

## **Part One: Our Town**

### **Chapter 1: Into the Forest**

### **Chapter 2: The Hunt and the Mine**

### **Chapter 3: Early Morning**

### **Chapter 4: Market Day**

#### **Individuals in the order introduced**

Papa, the chief of Tanoso; also called Nana  
or Tanosohene Nana Anyensu  
Elder Kofi, an elder; Kwaku's father  
Kwame, son of the chief  
Kwaku, son of Elder Kofi; Kwame's friend  
Asare, *odonko* who belongs to the chief and  
is his foreman  
Baako, *odonko*; Asare's son; friend of  
Kwame and Kwaku  
Asantehene, the king  
Anyetata, Baako's mother; Asare's wife  
Mama, Madam Ama, Nana's wife  
Akua, daughter of Madam Ama and Nana  
Yaw Mensah, son of Madam Ama and Nana  
Grannie, the Queen Mother, Nana's mother  
Auntie Abena, sister of Madam Ama

#### **Place names**

Tanoso, rainforest town that is the setting  
of the story  
Kumasi, capital city of the Asante Kingdom

#### **General vocabulary**

cassava  
cauldron  
clan  
cowrie shell  
ember  
garden egg or eggplant  
gourd

great-road  
Harmattan wind  
kola nut  
machete  
oil palm tree  
okra  
plantain  
savannah  
shea butter  
taut

#### **Twi words and phrases introduced**

*Adaepa* ... day of preparation for the *Adae*  
ceremony

*Maakye* ... Good morning

*Medaase* ... Thank you

*Mema mo akye* ... Good morning to everyone

*Nnonko* ... slaves

*Nyame* ... Akan supreme being

*Odonko* ... slave

*Yaa* ... response to a greeting; can be translated  
as 'Thank you'

#### **Ethnic groups and languages**

Akan who speak Twi  
Gurunsi who speak Nankane

#### **Animals introduced**

bush baby  
cobra  
crocodile  
duiker  
giant snail  
grasscutter

hog  
leopard  
monkey  
parrot  
porcupine  
puff adder  
python  
spider  
termite

### **Summary of Chapters 1-4**

These chapters describe a hunt, the chief's home and family life, and the beginning of market day in Tanoso. Akan domestic slavery and taxation are introduced. Responses to the questions below may include a reader's comparing his or her life to that of the chief's family.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. What is Nana's position in Tanoso?
2. Why are Nana, Elder Kofi, and Kwame going into the forest? Describe the forest as Kwame sees it. What weapons are Nana and Elder Kofi carrying and for what purposes?
3. What forest animals does Kwame identify? What happened to the leopards in the rainforest? Why?
4. What does Kwame learn about Akan slavery from his father? What law did the first king give regarding revealing the origins of the *nnonko*? What might be the purpose of this law?
5. Where do the *nnonko* come from? Why are they given to the king? What does he do with them?
6. How might Baako's status as an *odonko* change in the future? Does he know? Do his parents know? Will Baako's parents ever be free? Why or why not?
7. What is the outcome of the hunt? Since chiefs are not allowed to hunt, why did Nana accompany Elder Kofi into the forest? What will Nana do after the hunt?
8. How are Kwame and Baako dressed? What do they do for fun?
9. How does Kwame help the children from Tanoso that he meets at the stream?
10. What are the morning chores of the chief's children?
11. What is the title of Kwame's grandmother? How does he show her respect?
12. Describe Nana and Madam Ama's home. How were the huts built? Who did the work? Where does Mama Ama cook? Where does her family eat breakfast? What activities occur in the main courtyard?
13. What is Madam Ama's work outside of her home? Who works with her? What does she plan to trade or sell in the marketplace? How are large bundles transported to the marketplace? Do any domestic animals help with this work?
14. How do Kwame and Akua help their mother set up her trading stall. How are the large banana leaves used?
15. What does Madam Ama want Kwame and Akua to trade for in the market? What can they offer in a trade?

16. Describe the great-road in Tanoso. Are there other such roads in the kingdom? Who builds and maintains them? What is their purpose?