



THE HEART OF THE ESTATE

Before you wander further...

Every estate is built upon something.

This one is built upon memory.

I did not set out to build an estate. I set out to write down what my grandmother said, before the saying of it was lost.

- I *Memory is heritage. What a family remembers is not a story about the past, it is the deed to the ground they stand on.*
- II *Ordinary lives deserve extraordinary attention. Nobody here is a background figure. The woman selling tomatoes at the roadside is written with the same care as any queen.*
- III *Nature is the witness. The trees were there before the argument, and they are there after the reconciliation. They keep the only honest record.*

- IV We do not hurry the reader. Nothing on this Estate is designed to be consumed quickly, sold urgently, or finished tonight.
- V Accuracy before flattery. To remember someone truthfully is a greater tenderness than to remember them Kindly.
- VI The work belongs to the village. It was gathered from many mouths, and it goes back to them first.
- VII Silence is part of the writing. The pauses, the unfinished sentences, the things a grandmother would not say – these are Kept, not tidied away.

This is the whole of it. Everything else on the Estate is only these seven things, said again in a longer form.

Yaya Nyari

