

INKOSI GLOBAL

THE INKOSI QUARTET • BOOK I

THE RECOGNITION

What If You're Already Sovereign?

the first light of becoming

A BOOK CLUB KIT

Carly Lewis • Publishes 18 January 2027

Free to print and share with your circle or book club.

The glow is earned.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Twelve hundred people are on their feet. Two minutes and forty-seven seconds of applause. Maya Turner, forty-two, founder and CEO of a two-billion-dollar company, has just given a perfect keynote, and she has timed the ovation and counted the steps to the exit.

An hour later she is on the carpet of Room 1847, heels still on, shaking without tears. Her board votes in eleven days.

At three in the morning she answers an email she has left sitting for six months, from a woman called Ruth Abernathy. The reply comes in eighteen minutes: take your shoes off. “The floor you’re sitting on isn’t the bottom. It’s the ground.” And: Accra, on the 12th.

THE RECOGNITION follows Maya from that floor to a house in Accra and a circle of women who will not let her perform her way back up, then on to Cape Point, Johannesburg and home, where the hardest rooms turn out to be the ones with her own family in them. It is a novel about the woman underneath the performance, and the slow, unglamorous work of letting herself be seen.

A NOTE BEFORE THE QUESTIONS

This is not a quiz on the book, and there are no right answers in it.

The book was never really about Maya. She is only the lit window you read by. It is about you, and the face you have been putting on, and how long you have been putting it on without noticing.

So these questions are built to turn the conversation toward the people in the room, gently and honestly. Use the ones that open something. Leave the ones that do not. And if a question makes the room go quiet, do not rush to fill the quiet. The quiet is usually where the work is.

For the one reading alone: a pen and the margins are enough. For the circle or the book club: let one question breathe for a long time rather than hurrying through all of them.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If your group wants to locate itself first, each person can take the GLOWTH reading, free and about four minutes, at inkosi.global/growth.html, answering on the one thing they came here carrying. Then let each person name, out loud if they are brave, which of the four places they are actually standing in. It is a hard thing to say in a room. It is also, often, where the room finally becomes a circle.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

On the performance

- 1 Maya has not let anyone see her guess wrong since she was nine, when one extra letter at a spelling bee, and a small tilt of disappointment on her mother's face, taught her never to disappoint anyone again. What is the earliest moment you can name where you learned a rule about who you had to be? Who was watching?
- 2 Twelve hundred people watch Maya in complete command, and almost no one in her life has seen her. Which have you had more of: being watched, or being seen? What would it cost you to be seen by one person this week?
- 3 Maya's performance is not a lie. It built a company and holds rooms of twelve hundred. Yet her ex-husband tells her, "Being married to you was lonely," and her daughter says the together version of her was "like you were a robot or something." Where is your own performance working, and what is the bill you are quietly paying to keep it running?

On the floor

- 4 The floor does not come after a failure. It comes an hour after a perfect keynote. Why do you think the book puts the collapse after the triumph?
- 5 The book insists it is "not a story about a breakdown. It's a story about a breaking open." Is there something in your life you have filed under falling apart that might, from here, be re-filed as a breaking open?

On the circle

- 6** In Accra, Maya snaps at Amara (“Can you stop?”) and Zainab tells her plainly: “Not because you were wrong. Because you were cruel about being right.” Who in your life tells you the truth that plainly? If no one does, what has made that role unavailable?
- 7** Ruth refuses to be anyone’s guru: “I’m someone who broke earlier.” What changes when the person helping you admits she has been on the floor too? Who has been that for you, and could you be that for someone else?

On the girl

- 8** In the mirror room, Maya meets the girl she was at nine, still asking whether it is one C or two, still defending the shield she built. What the girl finally hears is, “You just don’t have to drive.” What has the younger version of you been carrying on your behalf, and what would it take to let her stop driving?
- 9** “You don’t have to earn it, and you can’t.” What have you been working to earn that may already be yours?

On what comes after

- 10** Sovereignty in this book is not an arrival. Ten years on, Maya’s younger self asks, “Are we fixed?” and the answer is, “No. We’re practicing.” Ruth calls it “a spiral, not a staircase.” Does that make the work feel lighter or heavier to you? Sit with why.
- 11** The book closes on a line of women, Eula Mae, Dorothy, Maya, Claire and Nala, and an old photograph, and three words: “And now: you.” What have the women before you handed down that you want to keep? What are you willing to set down, so that it does not reach the next one?

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