



Naija IP Tales

Traditional Knowledge

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

TANGIRI COMMUNITY,
SOMEWHERE IN WEST AFRICA...

NOT MUCH IS KNOWN BY MANY ABOUT THIS
RIVERINE COMMUNITY, FOR FEW HAVE VISITED
TANGIRI COMMUNITY. THE LAND IS
SAID TO BE THE HOME OF SOME OF THE
BIGGEST NILE CROCODILES ANYWHERE IN
THE WORLD.

PERHAPS THIS IS DUE TO THEIR FRESHWATER LAKES.

HAVE YOU
SPOTTED NDABA AT THE
AIRPORT YET? OKAY, GOOD.
PLEASE BRING HIM STRAIGHT
FROM OSUBI TO THE INNE
UMOFO MAIN LAKE THE MOMENT
YOU REACH UMOFO. I AM NOT
AT HOME, I CAME FOR A
TIME OUT WITH RUKI HERE.
THANK YOU, JAPHETH.

BECAUSE OF THE SEVERAL WATER BODIES
SURROUNDING THE COMMUNITY, MANY OF
THE INDIGENES ARE FISHERMEN. THE
REST OF THE COMMUNITY ARE RICE FARMERS
AS THEIR SOIL IS PREDOMINANTLY
SEMI-ACIDIC WITH VERY LITTLE DRAINAGE,
WHICH ALLOWS FOR GOOD RICE FARMING.

NOTE, TANGIRI COMMUNITY IS A FICTITIOUS CREATION, MADE SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS IP
STORY ON TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE.

ABOUT AN HOUR LATER,
DEDE'S VISITOR ARRIVES.

I CAN'T BELIEVE
THAT EVEN THOUGH
I HAVE TRAVELLED THE
WORLD WIDELY, COMING
TO TANGIRI FOR THE FIRST
TIME EXCITES ME IN A
WAY I CANNOT
EXPLAIN.

NEVER A
DULL MOMENT
WITH YOUR UNIQUE
SENSE OF HUMOUR THAT
MADE OUR TIME AT
HARVARD MEMORABLE.
IT'S SUPER GOOD TO
SEE YOU!

AND THIS
MUST BE THE
ELEGANT RUKI THAT
STOLE MY BEST
FRIEND'S HEART.

WHILE AT
HARVARD, YOU WERE
LIKE A MAJOR COURSE
AS MY FRIEND COULD NOT
STOP TALKING ABOUT YOU.
I AM GLAD I WAS ABLE
TO TRAVEL DOWN FOR
YOUR TRADITIONAL
MARRIAGE.

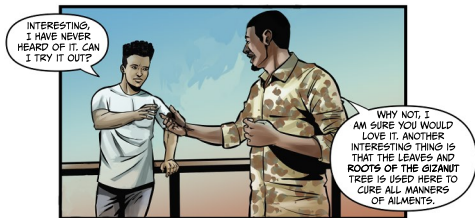
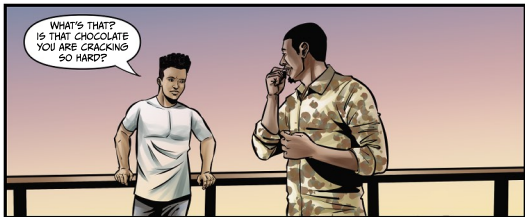
THANK YOU
SO MUCH, NDABA.
WELCOME TO IWE
TANGIRI.

WHAAAA!
THIS IS INCREDIBLE.
YOU KNOW BACK IN SCHOOL
WHEN YOU BOASTED THAT
YOU GUYS HAVE SOME OF
THE BIGGEST CROCODILES IN
THE WORLD IN YOUR LAKES,
I THOUGHT YOU WERE
EXAGGERATING

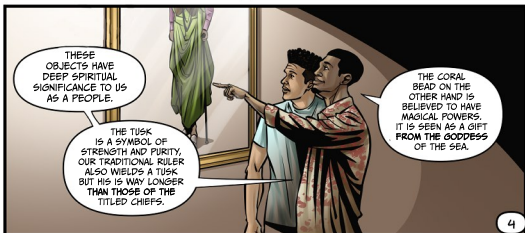
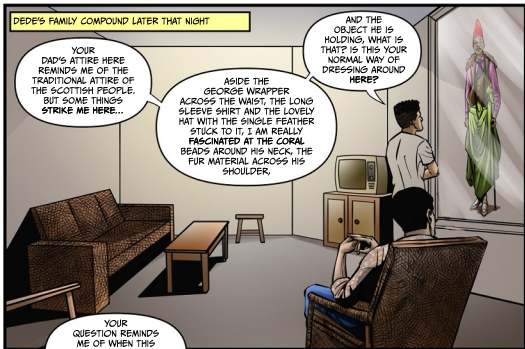
BY THE WAY,
WHAT ARE
THEY DOING
STARING AT
THE BEAST?

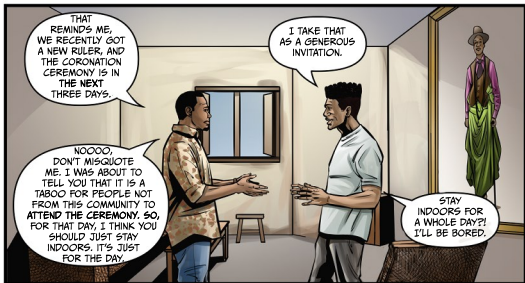
IT WILL
BE THE TANGIRI
CROCODILE
FESTIVAL IN A
MONTH'S TIME,

WHOEVER
CATCHES THE BIGGEST
CROCODILE IS GIVEN A
COMMUNITY AWARD, SO I
GUESS IT'S THAT TIME OF
THE YEAR WHEN MEN BOMBARD
THE LAKE IN SEARCH OF
CROCODILES TO ENTER
FOR THE COMPETITION.



FOOTNOTE: GIZANUT IS A FICTITIOUS FRUIT CREATED SOLELY FOR THIS EPISODE TO EFFECTIVELY EXPLAIN HOW TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE WORKS WITHIN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW.





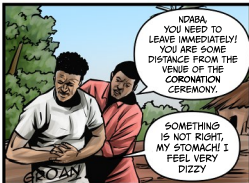
THREE DAYS LATER AFTER EVERYONE HAD LEFT FOR THE CORONATION CEREMONY, NDABA, OUT OF BOREDOM TAKES A WALK OUT OF THE HOUSE TO GO TO THE COMMUNITY CENTRE TO CATCH FUN, UNKNOWN TO HIM.....



FROM THE CROWD, DEDE SPOTS HIS FRIEND.



NDABA,
YOU NEED TO
LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!
YOU ARE SOME
DISTANCE FROM THE
VENUE OF THE
CORONATION
CEREMONY.



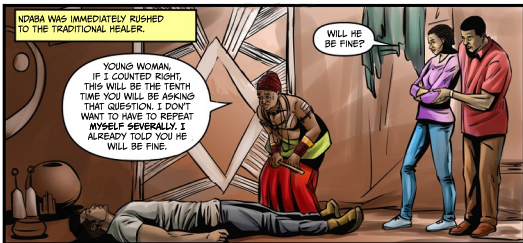
SOMETHING
IS NOT RIGHT,
MY STOMACH! I
FEEL VERY
DIZZY

NDABA!
NDABA! NDABA!
TALK TO ME.



YOUR CRY
IS USELESS. TIME IS
OF ESSENCE, THIS MAY
BE THE ONLY TIME WE HAVE
LEFT TO SAVE THE YOUNG
MAN. LET US TAKE HIM
IMMEDIATELY TO AKURU,
THE TRADITIONAL
HEALER.

NDABA WAS IMMEDIATELY RUSHED
TO THE TRADITIONAL HEALER.



YOUNG WOMAN,
IF I COUNTED RIGHT,
THIS WILL BE THE TENTH
TIME YOU WILL BE ASKING
THAT QUESTION. I DON'T
WANT TO HAVE TO REPEAT
MYSELF SEVERALLY. I
ALREADY TOLD YOU HE
WILL BE FINE.

WILL HE
BE FINE?

SEVEN HOURS LATER....



WHERE AM I?
WHAT HAPPENED
TO ME? I CANNOT
REMEMBER
MUCH.



THANK
GOD, HE IS
AWAKE!

YOU SHOWED UP
ON THE ROAD THAT
LEADS TO THE VENUE
OF THE CORONATION
CEREMONY, I TRIED TO
WARN YOU TO STAY
AWAY, SUDDENLY
YOU COLLAPSED.

DO YOU
REMEMBER NOW? I DO
NOT KNOW WHETHER IT IS
THE GODS OF THE LAND
THAT STRUCK YOU FOR
APPROACHING THE VENUE
OF THE CORONATION

ON THE
CONTRARY, NO! HE
VOMITED MUSHROOM AFTER
GIVING HIM SOME CONCOCTIONS
TO DRINK. WHAT I OBSERVED
AFTERWARDS WAS THAT THERE
IS A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT HE
MIGHT BE ALLERGIC TO
"MUSHROOM." AN ALLERGY
CAN BE LIFE THREATENING.

YES, I
REMEMBER BUYING
MUSHROOM FROM A
HAWKER AND EATING IT
ON MY WAY TO THE
CORONATION GROUND.
I JUST WANTED TO
TRY IT OUT.



WHEN I GOT
UP, I DISCOVERED
SOMETHING ELSE,
THE LUMP I HAVE HAD
FOR YEARS BECAUSE
OF PILE HAS
REDUCED.

MY ENTIRE
FAMILY MY DAD,
MUM AND TWO SISTERS
SUFFER FROM THE SAME
AILMENT. COULD THE
REDUCTION IN THE LUMP
BE BECAUSE OF
THE HERBS?

I ONLY TRIED
TO DEAL WITH THE
ISSUE THAT BROUGHT
YOU HERE, BUT THEN
AGAIN, THE ROOTS AND
LEAVES OF THE GIZANUT
TREE I GAVE YOU TO
DRINK IS KNOWN TO CURE
SEVERAL AILMENTS ONE
OF WHICH IS PILE,

THIS I BELIEVE
SHOULD EXPLAIN
WHY YOU NOTICED
THE REDUCTION IN
THE LUMP.

...CURE
PILE? JUST
LIKE THAT?



YOU WILL
RARELY FIND
ANYONE WHO
SUFFERS FROM
PILE IN THIS
COMMUNITY.

FROM
THE TIME OF OUR
FOREFATHERS,
WE HAVE ALWAYS
USED THE ROOTS OF
THE GIZANUT TREE
TO CURE PILE.

BOTH THE
LEAVES AND THE
ROOTS OF THE GIZANUT
TREE ARE POWERFUL
SOURCES OF MEDICINE.
THIS IS MADE FROM THE
ROOTS. YOU MUST TAKE IT
FOR SOME TIME AND SOON
ENOUGH YOU WILL BE
COMPLETELY FREE
FROM PILE.

NDABA WAS ALLOWED TO GO HOME A DAY LATER.

A WEEK AFTER DEDE AND RUKI'S TRADITIONAL WEDDING.

HONESTLY
YOU DO NOT KNOW
WHAT IT MEANS FOR ME
TO BE ABLE TO TAKE THIS
MIRACLE PLANT HOME TO
MY FAMILY, AFTER BEING
COMPLETELY FREE FROM
THIS AILMENT.

I ALREADY CALLED
MY DAD LAST WEEK
AND I TOLD HIM TO
KISS HIS TROUBLE
WITH PILE GOODBYE
FOREVER.

I
UNDERSTAND
YOU PERFECTLY,
NDABA, BUT....
BUT... BUT.

I CAN
ALMOST READ
YOUR MIND FROM
YOUR BODY LANGUAGE,
YOU SEEM TO HAVE
SOME RESERVATIONS,
WHAT IS IT?

YOU KNOW
THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE
HEALING POTENTIAL OF THE
PLANT YOU ARE REFERRING
TO BELONGS TO THE COMMUNITY.
IT'S THEIR TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE, AND IT WILL BE
WRONG FOR YOU TO TAKE IT
WITHOUT PROPERLY NOTIFYING
THE CHIEFS OF THE COMMUNITY
AND HAVING THEIR
CONSENT.

I DON'T
HAVE A
PROBLEM
WITH THAT.

ONE
MORE
THING.

WHAT IS
THAT?

THE CONSENT
OF THE COMMUNITY
CHIEFS IS AT BEST
ORAL, WE BOTH KNOW
THE LAWS GUIDING
THESE THINGS AS
LAWYERS,

A PROPER
DOCUMENTATION OF
THE TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE OF THE
HEALING POTENTIAL OF
THE GIZANUT PLANT AS
EMANATING FROM MY
COMMUNITY NEEDS TO
BE DONE.

NOW, I
GET YOUR POINT,
DEDE. I EQUALLY
HAVE NO PROBLEM
WITH THAT.

SOON AFTER, NDABA TRAVELS BACK TO CARPAN*. HIS ENTIRE FAMILY IS CURED USING THE HERBS FROM TANGIRI COMMUNITY.

NDABA LOCATES AN OLD FRIEND; A SCIENTIST IN THE FIELD OF PHYTOTHERAPY TO FURTHER RESEARCH "THE MIRACLE PLANT" AS HE CALLED IT.

CERTAINLY! THE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS HAVE BEEN ISOLATED. THIS WILL MAKE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PLANT MORE PRONOUNCED.

ANY PROGRESS?

SHORTLY AFTER THE BREAKTHROUGH IN THE LAB, THE POTENCY OF THE PLANT STARTS TO SPREAD ACROSS CARPAN AND BEYOND

I MIGHT HAVE UNDER ESTIMATED HOW FAR THIS WOULD GO BUT I THINK IT HAS BECOME PERTINENT FOR YOU TO SENSITIZE YOUR PEOPLE ABOUT THE NEED TO PROTECT THEIR TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE GIZA PLANT.

FORECASTING WHAT THE FAR RECHING IMPACT OF THE GIZA PLANT MIGHT BE, NDABA PUTS A CALL THROUGH TO HIS FRIEND, DEDE, IMMEDIATELY.

I TOTALLY AGREE WITH THIS. I WILL WORK TOWARDS ARRANGING A MEETING WITH THE COMMUNITY CHIEFS.

AFTER CONSULTING WITH THE COMMUNITY ELDERS, DEDE WAS EVENTUALLY ABLE TO HAVE A MEETING WITH THE CHIEFS AND TRADITIONAL RULER...

OUR COMMUNITY'S DISCOVERIES OF THE MEDICINAL POTENCY OF THE GIZANUT TREE IS PART OF OUR TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT IT NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED TO PRESERVE OUR OWNERSHIP OF IT.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS?

FOOTNOTE: CARPAN IS A FICTITIOUS ISLAND IN WEST AFRICA CREATED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THIS STORY.



OUR
TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE CAN BE
PROTECTED THROUGH
EXISTING INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY FRAMEWORKS
SUCH AS PATENT,
GEOGRAPHICAL
INDICATIONS AND
COPYRIGHT.

I WILL
BREAK THESE
TERMS DOWN
LATER DURING
THIS MEETING.



IN SOME
CASES, SOME
COMMUNITIES HAVE USED
TRADEMARKS TO PROTECT
ASPECTS OF THEIR CULTURE,
AND THE BENEFITS ARE
ENORMOUS, ONE OF WHICH
IS THE RIGHT OF THE
COMMUNITY TO CONTROL
THEIR TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE.



YOU ARE
INDEED A TRUE
SON OF THE SOIL.
YOU HAVE SPOKEN
WITH THE WISDOM
OF THE GODS.

MAY OUR
ANCESTORS
BLESS YOU.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS IS AN AREA OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW USED FOR PRODUCTS WHOSE QUALITIES ARE LINKED TO THEIR SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN.



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