

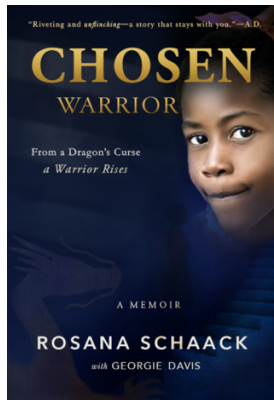
Chosen Warrior

From a dragon's curse, a warrior rises

a memoir

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with Georgie Davis



A Note to the Reader

Thank you for taking a moment to read the opening chapter of *Chosen Warrior*. The story traces my journey from a childhood marked by hardship and superstition in Liberia to a life shaped by faith, service, and advocacy for women and girls.

The chapter that follows recounts the moment when illness changed the course of my life and set the stage for the story that unfolds throughout the book.

CHAPTER 1

The Dragon's Curse

I do not remember the fall itself. I was only two. I see it the way my mother told it: Ma swaying down the path, a basin of cassava balanced on her head, a fish in her hand.

I ran to her, giggling, my feet slapping the warm earth.

Then an unseen hand swept my legs from under me.

Dust rose as I hit the ground. Ma dropped everything and rushed to scoop me up, brushing dirt from my face. It seemed like any toddler's fall, until her palm touched my forehead. My skin was burning hot.

She pounded herbs and brewed a dark tea. I sipped the bitter liquid. Then she laid me down to rest. But the medicine did not help. By nightfall I shivered under my sheet, eyes glazed, my cries fading. A gray cat slept beside me and stirred whenever I woke, alerting Ma through the long fevered nights.

Days passed. I stopped eating. My body grew weak.

She turned to my father for answers. "What sickness doing to Glaypohkpay?"

He had none.

After a week, the fever finally broke. Ma was relieved. But when I got out of the bed, my right leg gave way. I collapsed.

Once my strength returned, I could stand only on one leg, hopping to get from place to place. In the yard, I dragged myself forward with my arms, the leg trailing behind me.

A sudden fever. A twisted limb. Whispers spread through the community.

Someone has bewitched the child.

Maybe a jealous woman. Maybe an unpaid debt. A neighbor who smiled but cursed me in her heart.

When my condition did not improve, my mother carried me to the "sick bush," a place beyond the edge of a village where traditional healers treat illnesses.

The medicine man sat cross-legged on a woven mat beside a fire, smoke drifting through bundles of herbs. Ma held me in her lap while the healer moved his hand along my leg, slow and deliberate. He muttered words, calling the spirits.

A clay bowl lay beside him. He reached in and lifted three cowrie shells to see what they revealed.

Shaking them in his palm, he blew over them and cast them to the ground. The shells struck the packed dirt, rolled, then stilled. He bent low, reading what no one else could.

He shook them again. And again. The shells spun and fell a third time.

The medicine man lifted his head, his eyes heavy and resigned. For a long moment, he said nothing.

Ma held her breath.

At last he spoke.

“For true-true, dis one serious. Somebody witch your child. Dragon don swallow her leg.”

Ma clutched me, her body shaking. She had come seeking a cure but left haunted by the image of a beast devouring her child’s tiny limb.

Back home, she told my father, who took the healer’s words as law. It must be true. One day I had walked. The next, I could not stand.

A daughter gave him little pride in a culture that valued sons. Now, with a crippled child in his care, his heart grew colder still.

Too young to understand, I was no longer treated like an ordinary child.

In the eyes of my people, my fate was sealed.

And everywhere I went, gossip followed.