, and thrive.

Dedication

It is with heart-felt honor that this book is dedicated to
Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and all the pioneers who
promoted Pan-Africanism.

Prologue

The country of Ghana is currently located in West Africa, bordering Cote d'Ivoire—Ivory Coast—on the west, Togo on the east, Burkina Faso to the immediate north, and the Gulf of Guinea portion of the Atlantic Ocean to the south.

Ghana has a number of distinctions: 1. It is named after the great medieval West African empire of Ghana, which was located approximately 800 kilometers north of modern Ghana's present boundaries. 2. Formerly known as the Gold Coast through 1957, Ghana remains part of the principal West African sources of gold exported to Europe and the rest of the world—over 75% of the world's supply of gold before the 1860's came from West Africa. 3. Ghana was the first sub-Saharan African country with a democratic constitution and style of government to gain political independence from England.

The story of Ghana's political evolution is a microcosm of the rest of Africa. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, a United States and English-trained scholar, became the country's first prime minister and president. In 1957, with Dr. Martin Luther King and his family in the audience, he declared at Ghana's first emancipation celebration that Ghana's independence would be meaningless without the political freedom and unification of the rest of the African continent.

Ghana's story was filled with important names—J.B. Danquah, Obetsebi Lamptey, Akufo Addo, Ako Adjei and many others—most with strong wills, insightful leadership, and a deep commitment to freedom and self-government. It was overwhelmed with intertribal friction, greed, corruption, individual and tribal lust for power and mean spiritedness born of an inferiority complex. As the first, and quite probably the most visionary of Ghana's leaders to the present day, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was loved intensely in Ghana, even though his term was cut short by a military coup d'état, which forced him into exile in neighboring Guinea. That became the favorite weapon of takeover for the forces suspicious of and impatient with the democratic processes. The rule of the soldier's guns became the symbol of Ghanaian politics and that of much of Africa from 1957 through the rest of the century.

The story told in this novel is part of the tale of clashing visions in Ghana, which is part of Ghana's destiny. Ghana's great story remains the soul of Africa's quest for respect and dignity in the modern world.

Chapter 1

“We will not succumb to intimidation!” Nii Mensah Ankrah shouted.

The gathering crowd thundered approval. Nii Mensah’s strong chiseled face appeared as a silhouette against the darkening horizon, and he thrust his arms in the air.

“Bring back Dr. Kwame Nkrumah!” He yelled.

“Yeah, yeah! Bring him back! Bring him back!” The crowd roared.

“Founder of the great Ghanaian nation.” Another section of the crowd yelled.

“We will not allow him to be so easily deposed!” Nii Mensah shouted.

“No! No!” The crowd chanted. “Bring back Dr. Nkrumah! Bring him back! Bring him back!” Intensity gripped the dusk like a gathering tornado.

“Stomp out the coup! We know what to do! We know what to do!” The crowd’s voices exploded. “Stomp out the coup! We know what to do!”

Nii Mensah rode the wave of excitement. The crude outdoor platform in the southwest region of Ghana was built for large sports events, but to this Premph College graduate, it seemed tailor-made for taking his stand against military rule. Since he was a young boy helping his parents organize the community

against the Colonial government, Nii Mensah had prepared for this day. The crowd joined him on the platform, stomping and dancing. The people were with him—submerged in the political unrest and uncertainty of their country, of their time. His husky voice projected through the dark green leaves.

“We will not allow Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to be permanently exiled to Guinea. We are stronger than that!” Nii Mensah declared. “We will not allow them to defeat the man who gave up every selfish thing for Ghana.”

The protest grew louder and the crowd grew larger. “Are you Ghanaians?” Nii Mensah shouted.

“Yes! Yes, we are Ghanaians!” The people shouted back.

“Are you Ghanaians?”

“We are Ghanaians! And we have had enough of this coup!”

“Are you sure you’ve had enough?” Nii Mensah yelled, pumping his arms in the air.

“Yes! Yes! We have had enough! We know what to do! Stomp out this coup.”

“Are you ready to follow me? To Christianbourg Castle?”

The voices went silent, as if some great undercurrent of an ocean had seized their human power. Nii Mensah paused with concern, but a gust of determination stretched his arms toward the sky, and he heard a low rumble inside himself. Suddenly, he felt his tall, striking figure move one foot forward, marching, holding a large elder cane in the air. The people followed. Humidity stuck to his skin as they charged eastward, denouncing the government’s greed, corruption and murder under the sound angry footsteps.

Someone in the back yelled, “The soldiers!”

Uniformed soldiers leapt from the thickets behind them, and shots rang out. Two people fell and pandemonium filled the stampede. Osei Acheampong, Nii Mensah's best friend and Vice-President of the Positive Action Radical Student Organization, of which Nii Mensah was President, grabbed his arm.

"Go! You have to go. It's you they want," Osei demanded.

"I have to see who got shot?" Nii Mensah wrestled against Osei.

"Listen! All we have accomplished will vanish if they shoot you or take you to prison. Go with Odartey, now!" Osei shoved Nii Mensah toward Odartey.

"Let them come. If I am to die, I am to die!"

"Odartey!" Osei shouted. "Get Nii Mensah out of here. Now!"

Odartey dragged Nii Mensah a few feet ahead of the soldiers, as their footsteps sounded closer and closer, pounding, quickening, faster and faster. Osei and his men blocked them—arms linked and standing as a human fence. They faced death without flinching and stared down the rifle-drawn soldiers. A fight broke out.

"Save Osei!" Nii Mensah yelled. He heard the sound and felt the velocity of a bullet shooting past his body.

As Odartey dragged Nii Mensah into the woods, the crowd faded, and then disappeared. He struggled to return, but the hands pulling him were too strong—family hands, ally hands, and the love of Ghana hands, all overpowered him into the darkness, into the solid blackness swept him into his future.

"What have I done?" Nii Mensah ran, crying. "My God! What have I done?"

Ordartey yanked Nii Mensah faster until he felt his feet sloshing through Death Creek's muddy waters. The stale smell of the gully hit his nostrils and the colorless foliage slapped his face. As voices of the night rose, Nii Mensah wondered if Osei might die before morning, if he should have stayed to die with him.

"They won't stop until they find you." Odartey panted as he directed them deeper into the darkness. "Here, this way." He parted the twisted branches and ran faster, kicking off their water-logged shoes while enemy voices chased close behind. They kept running with the voices gaining closer proximity. Without words, Odartey veered off the path and he pushed Nii Mensah down into the overgrowth of an aged tree stump. The voices rushed by. Nii Mensah rose to continue their journey, but Odartey pushed him down again.

In a short while, the sound of feet shot past them returning the way they had passed earlier. Whispering, Odartey convinced Nii Mensah to wait another hour. Then they took off running again. Finally, in the darkest part of night, just before dawn, they hit the other side of the gully. Nii Mensah could still see nothing, except for the hope of his best friend's life. Odartey led the way, trotting up a steep and narrow hill. Their panting was the only sound. Soon an outline of St. Mary's Catholic Rectory appeared as an overly tall door of Gothic architecture. Out of breath and dizzy, Nii Mensah swayed from foot-to-foot while Odartey knocked on the door. Finally, a controlled voice whispered from inside.

"Who is there?"

"It is Odartey."

Father Owusu, a pale and slightly stooped Catholic priest wearing a navy night jacket, slowly opened the door. “My child, what have you done now?”

Nii Mensah felt sorry for the trouble he was causing, but he strongly supported his convictions. He had seen too many people die without a cause, or protest.

“We are in trouble, please help us.” Nii Mensah knelt before Father Owusu, feeling sure that God must have already petitioned for their lives. The priest wordlessly ushered them into the back room. In the small, dark space, Father Owusu sat on a chair beside a twin bed and whispered.

“You must stay out of sight, until we find a way out.”

Thinking of the seriousness of the situation, Nii Mensah nodded.

“Your presence brings us all great danger,” Father Owusu said.

“My deepest apologies, Father. But I wonder which is worse, to stand by and watch our people die in the bloodbath of the coup, or to take action against it and run for our lives?”