

**Dr. Mary Thamari**

# Plot Summary

- Centred around Tina, a refugee teen who joins the Goondas gang in Sangui City
- Seeking the truth behind her mother's death and suspects Roland Greyhill murdered her mother
- Delves into her mother's past and life in Congo that uncovers secrets that change everything - Catherine
- Tina faces moral dilemmas and uncovers corruption

# Characters

Tina, Anju, Kiki, Greyhill, Omoko, Boyboy,  
Catherine, Mwika, Bug Eye, Ketchup,  
Michael, Nurse

# Key Themes

1. Revenge and Justice
2. Family and Loyalty
3. Survival and Resilience
4. Power and Corruption
5. Identity and Belonging
6. Forgiveness and Healing



# Revenge vs. Justice

## Tina's Vengeance

Driven by anger after her mother's murder and believes Roland Greyhill is guilty.

Tina's quest for revenge significantly impacts her relationships:

- Strain with Michael Greyhill
- Distance from Kiki: Prioritizing her mission over their relationship
- Conflict within the fellow gang – the Goondas: personal vendetta vs with the gang's objectives

Makes peace with truth

# Family and Loyalty

## **Loyal to Kiki**

- Tina's love for her sister is unwavering; visits; and frames her actions in light of her sister

## **Seeks her mother's murderer**

- Investigates her mother's past and uncovers secrets that reshape gives a sense of peace/closure

# Identity and Belonging

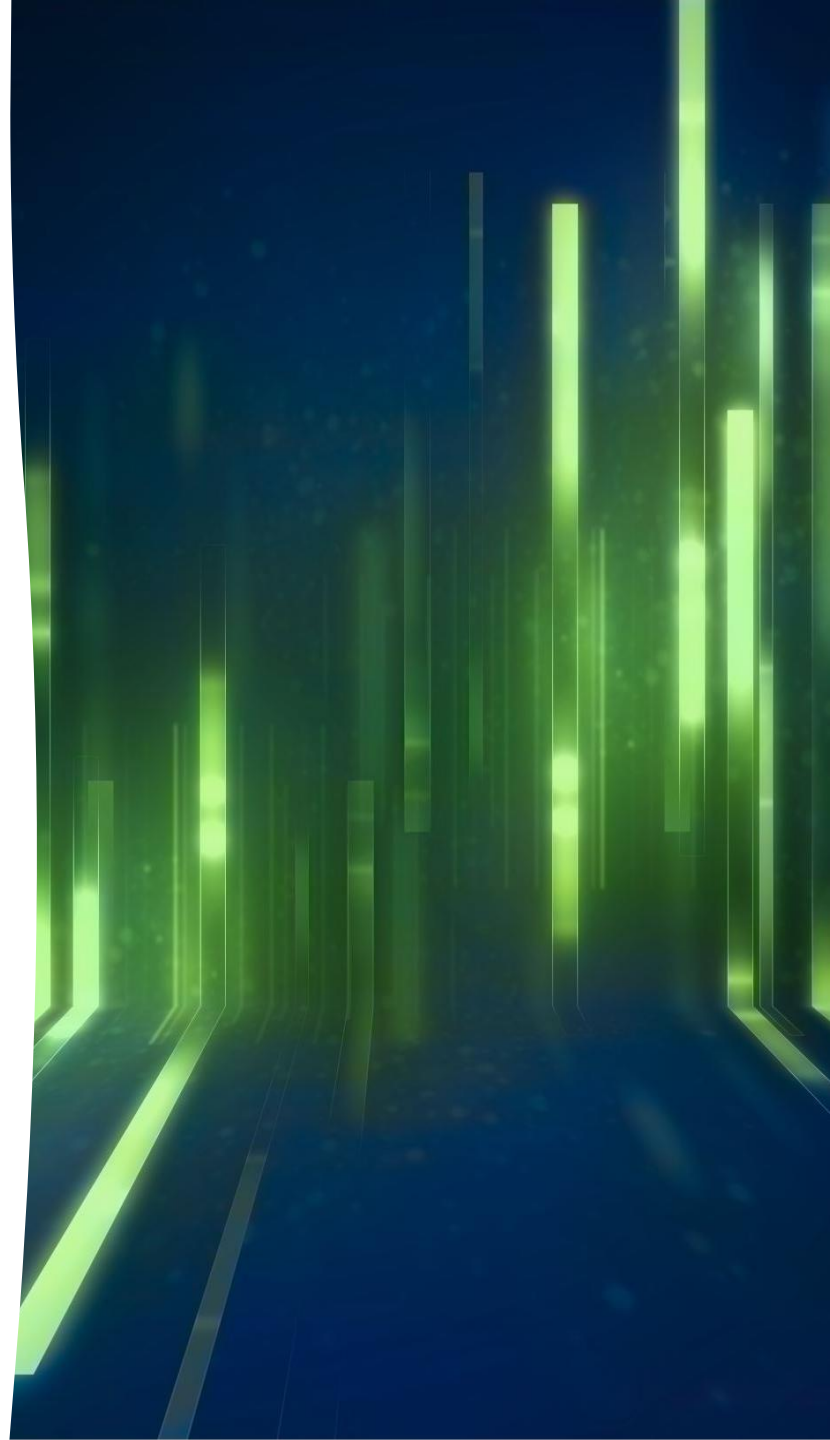
Who is Tina?

Where is home?

How does her multifaceted identity aid her quest?

Congolese heritage vs. Kenyan life.

Street life and life in Greyhills mansion



# Survival and Resilience

**Anju and Catherine's** experience with the militias that causes them to make difficult choices. They survive but live with trauma.

## **Street Smarts Tina**

- Raised in the streets of Sangui City where she learns to navigate danger and hardship.
- Becomes a skilled member of the Goondas.
- Uses her skills to uncover truth about her mother's past

## **Mental Fortitude**

- Endures trauma, loss, and fear.
- Shows emotional strength throughout.

## **Resilience**

- Keeps fighting despite setbacks.
- Survival is more than staying alive—it's pushing forward.



# Power and Corruption

**Greyhill represents the powerful and untouchable in society, symbol of systemic corruption, and greed**

**Abuse of Power** - Uses wealth to escape accountability and exploitation of others labour and resources

**Broken Systems** – Violence meted on Tina's mother and Catherine



# Forgiveness and Healing

## **Letting Go of Hate**

- Hatred for Greyhill fueled Tina for years.
- Truth softens her anger.

## **Understanding the Past**

- Her mother's choices weren't simple.
- Uncovers layers of pain and love.

## **The Cost of Holding On**

- Revenge drains her emotionally.
- Healing requires release.

## **A New Chapter**

- Chooses forgiveness over revenge.
- Begins her journey toward peace.

## Understanding of labour via struggles of refugees and the economically marginalised groups

- Labour for survival – Goondas ‘dangerous’ labor as a thieves is driven by necessity and survival – depicting realities of unemployment and vulnerabilities of the displaced refugees
- Emotional and mental Labor: Tina navigating her grief, anger, and the complexities of her relationships while pursuing justice
- Michael Greyhill - grapples with the moral complexities of his family's actions and his own role in the unfolding events
- Boyboy: Tina's friend and tech-savvy ally, Boyboy's labor involves using his skills to help Tina in her quest for revenge.
- Militia use of slaves to mine which they exchange for money and weapons

## Understanding of labour via struggles of refugees and the economically marginalised groups

- **Acceptance and Exploitation:** The community often accepts the labor of refugees and marginalized individuals as a norm. Tina's mother, who worked as a maid, represents the exploitation faced by many women in similar positions
- **Gang Labor:** The Goondas, the gang Tina works for, are a significant part of the community's underground economy.
- **Support and Solidarity:** Despite the harsh conditions, there are moments of support and solidarity within the community. Tina's friends, like Boyboy, help her in her quest for revenge, reflecting a sense of camaraderie and mutual aid among those struggling to survive
- **Hard choices** – Catherine makes hard choice of being prostitute as she cannot be a nun or do other work.



# Gender Roles

- Women's Struggles: The novel addresses the challenges faced by women, particularly refugees. Tina's mother worked as a maid for the Greyhill family, a role that underscores the limited opportunities and vulnerabilities of women in such positions (\$50-\$160) per month.
- Empowerment and resistance: Tina's character defies traditional gender roles by becoming a skilled thief and gang member.
- Tina's journey is one of empowerment, as she takes control of her circumstances and fights against the injustices she faces.
- Mama Anju: Tina's mother, who worked as a maid for the Greyhill family, embodies the traditional gender roles and the exploitation faced by women in such positions.
- Her tragic fate serves as a catalyst for Tina's actions and highlights the systemic issues of gender inequality



## Role of technology in future of 'survival'

- Boyboy's use of technology provides a glimpse into the future of tech-aided crimes, showcasing how advanced tools can be leveraged for criminal activities.
- Boyboy's tech-savvy approach in the novel is a microcosm of current trends, illustrating how technology can be both a tool for survival and a facilitator of crime.



# Author's Purpose



Exploring  
justice,  
redemption,  
and healing



Highlighting  
moral  
complexity



Elevating  
marginalized  
stories



Creating  
emotional,  
relatable  
characters

# Reflection

- What themes stand out for you? In what ways might this theme apply to your understanding of learners in your teacher role?
- What factors influence Tina's feelings of acceptance and alienation? In what ways can we build acceptance of diverse learners?
- How does the novel address issues of social justice and inequality? What message does it convey about the importance of fighting for systemic justice?

