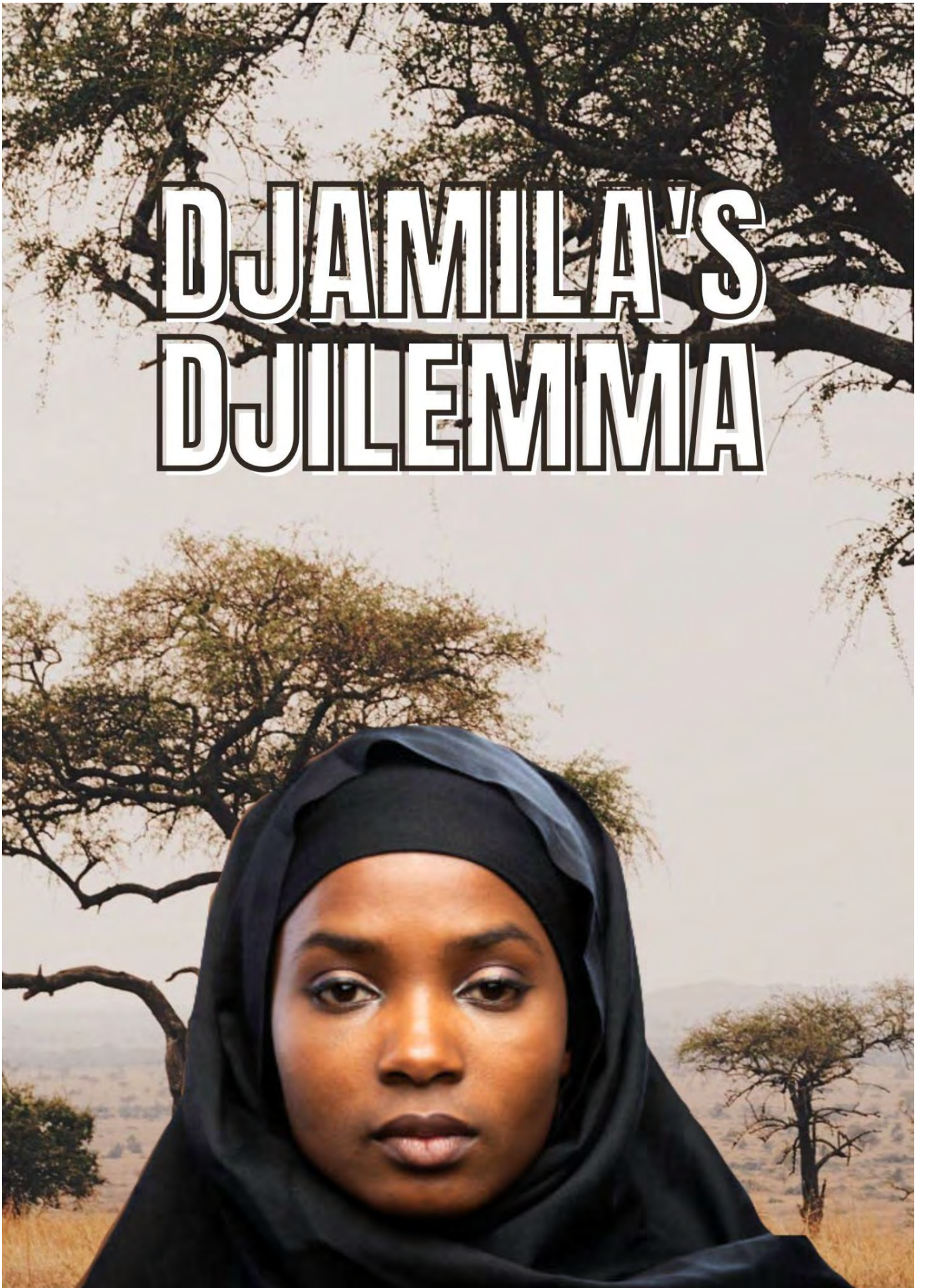


# DJAMILA'S DJILEMMIA





### Copyright Statement

Published by The Shays Republic, St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, Mark Street, Hunters Hill NSW 2110.  
Matthew Colgan, William Finlayson, Oliver Neate, Finan Maher, Max Merifield, William Perkins, Benjamin Sestanovic, Thomas Spigone and Harrison Tong.

Copyright © Year, St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill.

All rights reserved. This book is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

PARAMETERS FORM		in a Day	PROJECT Science. Solutions. Survival.
<b>TEAM DETAILS</b>			
STATE:	NSW		
DIVISION:	Upper School		
SCHOOL/GROUP:	St Joseph's College (Hunters Hill)		
TEAM NAME:	Year 10 Joeys		
TEAM ID:	524		
<b>PARAMETERS AND RANDOM WORDS</b>			
<b>Parameters</b>		<b>Random words</b>	
Primary character 1	Football player	pineapple	
Primary character 2	Personal assistant	blue bottle	
Non-human character	Vampire	lifesaver	
Setting	Church	big brother	
Issue	Discovery of magic powers	family	

## Contents

- Chapter 1 - Hanging in the Balance
- Chapter 2 - Gleaming Reminiscence
- Chapter 3 - The Uncanny Incantation
- Chapter 4 - Good Help is Hard to Find
- Chapter 5 - Djamila est bien dans la peau

## Foreword

This book is dedicated to all of the children who are currently going through an extremely difficult time in their lives. Never give up, keep going strong and remember that there is light at the end of the tunnel. From all of us at The Shay's Republic Author's Association™, we wish you the best and a speedy recovery.

## Chapter 1 - Hanging in the Balance

The aroma of freshly cut grass, the raging jeers from the audience and the brutal nature of football itself formed the foundation of Djamila's angst. She was overwhelmed. She felt her mind wandering far, far away, back to her homeland in Senegal. There, her mother used to summon her, 'Djamila, come and help with the crop harvest!' Her days used to be filled with contentment.

\*\*\*

"Djamila, DJAMILA!!!", shouted Al-Tahéera. These were different calls, angry calls. She had done it again... disassociated. Quickly, she pulled it all together and rejoined her teammates on the pitch, a fanatical audience screaming at her, shouting to "GET IT TOGETHER DJAMILA!" A shudder flowing through her body, she now felt very overwhelmed - Djamila did not bear easy with anxiety.

Nearing the final minute of a tense football game, Sydney FC's star player, Djamila Fatima, glances at the scoreboard, '*Sydney FC versus Sydney Wanderers; 3 - 2*'. One goal and one minute stood between Djamila's team and the grand final. The time slips out of Djamila's grip as the crisp winter air clips at her heels, urging her to run faster than ever before. The ball floats out of her reach as her rival, Alouine, dribbles it masterfully through the Sydney FC's so called impenetrable defence. The crowd filled with anticipation and urged on the players. Tic-Toc-Tic-Toc, the pulsating thought that there were only 30 seconds between her and the grand final reverberates constantly in Djamila's mind;. Djamila pushes herself as Alouine thunders down the line, the goal posts approaching, 50m... 40m... 30m... Djamila, hot on the heels of Alouine, powers through the pain and pushes through the night. Al-Tahéera, Sydney FC's goalkeeper, now filled with adrenaline and buzzing nerves, began to tense her limbs as she prepared for Alouine's powerful left boot. Alouine cocked her leg, ready to shoot the winning goal but moments before impact, Djamila slide tackles her and the ball ricocheted out of the pitch. The referee's whistle



### *Djamila's Dilemma*

breaks the night's tension. Djamila, Sydney FC's new saviour, begins to pop back up but is immediately struck down by a shooting pain from her right hamstring. She glances down at her leg, clutching it in agony, as pools of crimson blood begin to lap around her cut. The flashing lights around her begin to fade into darkness, her conscience slipping away. She feels her saliva slipping out of the rims of her ajar mouth. She was unconscious, uncomfortable and unconditionally dazed. Her sight starts to darken, her mouth getting dry, her limbs feeling heavy. Then her head slowly drops to the turf and her eyes slowly close as she fades into an abyss. The icy wind attacks her face as she tightens her hijab in a desperate attempt to stop it from blowing away. The crowd looks at her as if to encourage her to arise and press on with her endeavours to stop Alouine. A deafening curtain of noise relentlessly bellows through the air as the crowd's uproar crescendos



## Chapter 2 - Gleaming Reminiscence

Djamila suddenly appeared at her old home just outside of Dakar, Senegal. Although, something wasn't right, it was like a memory, a glimpse into the past. She was tending to the corn crop in the torrid heat, such a nostalgic smell. She could see her parents on the verandah and they smiled at her. She continued walking through the tall corn fields. Djamila brushed her hand along the harvest. The corn sold at the markets would provide enough money for the next couple of months. She spotted her brother Brett at the other side of the field. He seemed to be intrigued by something. She walked towards him and saw that he was looking at an old, shedded snake skin. She turned back to Brett but he had vanished. She looked back towards the house but all she could see was corn surrounding her. A king cobra slithered out of the crop and they stared into each other's eyes. The snake only had one eye. It moved towards her feet and up her leg but somehow Djamila didn't feel afraid. It rested on her shoulders and softly injected its venom into her right arm. Djamila felt stronger than before and her hands started to glow brightly. The cobra's missing eye had now appeared once more, Djamila could feel her newly acquired power flowing through her veins.

\*\*\*

Her flashback moved to her current home in Sydney. The hot golden sands were between Djamila's toes and the soft sound of the small waves crashing against the shoreline formed a pleasant auditory resonance. The shimmering bright sunlight made the sea sparkle like thousands of tiny jewels. Bondi beach was unusually quiet and peaceful for such a beautiful day. It had been a long time since Djamila's **family** last visited the beach and the warm breeze was quite strong against their ears. Her **big brother**, Brett, handed her a **pineapple** for them to share together, a refreshing food for a nice summer day. Djamila's big brother was her hero and she had fond memories of playing football on the beach. It was



because of him that she made it into the W-League. They started kicking the ball to each other and showing off their best tricks. Djamila flexed her double rainbow flick kick to get the ball past her brother and into the makeshift goals. She cheered in delight but realised now that her brother was going to show off his best moves. He started sprinting towards her, quickly switching directions. She approached him to move in for the tackle when Brett moved into a diagonal cruyff. Djamila missed him altogether and Brett drove the ball in between the goals. The ball rolled down into the ocean, where the waves consumed it and slowly took it out to sea. She stared at the ocean, a powerful force, the day she nearly lost her brother, the scariest experience of her life. She could see her brother struggling to breathe, the **blue bottle** wrapped around his neck and chest, the lone **lifesaver** pounding at his chest to resuscitate him. As

time went by, the hopes of survival were looking dimmer. Djamila remembered kneeling next to Brett and giving him a farewell kiss on his forehead. Suddenly he started coughing and his eyes opened...

\*\*\*

It was 3:45am. The hospital was alive with traffic. Blinding lights were coursing through the veins of the tile-brick roof, which formed complex knots in Djamila's cerebrum, resulting in a migraine. The un-accommodating clinical atmosphere was unnerving. She tensed her optic nerve, desperately trying to keep her eyes alive and open; it was as if her eyelids were bricks, and her strength was like dust. She didn't win the struggle and her eyelids rolled over. In this trance, she wondered long and hard about who she once was. About where she once was. About who she once was with. Senegal, though severely impoverished, was a place in which Djamila was free. And now, the pain of her wound was parallel to that of her nostalgia. Church. That's all she had in mind. A place to relax. A place to give praise. A place in Senegal that everyone would go to and unite. A place where she was at peace with herself and purely tranquil. 'Huuuu', a sharp draw of breath from within Djamila woke her up to a shocking reality. Brett intently stared at her and softly mimed to the window. Behind the double-paned glass windows awaited a lush, green forest. "Let's go...."

Brett pressed on through the forest, cradling Djamila's skeletal frame so as to not cause her any further discomfort. Djamila was half asleep, repeatedly reciting the dua that her mother had taught her in Senegal. It always assuaged the pain, but this time Djamila was far too burdened with the piercing agony that permeated her body from the torso down. Her vision periodically faded into sight, before dissipating into an ominous abyss. Each time she regained clear vision, her eyes were met with the monotony of parallel tree trunks and rigid green branches. She spotted a crimson red apple dangling from a branch of the palm tree. It was almost as if the tree's branch was a hand that was coaxing Djamila into reaching for the apple. A solitary ray of sun illuminated the apple, marking a stark contrast against the darkness cast by the forest. Djamila's fatigue could not outweigh her desire to taste the forbidden fruit.

'Apple! I need that apple, Brett!' she whispered, before attempting to loosen Brett's grip on her body.

'We're almost there, Djamila. Just close your eyes and hold on tight!'

Djamila's leg tingled as she fell into a trance and began softly descending into a state of deep sleep.

\*\*\*

Brett did not need to awaken Djamila. At once, her eyelids unfurled and she felt an uncanny aura surrounding her. Grey concrete slabs formed the carcass of the colossal church that towered over Djamila. The sun's rays induced reflections which ricocheted off the metallic ornaments that adorned the doorway. The spire that sat on top of the church sent forth a looming emanation, akin to that of nuclear radiation, which caused Djamila to feel increasingly uneasy. The colourful mosques that Djamila was accustomed to in Senegal ghastly church were the antithesis of the ghastly concrete conglomerate, concealed with unkempt rows of gumtrees, which stood before her.

Brett slowly entered the derelict church with poise. The roof was severely weatherbeaten and several tiles had fallen off. Graffiti was ubiquitous and the once quaint stained glass windows were now smashed. Brett moved forward towards the altar and gently placed down Djamila onto her feet. They saw a slender figure with a large black cloak. He was chanting and was midway through a ritual. His eyes were sunken in and his skull was protruding outwards; his appearance was akin to that of a vampire! He started desperately begging her, "This curse... save me! You are the last descendant of the prophet. I have changed from my old ways. I promise you!"

## Chapter 3 - The Uncanny Incantation

"Wh-where am I?"

The last thing Djamila could remember was being one goal up in the *Sydney FC versus Sydney Wanderers* game and then shipped off to hospital after her injury. Now she is lying on what felt like a stone bed within a dark, cold palace kind of place. A gasp escaped her lips when she began to get her bearings. She wasn't lying on a stone bed, she was lying on an altar! Father Felix's altar! Relief washed over her when she heard the familiar voice of her assistant Brett,

"Don't worry, Djamila. I have spoken to Father Felix and he is certain that he can heal you," Brett reassures her. She saw the priest walking towards her. He seemed odd to her but she couldn't quite put her finger on why. He seemed to glide over the ground rather than walk and didn't make a sound as he moved.

"I can heal you, but it won't be easy - I haven't healed in a long time". He had a deep but calming voice, reigniting a sense of hope for Djamila, she may actually be able to play the final!

"Yes Father please. I'll do anything." she replied, unable to hide her desperate tone.

"You won't be able to repay me, nobody ever has and nobody ever will," he said sadly, "there is something that no-one knows".

Djamalia was startled by this. Father Felix handed her down a green liquid that may be able to cure her of the muscle worn injuries she had received. Everything proceeded to go blurry, her eyes eventually shutting as Brett's voice echoed through her body.



*Djamila's Djilemma*

When she woke up she immediately tried to sit up to get her bearings. When she saw Brett asleep on a chair next to her and looked around at the empty church she remembered everything. She remembered her injury... wait her injury! She looked down at her leg and to her absolute delight discovered it had been healed. But then she recalled something father Felix had said to her just before he had healed her, something about no-one knowing.

## Chapter 4 - Good Help is Hard to Find

Still in disbelief of the great healing powers possessed by Father Felix, she proceeded to jump to the floor, her sweat covered feet creating condensation on the cold ebony. The hunchbacked Vampire resumed his place beside the top of the altar, his restless phalanges signifying that something wasn't quite right, the way he glanced back and forth as if he was fighting against himself. An enforced gaol held him captive, a powerful strength occupying his mind. His previous meditative and healing state was somehow corrupted as Djamila had never seen before. She encroached upon his vicinity, he muttered incoherent words, slurred by the slow swaying of his torso. Just like the wooden boards blocking the frosted glass from projecting the rays of colour, the thought-inspired words were tainted with an eternity of bottled-up solitude. He mumbled

'Too many years have I been jammed, congested, interrupted, but the fact I am lonely haunts my mind too often, I have to leave, have to see the light of day'. But his words sit at odds with each other as he sharply responds 'No, I must not. Resist the temptation, I'm the one that kept you alive, I'm the one that saved you.' He rallies back and forth with himself for many minutes, 'I should be free, I should be living my life'. 'No it's dangerous out there, they still know, they all know,'. 'Who knows?' Asked Djamila 'What do you mean?'

As father Felix's consciousness began to return he opened up about his past, who he used to be, what happened and where he is now.

'Long ago I made a mistake, being a priest in training I knew it was my job to protect my people and spread the word of God. Although there was always a constant urge, beckoning me back to my old ways of swindling, stealing and thieving. I wasn't strong enough and I gave in, that single decision has haunted me forever. Every day I strayed further and further from the truth, fooling myself with fictitious lies. There's no escape, I'm rotting with the vile elixir of greed.'

"Don't say that, there's hope". Djamila once again approaches the father Felix priest, creeping over so as to not frighten him in his vulnerable state.

"It's ok, here". It was unusual to see his tall and gloomy figure in such a state. Djamila cups her hands and wraps them around his wrinkled cheeks. She shuts her eyes for a moment and the fleeting memories flood back in, flashing before her in periods. She opens them again, the beaming rays of colourful light now fill the Church's once stark interior, piercing the father Felix's icy cold skin. His head darts around to every crevasse in the room, to which his layered black robe and cape seem to disintegrate into thin air. He lets out a series of remarks, before appearing to levitate. The grime and dirt once encasing him cracked and flew in all directions. He admitted his past faults, he was now a new man, a changed man.

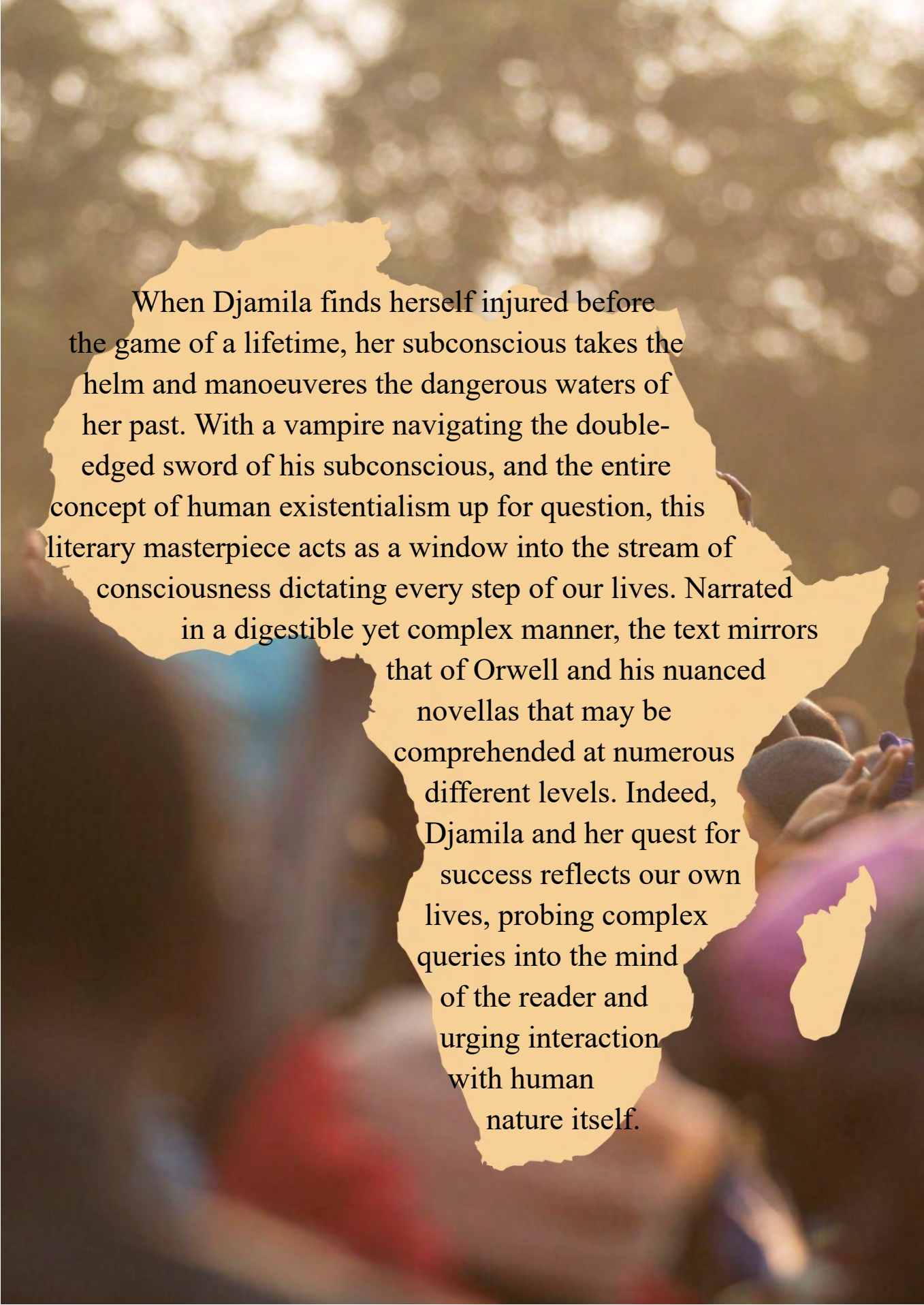
To her own surprise, the realisation floods her. The snake's healed eye, her brother's blue-bottle sting, now the father Felix Priest. Perhaps she wasn't the only one with healing powers. Every time she had flashbacks she must have been channelling her past into healing the future. Although the only thing on



her mind now with her leg up and running was the one hour until the grand final soccer game, there was no time to relish her newborn powers.

## Chapter 5 - Djamila est bien dans la peau

Djamila feels anxious knowing that there is only one hour before Djamila walks onto the pitch, as she walks off the luxurious bus with her personal assistant Brett. Legs feeling like they're trembling but they are still, with uncontrollable nerves Djamila walks through the grey rusted gate and scans the QR code on the table to walk into the stadium which will be her coliseum. Her feet feel heavy as she pursues onto the change rooms. The black shadows of the changeroom engulf her like the fear inside of her is trying to do. Brett places her Sydney FC bag, her custom boots and blue water bottle down on the bench and leaves her so that he can get a good seat. Djamila then went to have a shower, always doing this to try and calm herself and prepare herself for the following game. She thought about her older brother, her family, her friends, her coach, her team, all the expectations and all the hopes, could Djamila live up to them, would they be able to beat the infamous team that hadn't lost a game. She twisted the hot handle until the heat left the water falling on her head, leaving just icy water trickling down her body from head to toe. Djamila waited till it was unbearable then turned all the water off. After drying off and putting on the new uniform that was made especially for this match, the team lined up to head out onto the lit pitch. Electricity ricocheted through her bones as Djamila ran out into the roaring stadium, lights erupting out of the crowd from all directions. Breathless she patriotically recited the national anthem in a line with her team, her closest friends, in front of the deafening crowd. The whistle sliced through the tensions, the clock was released and the ball was launched across the evergreen grass. Gliding seamlessly from one foot to the other, strategically being placed and kicked with such care and precision as there was so much on the line. Whoosh, that signature sound a ball makes when it plunges into the back of the net, except it was in the very net they were trying to defend. Half time struck and the whistle blew saving the tired Sydney FC from enduring anymore pain. At one and a couple of close calls to nil they were being out classed and dominated. Water quenched the everlasting thrust of the players. The opposing team was relentless and had held most of the possession. It was supposed to be her moment but it was becoming further out of her reach the closer Djamila got to it. The referee commenced the second half. Her heart pumping like a jackhammer as the ball was sent her way. All of a sudden it felt like the weight of the world was on her shoulders as the opposition opened up. Djamila urged herself through the gaps, spinning and weaving through the opposition, the goalie came rushing towards her so Djamila did a chip over the goalies head..... Her heart stopped as the ball bounced off the crossbar back into the field, but at once, her friend Jasmine flew through the air like an eagle and headed the ball perfectly into the top corner. They had done it, tied the game. Now it was down to the penalty shoot outs.



When Djamila finds herself injured before the game of a lifetime, her subconscious takes the helm and manoeuvres the dangerous waters of her past. With a vampire navigating the double-edged sword of his subconscious, and the entire concept of human existentialism up for question, this literary masterpiece acts as a window into the stream of consciousness dictating every step of our lives. Narrated in a digestible yet complex manner, the text mirrors that of Orwell and his nuanced novellas that may be comprehended at numerous different levels. Indeed, Djamila and her quest for success reflects our own lives, probing complex queries into the mind of the reader and urging interaction with human nature itself.

**Reviews:**

Fivio Foreign: Really comprehensive and insightful story that provides a glimpse of hope and faith for our ever growing society.

Pop Smoke: Really really amazing book ! Feels like it was written in one day !

Kendrick Lamar: Met the authors, very humble and great people. HUMBLE.

Anony Mouse: Extremely rushed book but I have to say it was written in 1 day so kudos.

Fatou Ismali: I thoroughly enjoyed immersing myself in Djamila's journey!