

WASHINGTON

It is dark and the first birds haven't even begun to greet the day. Washington wakes and readies himself, then leaves the ramshackle maze of the labor camp to join other shadows, passing alongside him, with their machetes. Soon the faint singing of boys and men welcomes the sun, peering over the hilltop. The workers walk the dirt path to the cocoa field, their mud-caked clothes dangling over skin and bones. Their voices swell in rhythm with their march, as bare feet after bare feet trudge the mud. Toward the back of the line, the feet get smaller and smaller - younger and younger to a boy of five, the youngest worker on the cacao farm. The line gazes up at an unnatural sound. The buzzing of a drone: one of the ways they're tracked by the Big Boss. Back at camp, women prepare food as Nandi, the eldest, tells a story to the children: *"On opposite sides of the Kwango live two Peoples: Xotay and Ukudu. They barely know each other although Xotay's happiness, even their very survival is connected to Ukudu, as connected as the threads in a spider's shimmering web. Xotay have more than their share. But there is one catch. Xotay's happiness depends upon the suffering of Ukudu. So Xotay prays for Ukundu."*

It's Tea Time at American Girl Cafe! "Maryellen" is perched in a special pink doll size high chair. Zoey, her owner, 9, has asked if her doll can keep the highchair. It's been a long pilgrimage today from New Jersey. Zoey feeds Maryellen the last bite of her crustless sandwich. Maryellen's salon appointment is next: a manicure and possibly pierced ears. She signals to the server. "We have a little time before the manicure. Zoey and I want to split that double chocolate layer cake!" Zoey is upset. "What about Maryellen? She wants chocolate cake!" Mom knows to avoid sensitive topics that involve crossing Zoey in public. To defy Zoey would mean implying Maryann wasn't human. "Okay three slices. I'll just leave cash since we've paid. How much?" As the server clears the table, "Twenty Nine." Mom turns to Zoey, who is in no mood to be defied again. "Honey, do we really think we're gonna eat all that chocolate?" Zoey turns red with rage at the threat of Zoey being deprived. The server kneels down to Zoey's level, making eye contact. "It's very rich chocolate. You might want to share it with Maryellen just so she doesn't get sick!" Zoey doesn't know how to feel her body or tell that she's already full from the sandwich. There won't be enough room to finish the cake. She

whines, “Is the chocolate from the Willy Wonka Chocolate Factory?” “Zoey just discovered Johnny Depp,” Mom offers. The server stays firm in the truth: “Zoey, we use KOKA chocolate from the land of exotic gorillas.” Zoey perks up just a tiny bit. He thought of saying, *At least you won't find Augustus Gloop's body parts in your candy bar.*

It’s raining in the Black Forest, close to the Alsatian border. In a quiet KOKA satellite laboratory, Matilde Bocobsa stands in front of her research team as she presents recent findings to the Board. Matilde was expected to get married but she got a scholarship to The Sorbonne and became a scientist. “We’ve created legitimate biomarkers by isolating DNA at three cocoa farms, thus enabling the creation of a database of those markers specific to each farm. Unique DNA signatures have indeed been isolated! Chocolate bought anywhere in the world can now be traced back to its farm of origin! A chocolate producer, even a customer, given access to the technology, can know precisely the geographic location of the cocoa in their chocolate!” The Board nods. A few are somber at this news.

Atlanta. The KOKA Corporate Campus auditorium. In an Armani suit, before a Jumbotron, raven-haired CEO, Joyce Vale speaks to a packed audience of KOKA stakeholders. “The past murky handling of supply chains is over! We will now lead the way in fair-trading sustainability practices. KOKA is the first of the competitive giants to boast a certified 100% Green Supply Chain! KOKA For Good. Say it with me.” The crowd chants, *KOKA for Good!* The cheers are of those who mean well. Now, a glowing cocoa bean slowly rotates on the Jumbotron screen like the Shroud of Turin. Oohs and Ahhs as shiny wrapped KOKA chocolate balls rain down on the stakeholders from the rafters. “Now when you buy KOKA chocolate products, you’re casting a vote for humanity!” Balloons float down - in the colors of the Ghana Flag. A photo of none other than Washington rotates on the Jumbotron. Washington is cleaned up and wearing a KOKA T-shirt. "And now, under our watch, children like Washington, can go to school instead of laboring under impossible working conditions." Washington’s eyes are the same sad eyes they always were.

At the Tea Room, a mess of partially eaten chocolate cakes are about to be abandoned. Mom has the luxury of saying no to things. “Can you give them to the homeless, or something?”

I can't believe my eyes here in the city! So sad." The plates of cake were removed and tossed immediately in the kitchen trash.

Sun rises over the camp. Washington still sings on his way to work. His camp has had a face lift with a few KOKA touches here and there. The pay remains the same, the equivalent of 80 cents a day. Children hide when the KOKA Bosses come. Nandi still tells the same story of Xotay and Ukudu. "A prophecy was handed down by Xotay elders that one day, one member of Xotay would walk across the river to see Ukudu's suffering. They would finally feel it, and they would bring all the Ukudu with them to their side of the river - to live and prosper with them. It has not yet come to pass."