

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

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EXT. A LAGOS STREET LEADING TO A MAIN ROAD DAY

It is a rather very hot morning on a busy Lagos street. All vehicles are at a standstill. A group of police people are stopping all vehicles. A truck load of armed-to-the-teeth MOPOL arrive the scene with the occupants jumping off it even before it comes to a halt by the entrance to an adjoining street.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER SIDE OF THE LAGOS REGION DAY

FIDELIA, a young lady of about 19 is walking hand in hand with JUDE a little boy of about 11. The boy is dressed in school uniform with a clean backpack on. The lady is wearing a cheap pant suit and dragging an equally cheap bag. The only thing not cheap about these two is the genuine air of love and beauty about them. Looking up to her, the boy speaks

JUDE

So, you're now a worker? No more hawking on the streets?

FIDELIA

Yes ooo, isn't it wonderful?

She is really excited and feeling good about herself

They get to the bus stop and wait.

CUT TO:

EXT SAME AS 1 ABOVE DAY

AMINU in sporty outfit, eyes towards the direction of the massive deployment of policemen moves clean off the camera lens spotting a backpack.

The police is busy checking vehicles, boots and interiors for something even the passengers cannot say.

Aminu goes clean past a van boldly marked **Bomb Disposal Unit**. This time his loaded backpack is now light...empty. He heads towards a pair of top police officers who are looking on with an air of vigilance by the road. He keeps a curious look on the search party on the highway 'oblivious' of the two officers.

One of them, a lady spots him and looking him over decides to stop him for a check. The other watches from a secure distance as a backup.

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As she frisks him, he sees that all pedestrians with bags or stuffs are being frisked by dour-looking police officers. The officers find him 'clean' and lets him go with apologies. He nods back with deference with an air of understanding. The other police officer watches him go with mixed feelings.

CUT TO:

EXT ANOTHER SIDE OF THE LAGOS REGION DAY

The boy looks up to the girl with a pleased expression and asks.

JUDE

Does that mean we will soon get a proper home?

FIDELIA

Oh, yea, I save for six months, maybe I can get a housing loan as my boss said, and we will move into a nice one self-contained room all by ourselves.

They both beam on that and then the bus drives in and stops. The boy runs towards it and turning to her says

JUDE

Amen!

Waving a bye to him affirms

FIDELIA

Amen!

She watches him board the bus and the bus drive off. She turns to the street and sees cars racing by and other children hawking wares to motorists and car occupants...then it happens...

It is a loud explosion. All vehicles and pedestrians come to a screeching halt. Fidelia turns towards her little brother's bus with eyes wide open in shock. The boy runs out of the bus and dashes towards his sister who dashes towards him cutting through milling feet and bodies in panic and packs him towards her and goes down flat on her belly covering him completely as much as she can manage.

All pedestrians keep running everywhere and nowhere.

CUT TO:

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EXT

1 ABOVE DAY

The police people turn as one towards the direction of the explosion. One of the police pair takes his face off Aminu who she has been profiling with mixed feeling, but he does not flinch at the explosion, but she has turned too fast away to notice this. This time Aminu begins to run and run really fast. Just as he makes a jump across the gutter into a sidewalk towards a building to his right beside which is an alley way, another explosion picks up the police pair and the bomb disposal van up in the sky. Many cars, motor bikes and bodies are seen sky high.

The boy disappears from sight just as a human limb flies towards the point of his exit drawing a hot streak of blood along its path in the sickened air. Fume, dust and smoke fills the air.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET AS ABOVE

DAY

As the dust and smoke all begin to settle, the injured begin to emanate from the debris. One woman stands to her feet all covered in dust and blood only to realise that she has lost a leg, she cries out loud and drops on her side woe-stricken. A man rises from the smoke only to drop down headlong. The sound of ambulance is heard from a dazed distance. The bomb squad vehicles and police vans join the number of mangled vehicles on the street. People are heard screaming out of panic and terror from within the wreckage.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. INTERIOR OF A RESTAURANT

DAY

A lot of panic-stricken people most of whom are bleeding, stained, limping, most without shoes, some with one leg of their footwear on, many dazed, all harassed, are packed in the restaurant eyes glued to the only TV set in the place listening to the coverage of the multiple bomb blasts in the streets of Lagos early that morning. Dread is palpably etched in the scene as a sober female newscaster relays the report.

NEWSCASTER

The unthinkable happened today as the city of Lagos was rocked to its foundation as multiple bomb explosions tore the morning peace of the city...

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Videos of the battered, upturned, jammed vehicles, with fires and smoke still coming out of them, bodies jutting out of shattered windows, on top of some vehicles, in the crevices of jammed tight vehicles, in gutters...everywhere. The graphics on the screen reads: **LAGOS GUTTED**

Fidelia now mud-stained and her little brother shudder their way into the restaurant, too dazed to comprehend what is happening. They find their way to the corner end of the restaurant and as she slumps on the wall down to her butts with her brother, she seems to be seeing through the TV screen.

Everyone in the restaurant is sickened, shocked, terrified to jaw clenching, breath-holding silence. A particular man in his mid fifties sits on the floor, face dazed, eyes immobile glued to the TV screen as tears run down his fume stained face. From his mouth lips hardly moving, he wails

SHOCKED MAN

What have we done!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.

A LAGOS STREET

DAY

People are groping on along the road sides eyes lost in space. Many with injuries from the explosion, some with sheer disbelief etched on their faces. Police vehicles are driving all over the place, trying to instill calm. Behind them far from the explosion scene as the little boy turns his face, still holding tightly to her sister, medics are moving the dead, and the groaning strapped on stretchers into the multiple ambulances. Some ambulances drive towards and past them as they take their nonplussed faces to them wishing they can see the state of those inside them. The boy's face though harassed is dry now but with lines of earlier tears mixed with soot, but Fidelia just keeps rilling tears. She looks away from the last ambulance that drives past and clutches her brother's head onto her side.

They come to a spot where a group is gathered with faces glued to a TV set at an electronics repair shop. A man in a pure white kaftan and a white skull cap is addressing himself to cameras. On the screen is that common screamer **BREAKING NEWS: LAGOS BOMBING, WHITE BROTHERHOOD CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY**

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TV PRESENTER

If the double bombings that woke many up in the city of Lagos less than an hour ago came as a rude shock, the recent statement by the dreaded Islamic fundamentalist sect dubbed the White Brotherhood that they are responsible for them came as a sucker punch to an already shattered face of Lagos.

Fidelia runs her tear-marred face across all the faces glued to the screen and realises impotency and dread on them all. She shakes her head and pulls her brother along. The boy, by the way he keeps his face on the presenter on the screen, shows he would have loved to see more of the report, but his sister's unspoken command is too persuasive to resist.

TV PRESENTER (CONT'D)

Before now everyone in Nigeria believed that the South West, most importantly, Lagos, was immune from the madness of the White Brotherhood with their South-South version, but at the moment Allen Avenue tells a different story.

CUT TO:

INT A POSH LIVING ROOM DAY

A well-groomed naked female pair of legs are stretched out lazily on the affluent leather three seater. The sound that fills the speakers is not coming from the exquisitely shaped lady whose squints are focussed on the magazine she is hardly concentrating on. Behind her settee is a door cracked open by half through that crack camera reveals a lady's undies flying towards the door and landing on a spot close to the door. The sensual moan of an overpowered lady and the animal grunt of a pleased male fill the air.

It is actually an exclusive kitchen. The lady's equally well-groomed legs, one of which has a golden chain stopped at different point with something that shines like diamond stones, is wrapped round the waist of a broad backed man dressed in kaftan labouring to thrust into her between her legs as the woman laughs and groans at the same time. Mouth into his ears, she asks

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AGATHA

Bk, Bk, what do you want from me?

The muffled voice of the man whose mouth is buried in her cleavage sings out flat

BUKOKHUO

Supersex

The woman giggles and then punctuates it with a sensually sigh that follows unexpectedly

AGATHA

After that?

BUKOKHUO

Supersex

She moves her hips up to complement his deepening motion into her, still not satisfied ventures further

AGATHA

And...af..after that...?

She is really sailing high now on the new feelings he is sending through her that speaking is pleasingly hard

The man too finds it hard to speak free

BUKOKHUO

More su...super...sex, baby...ah!

Then the unexpected happens, she pushes him away from her, closing her legs together as she finds him out of her space. Perched on both hands on the exclusive kitchen cabinet, she holds his shocked and perplexed eyes in hers.

BUKOKHUO (CONT'D)

Now what!

AGATHA

(petulantly)

What you need can't take me far...I want more.

Tapping the kitchen cabinet surface as if apologising to it and loathing to stay off it, she drops her dainty feet on the sparkling tiled floor, heads out as she works her bra back on within her one-piece dress, picks her panty by the door as she gets to it, takes a look to the man she just stops half way through her, she makes that face of may-be-next-time to him

AGATHA (CONT'D)

You really have to leave now, BK.

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BUKOKHUO

What do you really want?

She does not respond to him as she joins the other lady in the livingroom.

AGATHA

Ah-ah Joy, you dey here since?
Abeg on the TV, joor.

The other lady brings down her legs to accommodate her sitting intention while reaching for the remote control on a side stool closest to her. She gives her slimmer friend this look that says she's playing too dangerously. The other lady gives her the talk-to-the-hands reply.

The towering broad man boiling close to boiling point charges in

BUKOKHUO

Agatha, I ask you...what do you...

The slimmer lady rises with ire and facing him delivers

AGATHA

Anh anh anh, you don't query me
in my own house.

The man stops surprisingly

AGATHA (CONT'D)

You see that door, it's not
locked; if you cannot stay with a
woman without rushing your
burning spear between her legs,
take it and never come back.

The other lady now is wary of the situation. She does not like her friend's rage, but then, an angry man as big as BK can wring two lady's necks in a flash of seconds without breaking a sweat.

BUKOKHUO

Real...

The other lady switches on the TV meaning to create a distraction and she gets it fast.

The graphics LAGOS BURNS, WHITE BROTHERHOOD TAKES RESPONSIBILITY hits everyone hard. The talk ends.

JOY

This na movie, abi na wetin?

Agatha slowly slumps to her seat.

Bukokhuo has this look of pleasant surprise almost as if appraising the work of an A class genius.

He heads towards the door and no one sees him leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT A POSH LIVING ROOM DAY

Bukokhuo, Topman, Maya and two other men are celebrating with a big bottle of Champagne. The glasses are clinking and lots of merriment is going on with huggings and back slapping. Topman is particularly exulted. He calms everyone of them down as he decides it is proper now to make a speech

TOPMAN

Who ever imagined this artistic carnage could ever have happened in Lagos Nigeria? There were times some of us thought it wasn't going to happen because of the tight security they put up...my friends, when men are determined, not even God their creator CAN stop them. Viva the reign of terror on Lagos, Nigeria!

They all clink glasses again.

BUKOKHUO

Brother, this blow must be quickly succeeded to convince them we mean business...

TOPMAN

My brother BK, like you know so well, we've no business prolonging this war...and, yes, a quick succession of more deathly blows would push them over the edge...

Pictures from the explosion scene are running on the screen as an international channels runs the report. They all seem drugged by the mere sight of it all, all actions and talking stops

MAYA

Lagos is exciting global outrage, hmmm...this is interesting!

Topman overly excited places his arms on Maya's shoulders, beaming with deep pleasure, eyes focused in hers, his full beards making him look like a life size poster come to life.

TOPMAN

We finally got the vital nerve of the enemy, the world's 20th largest economy, huh! We're only now caressing it, but the Cut is coming.

He heads towards the door and then stops. He turns towards Maya

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Thank you for your help...I hope we can keep counting on you, my dear?

Too moved by inexpressible emotions, Maya's eye springs forth tiny tears, she bows her head realising it is fruitless to hide the emotions looks up the man's face as a dark cloud strolls across it. She smiles despite herself with a glint of worship, realising she cannot hug him, she bends and touches his snake leather shoed-feet and stays there.

TOPMAN heaves a sigh of relief as his fear is promptly overturned by her new action. Raising his face to the ceiling muttering touchedly to himself, he returns the face to her

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Salaam, my faithful one, salaam...you may rise.

He touches her gently on her head and moves the hand off as if that were a force to lift her.

Maya rises to her full elegant height now subdued

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

With this kind of spirit in our camp, this war is won.

The others in the room nod

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

I told you, a country's strongest defence is not its armed forces or the police, it is its citizens who are inspired by its flag, its colours and any object of its identity, because the country means everything good and salvaging to them.

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TOPMAN (CONT'D)

However this country means nothing real and enduring to its citizens. I say if aliens from outer space were to invade Nigeria today, Nigerians will be passive about it, some would even take sides with the aliens. Why? Cos there can be no worse government than this. Look at Maya, brothers, and see how vanquished Nigeria is even before the great showdown! There's no child, no man, no woman who is truly human that'll die for Nigeria when he or she has even the thinnest option.

All nod with fervour.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Maya, you're welcome to the brotherhood, keep your mind locked on it, keep your services untainted by pity and silly sentiment and in our new kingdom your place will be assured. Sala'am.

He breezes out on that note and never looks back. All eyes are on his exit except for one.

Bukokhuo who keeps his sharp eyes on her all the while breathes out his query

BUKOKHUO

Are you ready for the boy now, agent Maya?

Snapping out of a deep world within, Maya looks towards the source of the voice. Now she sees all eye directed at her, she shudders briefly and nods it off

MAYA

And...where's...yea, yes...I am.

CUT TO:

INT.

AGATHA'S POSH LIVINGROOM

DAY

The two ladies have not significantly changed their mood since the last time. Joy is rattled as in the last time, now she begins to blabber out of shock.

Shaking it all off on her own end, Agatha hisses

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JOY

Wait o, dis na joke, abi na
wetin, abi Lagos don turn Kano,
Maiduguri...

AGATHA

Joy, shut up. Make u let person
hear word.

The other lady takes a stunned face to her partner.

Agatha returns the face.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Wetin? Na wetin you expect, abi
you think sey na country you get
here?

Drawing a loud and prolonged hiss she heads into another
room.

Joy sits wide eyed and confused at her departing friend.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AN UNCOMPLETED BUILDING NIGHT

Fidelia is sobbing with her brother fast asleep from shock
and emotional exhaustion.

FIDELIA

LORD, I sold on that street, in
that traffic for two years and
nothing happened. Today, this
only day I thought my life was
moving up as I went to resume
work at the mall, it happened
why? Why? Why? Just when I
thought You'd answered my prayers
of getting a better job...this
country is going into war? I have
friends on that street LORD, are
they all dead? Is the wise one,
the blind old beggar dead, LORD?

She shudders and finds her way on to her knees soaking her
face with hot tears

DISSOLVE TO
FLASHBACK:

FLASHBACK EXT. A LAGOS TRAFFIC DAY

Open on the busy heavy traffic street as traffic light comes to red and moving cars stop. It is the same one as 1 above but before the bomb rocks it. We need major landmark to connect it to the one in question. A group of early teens with the young Fidelia, aged 19 hefting some packs of grapes, swarm towards the vehicles eager and desperate to make some sales. Our young lady quickly makes her four packs disappear and she makes more dashing runs to and from a corner across the road to fetch more, dodging on coming vehicles in the process as if it were routine to her to be so much in danger ever so often. A blind old man being led by a man of about twenty one throws his face towards her direction as he hears the screeching of car tyres. He smiles to himself, shaking his head behind his black sunshades.

At the traffic light we see a group of young boys and girls hawking wares to drivers and passengers in vehicles. Some others are offering to wipe windscreens for motorists. A pair of scandalously dressed females cross the road as Fidelia selling wares to commuters lifts her eyes and they light on these full bodied ladies of her age. They turn to her and she, feeling a sense of reproach and inferiority, lowers her gaze. The ladies cross the road clean and nudging each other on noticing her. They take one good and direct look at her and then begin to laugh loud uproariously. Even as they disappear from the radar, she keeps hearing their laughter. She then takes a closer look at herself on the glass of a car she just serviced. She turns all over studying herself 'am I really so bad?', She queries herself feeling really beaten. She goes to a corner and sits on the pavement head on her hand. A line of tear course down her weather beaten cheeks.

The young man leading the blind old beggar throws him an empathetic face from Fidelia who turns to his direction. He finds himself fighting back tears. He quickly turns away to face the business at hand. He is rewarded with a clean hundred naira note from a hand eighteen inches away from his out the half an inch opened car window. Touching a beggar's hand can bring evil you know. The boy touches his head with his hand and prays for the good Nigerian who doesn't even bother to acknowledge the prayers. The rich always do their 'sa'ra'. On seeing the generosity visited on the poor beggar pair some hope enters her. She rises and runs towards the car now stopped by the traffic light. She offers her fresh grapes to them.

She has since wiped tears off her face and raises the fresh transparent PET plates of red grapes to the occupants of the gleaming car.

FIDELIA

Fresh grapes for your fresh
skins, sir, for your fresh skin,
ma'm. See, they're fresh and like
you already know, they're soooo
freessh.

All the occupants of the car turn not to the fruits but to her style and erudition.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

Ma'm, it's shielded from the sun
by this heat resistant plate
specially for you. Others sell it
for 1k, but I'll give it to you
for 9h.

Smiling, the lady in front nods her head and the glass behind rolls down and a hand comes out with four two hundred naira notes without word.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

Ah, master no na, for that I'll
part with two or more. See...

The woman in front impatiently hands her a thousand naira note and Fidelia brings out a neat hundred naira note for the lady and hands her the pack with it and collects the one thousand naira note. Then the car drives ahead only to stop a few paces away. Traffic.

Even with the sale just made she still recalls the scathing laughter of the girls and for the first time she thinks if those ladies can why not she... she takes another look at herself in the mirror of another car close by...as she is from all indications more endowed than they. Just as she is about all of these, a male voice calls out to her hearing and surprisingly the voice is close by.

MALE VOICE

Beautiful, hot, sexy...that's
what I see babe.

The guy, saying this with a smile playing on his handsome and youthful face, winks at her as the car he's in drives off. She smiles in appreciation and shy at the same time. She then turns away to a new voice almost getting into her bodily. It is the voice of the old beggar that is always there with them in traffic

OLD BEGGAR

Yes, he's right, so now what
next?

The girls's face lights up with shock and then confusion...this fellow has never spoken to anyone. This fellow sees nothing...the boy leading him turns a sheepish smile away from her. A sudden rage envelops her. She stamps her foot with an outburst

FIDELIA

The cheat! You're not blind!

Charges at him and yanks the sunshades from his eyes before the little boy can do anything only to realise that the spot the eyes had been are but tight close flesh. She shudders with pain and regrets. A gasp escapes her throat

FIDELIA

Oh, God!

OLD BEGGAR

So what now?

FIDELIA

I thought you were...

OLD BEGGAR

Oh, forget it...but in a way you're right...if I weren't a cheat how come I'm here?

FIDELIA

What do you mean?...You're old, you've no job and obviously nobody cares about you in this world. That's why you're here hoping someone with any sense of decency would help a fellow man. Please don't be so unkind to yourself and your kind.

OLD BEGGAR

You speak out of anger...anger...anger is good. But, against whom are you angry, society?

The old beggar shakes his head and moving his index finger wiper-wise in front of her.

OLD BEGGAR (CONT'D)
Nooo, anger against the beast
called society doesn't help
rather it destroys you.

Now the old craggy finger is pointed at her menacingly. She gasps and docks back as if someone just stabs her. For once she dreads the old beggar.

OLD BEGGAR
The only anger that works the
righteousness of God is the one
directed at yourself for being so
afraid to believe in yourself.
...Wait o, self-belief only works
when you've a dream... do you
have a dream?

Fully struck and overpowered Fidelia promptly responds as if her life depends on the answer.

FIDELIA
Yes, yes, yes, I do.

The old beggar smiles in a maniacal mood.

OLD BEGGAR
Do something about it now...You
don't have to work to kill
yourself to deserve it...just
believe it's possible and dare to
chase it. Believe you deserve it
now

So saying the old beggar urges the young man to lead him away and he promptly obeys.

Fidelia watches the old beggar go. She has just seen a new image of power around the old man, a common beggar, who all the while begs helplessly around. Is it possible?

She saunters heavily back to her place on the pavement while life resumes the blur past her... but she soon jumps to her feet as a voice shoots itself into her space. She looks up startled, and it's still the old beggar. He returns to her with a question.

The old beggar asks fixing his shaded eyes in hers...firmly

OLD BEGGAR
Do you have a skill...something
you do soooo weeeell, my dear,
something you love and makes you
happy to even think about?

She nods agitatedly lacking the breath to speak.

The old beggar smiles exposing his blackened teeth. Nodding pleased, too.

OLD BEGGAR (CONT'D)

Good. Good. Good, my dear...go
for it now. G o f o r i t. N.
O. W. keep loving it, keep
longing for it. Take risks for
it. Run for it now, today, this
moment. NOW. Stop working for
daily bread...go for the big
picture NOW.

She hurries to her wares with only one question in her head: what's this skill of mine...what's this thing I do soooo weelllll? While in her blind rage searching in her mind, she finds her market moving faster than ever.

Speed effect of Fidelia moving between her ware spot and the cars in traffic and returning again and again until she finally finishes all that she has.

She walks away counting her money. Crossing the road she keeps going. Then for a moment she stops and looks around for the old man...all traces of him is gone. She begins to run, run and run until she leaves the radar into the sunset.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING NIGHT

FIDELIA

(with a tear-soaked
face)

He was the only sane voice in my
head...Please keep him alive for
me, please...

CUT TO:

INT. A NIGHT CLUB POLE DANCE SECTION NIGHT

A slow piece of music is playing, but the girls in their white panties and bras are seated moody at the available chairs. Not a single customer is around.

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UBAKA is seated on a stool closest to the pole section where a sad lady in her panty and bra is absent-mindedly cleaning the pole with a white face towel preparatory to commencement of the dance, but Ubaka can see that her soul is not there. He looks away to his side with a heavy thought

The rather loud laugh of two customers coming into the club jerks him out of his painful reverie

CUSTOMER

Col' don catch the whole of Lagos!

Laughters.

CUSTOMER 2

See as all of Ikeja free by 10pm, everybody don hide for their house. If die wan come na to catch me for jolly point o...

More laughter

Then they look at the sad atmosphere in the club and their laughter freeze. Their faces fall from the ladies to Ubaka.

UBAKA

Good evening, gentlemen

CUSTOMER

Good evening, indeed! I think you should go round every house and meet every individual in Lagos to say that...how about, 'Fellow Lagosians, the evening is good, stop brooding over death, come out and play as you've always done cos nobody...i mean no one can hide from death!', Huh?

The fellow pulls out a fat wallet from his jeans pocket

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)

This is the last place I expected to find coldness and fear...I'm here and ready to empty this wallet on the first gal to rise convincingly to the music...dance! Dance!! Dance!!!

He doesn't wait for anyone to start dancing before he starts throwing the money at the girls

The other customer screams at the lady at a corner

CUSTOMER 2

Hey, you there, I'm thirsty, get
me a chilled beer...and let this
party thump my heart while death
prepares to face me...I dey here
who dey kill breeze?

The ladies as if dazed at the whole thing just gaze around

Ubaka stamps his hand on the marble top shocking the lady
perfunctorily cleaning the pole

UBAKA

Dance, ladies, dance! Customers
are here, damn it!

All the ladies rise and begin to manage some movements. The
pole lady tries to be more lively as two others advance
towards two vacant poles

CUSTOMER

And please change this music,
we're not mourning, Lagos will
never mourning, Eko is for
show...give us good, adrenal
music. Play me Enter the Place by
Tu Baba and Sound Sultan, my guy,
make we flow!

The music changes to the requested track. As the two
customers are rushed by the available strippers with three
others at the pole, a bit of life gets into the place, but
Ubaka is not fooled, he drifts away

Some more customers have trickled in. One of the earliest
customers thumps a glass of spirits on the rocks really
close to his face.

CUSTOMER 2

Ol' boy manager, you dey dream!
Abeg take dis one wash your face,
Eko o ni baje laiye laiye. Drink
and be merry, nothing dey happen!

Ubaka shakes it all off, accepts the drink with gratitude,
but the customer has turned his back before he can express
his thanks and the blaring music doesn't give his hoarse
voice any chance.

He looked at the handful of customers engaging the
strippers who are beginning now to have full life.

The customers tonight are generous with their money and the fact is giving the ladies their kicks and they too are generous with their lap dances, short of letting the men bang them in the open club. Two of the ladies drag one of the customers into a room marked VIP.

Ubaka looks away with a sigh.

FADE OUT.

INT. LADIES' VANITY SHOP DAY

Fidelia is entering a sale she just made on a ledger feeling very pleased with herself. Then she stops as her eyes touch the small 5 x 8 portrait on her desk. Her sad eyes take a slow journey to it. There is a family portrait: dad, mum, the younger her, another more mature lady and a little boy aged between 5 and 7. Camera tracks in on the happy, not-doing-so-badly family and rests on the elder lady who is a cynosure of eyes beaming to camera full of life.

EXT LAGOS, NIGERIA

EARLY EVENING

Open on a busy Lagos street in front of a popular shopping mall with people milling in and out. Across the road from the shopping mall Aminu approaches.

RAP music

*They say life is a game, but I
don't care.
When the chance for me to play
comes really strong, all I do is
play hard and square, I nor dey
fear...cos*

*I am a soldier of Allah. I am in
for His Jihad*

He takes his face to a cab parked by within which are two bearded men in kaftan, none regards him. He takes his face away and looks back to the grand edifice of the popular shopping mall.

Some good league away from him is pair of youths admiring a super hot lady in her late teen perfectly attired for fun in her lycra pants, skimpy top, and heels. She moves her perfect body across the road, while the other two guys watch her with concealed wild desire. As if aware of the look, she turns to the guys and a soft tender smile of command plays on her lips

Rap Music

*Today's for the man, everyday's
for the Holy One.*

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows21.

CUSTOMER 2 (CONT'D)

*Enemies can charge and challenge
but we put them under the rod.*

One of the guys swallows hard, the other whose drink is going to his mouth stops, but sadly, he has already tilted the bottle so that a good quantity drops on his white Ralph Lauren T shirt, he cringes at the act and holds his arms out to the lady as if saying, *look what you've caused me!*.

The lady does a wicked laugh and winks flashing a wave of the hand at the sad guys to end the torment and then fully turned, she never looks back.

Rap Music

*I am a soldier of Allah. I am in
for His Jihad*

*The power's in me to right the
wrong against Almighty Allah
Against His righteous people.
As long as we live and trust in
His might the evil we will turn
cripple*

Aminu regards the guys with contempt, shaking his head looks away to heaven as he breezes past the ungodly scene. He heads towards the interior of the mall, his knapsack on his back. His hands gripping a Nokia handset firm.

Rap Music

*I am a soldier of Allah. I am in
His Jihad*

*Don't blame me when you
cry...you've got enough warnings.
Don't blame me when you die...
the plea to change your evil ways
has been out so long.*

The men in the taxi trail him with their expectant eyes. As he walks away, A slim vengeful smile splits the face of the elder man on whom some grey hairs has begun to mix with the beard. The smile hardens his face. He nods to himself fully resolved and then to the other man, who nods satisfied to him. He takes his eyes again to the shopping mall bound Aminu.

Rap Music

*Don't hate me when I strike...the
penalty for sin must be delivered
through a vessel.*

*With submission to the will of
Almighty Allah, I am His humble
vessel and I willing and able.*

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows22.

CUSTOMER 2 (CONT'D)

Death to the infidels!

*I am a soldier of Allah. I am in
for His Jihad.*

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK A LADIES VANITY SHOP EARLY EVENING

Aminu is at a ladies vanity shop. His eyes sweep through the array of suggestive underwears, sex toys and magazines on display. He squints with suppressed revulsion. A sweet Fidelia presents herself to his attention smiling innocently willing to be of help. He turns to her askance. Even at that her service smile does not fade a bit. Then his standoffish mood slowly disappears. He feels charmed by her innocence

FIDELIA

Is there anything in particular
that you want, kind sir?

He does not respond to her he continues his scanning of the place.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

Ok, maybe you want to make up
your mind? I'd be right there
once you need me, sir. Please
enjoy it.

She heads away unhurt.

Aminu takes another look to her and suddenly softens over. He walks up to her with a winsome smile.

AMINU

I am sorry. My mind was...far
away.

FIDELIA

Oh no, not at all...I
perfectly...

AMINU

And then again, women...I just
haven't been able to...anyway,
not your problem, I'm supposed to
get my mum some lingerie...

Then the lady's sweet eyes go wide and then closes with a sweet smiling and an understanding squint.

FIDELIA

Ok...

AMINU

See what I mean...you'd think I'm
crazy.

He moves away in frustration towards the door and she promptly stops him begging him to forgive her.

FIDELIA

Oh, no, I'm sorry, no, it's not
what you think...I perfectly...

Then Aminu reaches for the handset in his jean pocket. He excuses himself and responds to the 'call'. Then shielding the mouthpiece with one hand signals to her that it's his mum on the line. She nods patiently and encourages him to continue.

A few seconds later, he returns now shielding the mouthpiece to his outer thigh

AMINU

My apologies, miss, that's my mum
on the line, I need to dash to
the corner and be back...would it
be too much of a bother to you
should I leave my bag
here...there's no cash inside
just articles of clothing for a
fussy, bossy mother...if you
don't mind, I could do a written
note...

FIDELIA

Oh, for shame, go on, go do what
you've to do, I'll just watch the
bag for you. Hurry up, cos we
close at 8.

Smiling with relief at her he bows to her as he lets her take the bag from him. Then he dashes out. Leaving the attendant with a few other shoppers and attendants in the shop. Camera tracks to the bag's interior and reveals a red light pulsating inside it

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PREMISES OF THE SHOPPING MALL

DAY

The thumb stops on its journey to the red button. The sharp sneer on his mouth fades as the image of the shop attendant fills his mind. He turns to the cab and the older man standing beside it. Perspiration beads on his forehead. Now can't he cross the road; he seems rooted there. He hears a voice from his head loud and clear.

MUM OOV

Aminu Zakare, from this moment,
as I see this setting Sun, you
are no longer Zakare. The day you
introduce yourself as one, that
day the tongue on you shall
wither and die, your heart will
squeeze tight and stop forever.

Aminu stops in the middle of the road. Clearly he seems to have lost his bearing. He mutters beneath his breath

AMINU OOV

Allah hu...Allah hu...

The older man throws a furtive glance around wondering what has become of the boy.

In Aminu's mind, the smiling face of the cheerful shop attendant immobilises him.

The older man comes to him and drags him off the road as a car heading into the premises of the mall begins to blare its horn at him. He jerks out of the reverie and looks at the car and out the window a little girl waves to him as if aware of his pain. He tries to raise his hand back to the girl, but he is stuck. That does not stop the adults in it to throw him a wondering glance. The older man swiftly reaches for the handset just as he makes contact, the handset falls and the battery detaches from it.

FADE TO:

INDEFINITE - DAY

A tight shot of a sensual female mouth speaking on the phone

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows25.

FEMALE MOUTH

I repeat, they're striking
today...now...where I can't say.
My privilege here is compromised.

CUT TO

INT. AN OFFICE WITH THE NIGERIAN FLAG AND THE SSS DAY

The lady behind the desk drops the phone with a perplexed exhalation. On her desk is a tag reading **ASSISTANT, DIRECTOR OPERATIONS** She begins to drum on her desk with a pencil. Then after a few seconds picks up her desktop phone and dials a number. Listen to it ring and then speaks

ASSISTANT D OPERATIONS

Boss, we've got another situation
occurring in Lagos...

A male voice comes over the wire

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS

In my office now.

The line goes dead.

She drops the receiver, exhales again and gathering courage, she rises

CUT TO:

EXT.

THE SHOPPING MALL

COOL EVENING

Aminu is walking briskly down the corridor with a dour determination on his face. The older man is taking the rear towards Aminu calling out to him

OLDER MAN

What do you think you're doing?

The man cast a defensive glance around the zone even as he plays catchup with Aminu. Assured that they are not being watched and followed, or noticed he adds

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

Do you know the disgrace this
will bring to your name...and
your father's name?

No word from Aminu, only movement and tears

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

Do you not care about paradise
even if you don't feel anything
about your handler's shame,
Aminu?

Aminu feels everything, he feels the growing desperation in the older man's voice and frame, but he does not look back, he has begun to quake with dread and tears.

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

You're sabotaging the
brotherhood!

That stops him. All sounds stop with a slow scrawl and dies out. The older man almost crashes onto Aminu.

The older man stretches his hand palm up to Aminu.

Aminu looks at his own hand and sees the battery.

The older man raises the remains of the handset to the youth's sight.

The boy stretches out his hand for the phone. The older man, thinking he has had his grip on him, hands the shell to him. Aminu takes it and turning round continues his walk and the sound begins again. The older man looks at Aminu with stunned displeasure. He feels outwitted and then digs his feet in.

Aminu gets to the shop in the middle of the mall and stops. Looking through the glass, he can see that the young lady and a more mature woman more stately, more dignified and taller in a two piece pants suit is standing over the bag and Fidelia as she unzips it and looking into it.

At the blink of the red in their eyes, they pull back with trepidation, but Aminu crashes in and reaching for the bag not without packing them bodily out of his way, he breezes out.

SHOP OWNER

(trepidation squeezing
her voice really low
and flat)

Call security, Fiddie!

Fidelia scampers towards the office desk phone, and the older man throws her a dark look that freezes her and the shop owner. Then he braces himself as Aminu tears past him with the bag in his hand, he tsks and heads into the mall loaded with bile; clandestine escape in mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A POWERFUL, DARK OFFICE NIGHT

Five men are seated in utmost silence. They are having their eyes fixed on one sad, angry spot before them. TOPMAN looks up. The others keep their faces away from his line of contact. When Topman is mad, no one dares to confront his gaze.

TOPMAN

I love that boy as a brother.

Silence all.

Bukokhuo sniffs as if nursing the pain. Bearing his face on one of them

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

And a brother he still is...

Bukokhuo shudders briefly underneath his gaze and then adjusts himself

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

At least a brother can still be taught a lesson.

Before Bukokhuo can react, the door bursts open and Aminu is dragged in covered in his own blood and sweat. He is hardly able to raise his head from the floor. His nose is almost crawling on the floor.

Bukokhuo shifts uneasily and takes a pleading face to Topman. He dared not say the word in his face and heart.

The two muscled, heavily bearded men who drag him in let him drop as if he were a bag of cement. Bukokhuo shifts in his seat at the act.

Topman rises and heads towards the lump, of Aminu

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Bukokhuo, I know how you feel. I feel for my brother, too

He places the sole of his well polished patent leather shoe on Aminu's neck.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

But...tell me, isn't this a waste?

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows28.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Was this the faithful who only four days back set the world's attention blazing on Lagos? Was this the man who fooled heavy security, working like a common shadow made Lagos a shadow of its former self? I think not!

Silence. Bukokhuo dips his head.

Topman takes another disdainful look at the lump underneath him, he tsks and moving as if to snap his neck, he slowly...very slowly, removes his leg.

He heads for the exit without looking back

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Because this is Nigeria, because I'm kind... and because our war is just, I give him one last chance. I give him back to you, Bukokhuo...

The so-called Bukokhuo drops his head in teary relief. The others sigh out loudly in shock and protest. Then he stops. All protests end.

He looks from one face to the other, he nods with a line

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Allah is merciful.

Then suddenly charged he turns to Bukokhuo with seething angst

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

And the infidel shop attendant that saw his face is having fun talking to the police, isn't she?

Bukokhuo stumbles in his mouth...

BUKOKHUO

It wasn't part of our plan to use raid tactics on Lagos, remember, Maigida?

He turns to him again boiling, his mask fully altered by rage

BUKOKHUO (CONT'D)

So, plucking an infidel off the blasted tree of sickly life is now a raid, Bukokhuo!

One voice speaks, it is one of the men

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows29.

JOSHUA

Master, the police and the SSS
mount a tight security...

TOPMAN

Curse them all! Curse the tight
security...I want that dirty
infidel crushed...a curse of
death on her!

All bows with

ALL

Yes, Maigida.

He looks at them simmering and then he leaves with...

TOPMAN

Allah is merciful.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT AN UNCOMPLETED TENEMENT BUILDING NIGHT

The shop attendant, Fidelia is holding Jude, curled up at a corner of the room, which is obviously her home, sobbing copiously.

The face of AMINU with the bag of bomb comes assaulting her, she quakes, looking up to the roof.

JUDE

Your first day at work bomb
exploded in Lagos... second day,
you got nearly bombed in your
shop!

She sobs

FIDELIA

We should say, 'Thank you, LORD',
not whine about it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A BRIGHTLY LIT OPULENT ROOM DAY

It is a cool breezy morning. Aminu, all being patched up, looks out to the bird singing on the branch of a flowering plant by the window. He takes his face from it with a snap to face the lady Maya attending to his wounds. He looks towards the door as the last image of a man in black suit leaves without showing his face. Then he is alerted to a voice in the room

BUKOKHUO

You're a lucky man, Aminu.

AMINU

I am sorry. I allowed cheap sympathies get the better of me... I failed the movement

He looks away from all towards the window, clearly so ashamed of himself. Without looking away from the window, he says almost in a determined, tearful whisper

AMINU (CONT'D)

It will never, ever happen again. Since they all choose to rebel against Allah through their wicked ways, they do not deserve mercy...not even their tender babies. Death to the infidels!

A line of tears drops from either unblinking eyes

The man nods his head with a grave look, on his face as he locks his eyes on Aminu.

Aminu lowers his contrite face.

Bukokhuo rises and heads towards the door and then stopping, he turns to Aminu. Aminu looks up to him. The man nods to him with

BUKOKHUO

You started well, those missions in Sokoto, Maiduguri and that massive first blow on Lagos only five days ago cannot atone for this grave sin. Allah help you!

AMINU

I'm an unworthy servant of Allah, may His righteous judgement correct me.

The man turns to the lady in the room

BUKOKHUO

Maya, please take good care of him.

MAYA

I think he needs a doctor, sir.

Both Bukokhuo and Aminu turn a revolting look at Maya. She returns the look to them wondering what she has said wrong. Looking at Bukokhuo, she drums it in

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows31.

MAYA (CONT'D)

His injuries are deep...I
recommend an x-ray

BUKOKHUO

He'll have an appropriate
treatment.

Bukokhuo looks away and heads out without a word more

CUT TO:

EXT.

AN OPULENT COMPOUND

DAY

Topman is followed by a group of three men heading towards a gleaming car parked facing the exit. The walls of the compound is well over 7 feet high with electrified barbings on the top of the fence. Close Circuit Cameras are hidden all over the place.

TOPMAN

How's the waste doing this
morning?

He asks as Bukokhuo approaches him.

BUKOKHUO

He's in top shape, Master. You
will yet again find him useful.

TOPMAN

Of course I will. That lad is
tough despite his wasting
weakness.

Slapping the man in black shining suit on the back he
smiled

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Take heart, your courier is not
such a waste.

He heads for his car with an air of playful airiness

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

You snatched him from the paws of
his hard fighting mother and
father and made him a useful pawn
in the game. He's a good choice,
I should say.

He steps into the car and lets out a pleasure inspired cry

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows32.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Hmmmm, haaaa! Lagos, the smell of
victory! Just one more, tightly
clenched blow and that's
it...chaos!

The other four men can not but agree with him. The man they
call Bukokhuo smiles for the first time out of pleasure and
turning to his car on the other side of the compound, he
sees Agatha coming out of it with an impatient air

When Topman sees her, he whistles melodiously to Bukokhuo

AGATHA

Buk, I don't have all day, I'll
be late for work!

Topman nods

TOPMAN

Have we so lost our meaning as
gentlemen that we now keep ladies
waiting?

The men explode with laughter

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

See why I think sometimes it's
better with your kind? Ladies'
mindset is unearthly.

Snapping out of his philosophical air, dismisses him

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Oh for shame, go to your adorable
problem, my friend!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.

THE OPEN BAR

NIGHT

Ubaka has just noticed something. Aminu now dressed in
white and white wearing a sunshade walks gingerly through
the car wash with a slight limp right into the beer parlour
and passing by Ubaka, he takes off his sunshade and their
eyes seem to have glued to each other. He cannot explain
his fascination for Aminu, but he fascinates him deeply. He
also saw deep seated pains and the paling caused by fever
in those eyes. He is extracted from his fixation by the
catcall from behind him. He turns and sees that it is the
customer he has just given a bill to seconds before he sees
the approach of Aminu. It is the same customer at the
strippers three days back.

He heads towards the table of four comprising a man and three delectable ladies and bends over respectfully to listen to the man. The man orders

CUSTOMER

Take me through the bill.

UBAKA

Item by item, sir?

CUSTOMER

(sarcastically)

No, hair by hair; do I look like
a jerk to you, or you think
because I've drunk too much beer
I don't know what I'm doing?

Realising that the man is raising his voice, he promptly apologises and makes the grave error...

UBAKA

Just calm down, sir, I meant
no...

The man drops a slap on his braincase with the line

CUSTOMER

My friend, respect yourself!

Then one of the ladies blurts out

BABE

Enh he! Heeey! See the big fool
asking someone to calm down o!

The other two girls just laugh and clap their hands wondering

CUSTOMER

Don't mind the idiot!

At that point, still too dazed to comprehend what is happening around and to him, the proprietor rushes in to calm the irate customer and his three ladies without failing to command him to apologise.

Rising to his full modest height, the young man looks from the man who just slapped him to his lovely but now looking flimsy lady to his towering employer. He shakes his head

UBAKA

Sir, I'm sorry, I didn't intend
to make you lose your temper.

CUSTOMER

That's your headache, who're you wretched fool to make me lose my temper! Abeg, let's get out of here...

Talking to his girls now.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)

How much is there on the bill?

BABE 2

(who already has got the bill, reads out)

Twelve thousand, nine hundred and ten naira.

The man pulls out a bundle of money from his jacket and throws it on the table for the lady

CUSTOMER

Count out the money and meet me in the car. If I ever come here again let them send their ugliest dogs to serve me.

As he leaves with a deliberate swagger, the proprietress follows him apologising, but the man will not listen. Then she comes back to Ubaka who is now giving change to the lady.

PROPRIETRESS

Your rudeness just cost me a good customer!

From a far corner seated with a bottle of soft drink and a plate of pepper soup and alone, Aminu takes in the whole scene. He takes a livid face after the customer and his girls as they head out.

UBAKA

I must get out of here now...

But she cannot say much as she sees tears streaking down the young man's cheeks. Now she understands what will follow next as she sees him putting together all the money he has sold so far and quickly, she cuts in

PROPRIETRESS

Ubaka, don't be rash, service year is an opportunity for significant growth. If you knew what these men and women in sharp suits go through on their jobs...

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows35.

PROPRIETRESS (CONT'D)

Ha, my dear, Nigeria is a country where gain comes far ahead of human dignity. You need to learn to rule your bloated feeling of self-worth now, or you'll never go anywhere. Don't allow pride come between you and your growth. Ubaka, that was nothing, shake it off.

Too overcome to talk, Ubaka just raises an index finger to indicate that he needs to be left alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. POLICE AREA COMMAND OFFICE IN LAGOS DAY

It is briefing session at the police chief's office. Around the table is a select team of senior officers who are all superintendents. The man is making a presentation using projected slides on giant TV screen with images of explosion scenes then he comes to a map of Lagos with some hot spots marked out in blinking red all over the map.

AREA COMMANDER

We already understand their hot romance with high population density areas, the police and military posts, high fun spots in other cities. The intelligence about the planned attack on Lagos is pure. So the protection of the citizens of this great state is our burning priority: we begin with our command. While the military are very capable of protecting their own, and we our own stations, we must protect our clubs, beer parlours, and most importantly Schools, markets and shopping malls, We must keep our flyovers and bridges safe...and the strip clubs... all over the Ikeja axis...I hear new ones spring up like mushrooms all over the place here now.

He says the last parts concerning strip clubs with a sense of veiled concern and concealed disgust.

Maya, the only civilian in the midst fixes her analytic eyes on him all the while.

OFFICER 1

Sir, how about our churches, sir...

AREA COMMANDER

Yes, add the mosques to that,
too.

The chief seems overpowered by the task and pauses for control. Then he looks up sounding tough

AREA COMMANDER (CONT'D)

I just don't want a bomb to shout
in my command, do you understand,
people!

All respond in unison

ALL

Yes, sir!

He raises his face and connects with Maya

AREA COMMANDER

Any questions, please?

MAYA

Sir, I think the command is
spread too thin for this job to
overlook any intelligence that
might lead to a major crack. All
the men on ground cannot cover
all of these places, depending on
greases...I worry, boss.

All the other officers turn to her with a careful appreciation of her point

AREA COMMANDER

In a nutshell, agent Osunde?

The room goes thick with tension.

Maya throws in the gunpowder

MAYA

There might be a good lead on the
Shopping Mall bag bomb scare.
Ruling it out as a fanciful
display...

AREA COMMANDER

(helping her finish the
line)

Of terror mongering affection...

MAYA

(grateful for the
assistance, but
continues all the same)

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows37.

MAYA (CONT'D)

...may be walking us out on a meal ticket...sir, We're starved of leads!

AREA COMMANDER

What're you suggesting, that the intelligence report from your service on it is flawed?

MAYA

I suggest nothing of the sort, sir, but ready to follow reasonable orders, sir.

A hush pulls through the other officers.

The Chief allows a thin smile of fatigue to rule his mouth. He ignores her and turns to the screen

AREA COMMANDER

Reasonable order 1: spread fat, spread thin, I don't give an hour glass shape, just make sure, no bomb shouts, and no unauthorised gun sings in this command. Do you understand me?

He actually says that right onto Maya's face, but...

All respond

ALL

Yes, sir!

AREA COMMANDER

Grease or no grease, the order from my Commissioner, sanctioned by my Governor instructed by my President who all have made resources...ample resources available to buy and maintain all the greases we can afford to ensure we win this war is: No bomb explodes, no gun fires unauthorised. Agent Osunde, the brief we have at the force headquarters is simple: we are at war! And those of us in the police force understand only one thing: our country needs us, and calls for our service, not your fears and reservations. SERVICE, my lady! That's what we do in the police force.

AREA COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Perhaps you understand what
SERVICE means like we do, my
girl?

Maya nods, swallowing hard.

MAYA

I think the shopping mall report
deserves attention. I think the
girl...the shop attendant needs
protection.

The Area Commander turns a harsh face towards her.

AREA COMMANDER

In the absence of further
questions, we're done here.

Maya will not take that, she fires on, making everyone to
stop.

MAYA

The girl's life will be their
next target...she saw the bomber
and that's enough to kill her,
Sir!

AREA COMMANDER

Intelligence from the SSS states
that...

Boiling with passion now

MAYA

There was a bomb in that mall,
there are witnesses...

AREA COMMANDER

We work with intelligence, agent
Osunde, and the one I have rules
out your option.

As she makes to speak, the tall man cuts in

AREA COMMANDER (CONT'D)

I think if you have any problem
with the report from your
service, you should take it up
with your superiors, but as far
as we're concerned nothing of
public security interest happened
at the Mall.

Maya swallows hard again and holds back her next words. She
flinches, turns to uniformed officers and smiles wryly.
Then taking her face back to the big man she nods

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows39.

MAYA

Ok. Right. Nothing of public
security interest happened there.

Looking into her eyes to be sure nothing else is coming,
the big man nods and turning to the others

AREA COMMANDER

Have fun, guys.

He leaves followed by his entourage. Maya turns to the
window

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT THE SAME SUNDOWN HOUR. BUSY ROAD NIGHT

The blind beggar is trapped in the middle of the road,
unable to move on or go forward, yet he is calm. His boy is
not with him now. Clearly he needs help to cross. Cars are
breezing past avoiding him. None slows to allow him cross
except to abuse him once in a while. He simply waves an
apology to them each time he gets a curse from anyone.
Ubaka sees him as he raises his face to look at the world
from his sitting position a few metres from the road rueing
his fate. At that moment, a sense of duty hits him. He
jumps down from his high sitting position and runs onto the
road. As his hand touches the old beggar, a smile lights up
the old beggar's face.

BLIND BEGGAR

Why do you care, corpashion?

A shock hits Ubaka. Did he say corpashion? Well, he has no
time for dialogue, he quickly stops oncoming vehicles and
gradually leads the blind beggar to safety on the other
side of the road.

BLIND BEGGAR (CONT'D)

You're not a happy man, son.

UBAKA

I'm sure you're now safe.

He leaves him and heads away. Just then another thought
paralyses him. He stops. He can fight himself now. How can
he leave an old blind beggar by himself! He returns to him

UBAKA (CONT'D)

Baba, where're you going?

BLIND BEGGAR

Does a beggar have a destination?

UBAKA

You sure must be from somewhere
wherever it may be?

BLIND BEGGAR

Problem with you is that you take
life too seriously. Give life a
smile and a bit of trust and
you'll feel her tender touches on
you.

UBAKA

Did you fall into traffic problem
to be on my case, old one?

BLIND BEGGAR

There you go again, there you go
again, see what I mean? You're
just too serious.

UBAKA

Preposterous!

He turns around and heads away.

BLIND BEGGAR

Thanks for helping me, son...you
can go, I'm super ok here.

UBAKA

Whatever!

OLD BEGGAR

But with so much rage and
intensity in you as you are now,
you can't get that dream through
life.

Ubaka is thoroughly immobilised.

UBAKA

Who in God's name are you, old
man! Was it a crime that I helped
you through traffic? What's wrong
with this city!

OLD BEGGAR

It's a soul estranged from life
that blames his city for his
fate. The abundance of the
Universe has nothing to do with
location.

Ubaka is scandalised.

UBAKA

Yet you're a beggar?!

OLD BEGGAR

No, no, no this is not about me.
I'm not the angry, plaintive one.
I'm perfectly happy with my
universe, I bear no grudge, I
harbour no hatred, I only tell
the truth and in your case, I
say, until you learn to be
grateful for what you don't have
and giving thanks in view of the
day they'll manifest in your
life, you'll get nothing out of
life beyond the slaps and knock
downs you presently get. Those
who knock you down have no hatred
for you, rather they're
responding helplessly to the
signals you send out to them.

The corps member rushes towards him and rips his dark glasses from his eyes. And to his chagrin, the man is a tightly closed blind man. Unable to return the glasses for shock, self-reproach, regret and pain. He totters to a seat on the floor suffering real deep.

The beggar walks his way towards him and collects the glasses from him and wears it again.

OLD BEGGAR (CONT'D)

Must you all play it the same way? Where I come from, there's a saying that he who gives thanks asks for more to be done unto him'. Be thankful, son.

Ubaka just sits there blasted as the old blind beggar drops his daggers into his heart.

OLD BEGGAR (CONT'D)

Look up there, have you ever seen a bird drop dead from hunger? How many creatures of the wild have you seen die from hunger? Only domesticated ones die of famine. The wild know the laws of life. Learn wild, son. There's too much in the universe for your eternal pleasure. This is cosmic truth.

Too numb to speak, Ubaka looks up hoping to see a bird or two, but by the time he lowers his face to the earth, he finds he can no longer see the blind old beggar.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.

LADY'S VANITY SHOP

NIGHT

Fidelia has just locked up and is heading out of the shop through its wide corridors. There're other lit shops on either sides of her. She is not interested in looking at any. She is not also interested in the three men from behind, beside and ahead of her. The one beside her has just made a brisk ending to the conversation he is having with a laughing, teased shop attendant in another shop. She believes he will be back as he promises as he reaches for his pocket to pick a phone that has no promise of ringing. He raises it to his ears and raises an excuse demanding finger to the lady, who nods permit and practically undresses the dashing young man as he exits.

Fidelia is in a hardly happy mood. She's humming a sad tune playing in her head

SONG

I'll be back, baby, when the
storm of tonight's over.
I'll be back.... when the veil
of gloom gives way... to the
fireworks of heaven then no one
would be asking what's wrong...
I'll be back, I'll be back, baby,
I'll be back when you've learnt
to love me again...

Just as the song continues, she hears a clear loud whistling from behind her. She turns and sees a dude in combat shots and body glove heading towards her, whistling the lines of the song. Something about the guy does not force a smile from her. His eye sockets are deep and dark with hideous impossibilities. Then as if that were not enough, she sees another far from behind him making as if conscious of them (she and the whistler). She turns and makes to run, but she crashes onto the guy ahead of her.

FIDELIA

Oh, sorr...

She feels something cold just above her belt line. She is wearing a jean pant and T-shirt. She looks up to the man. he is a much older guy than the one behind her and he is quite bearded too. She looks behind her and finds the other guy relaxed and instead of walking on, stops and has his interest in what is going on. The third guy behind is now in a state of caution as he looks around.

OLDER MAN

Remember me, little girl?

She makes an animal grunt of trying to make out what this is all about.

The thing beneath her navel buries deeper and she can feel a sharp pain and a cutting sensation down there. Her alarm bell ticks off.

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

I'll give you a ride, darling.

To any one else passing by, Fidelia is locked in an embrace with the man. The man too is trying to avoid any show of violence.

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

Don't try to be smart, just might not be able to know what happens to this sweet body.

Her mind is so blunt and numb that she feels her knees buckle, she feels all her energy drained off her body, she decides to act on the situation, not attempting to be strong. She screams as loud as her strength can carry her

FIDELIA

Aaahhhhhhh!!!!!!

She allows her body fly backwards and go down on her back, but after her solid knee catches the man's crotch real hard.

The three are too startled to know what next to do without inspiring a tumult.

This momentary disarming, brings Fidelia crashing on her back. As if empowered by her fall, she rolls on the floor and without thinking against it bolts like a miler. Screaming at the same time. All of these happens in a flash and the Older man is down on his knees wincing in primordial pain

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

Heeellllpppppp!
Heeeeellllppppp!!!!

In no time, she has crossed out the parking lot and is heading through the gate when a fat man in danshiki opens his arms wide to her as if to embrace her

DANSHIKI MAN

What...what's it....?

The man means to hold her and calm her down, but Fidelia has gathered too much momentum and she has never seen anybody she can now trust so when the man will not leave her line of escape, she manages a high jump with her legs stretched towards the man. It is too late for the man to side steps and gives way. Fidelia lands her fully stretched out feet on the man's midriff and the feeling of crashing the unsuspecting big man comes good and empowering...especially that power!

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows44.

She totters to her feet ignoring whatever becomes of the man, and continues running and screaming.

FIDELIA
Heeeeelllllllp!!!

People on her path run before they even get her on their sight. The whole place becomes a pandemonium of scared runners.

The Danshiki man rises wiping a hand gun from his clothing but the older man who has caught up with him still half bent screams caution to him and he holds back the fire intent.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BAR AT THE NUDE CLUB **NIGHT**

Agatha and her equally gorgeous and voluptuous, but a bit fleshier friend Joy are leaving the popular strip section of the club and heading into the VIP section with two men following them, nay Agatha is actually leading them. Some of their stripper colleagues slaps Joy on her impressive arse and she jumps playfully. It is all a fun game. She turns to her man, who is counting himself lucky to have such a babe to himself, receives tug by his neck tie, he quickly let go his fantasy briefly and follows on.

CUT TO:

INT. A PALATIAL LIVING ROOM **NIGHT**

Bukokhuo is seated with watching AMINU who lies on a sofa reading a newspaper.

AMINU
I've that place fully rigged, I
can't risk them being detected

BUKOKHUO
Maigida says, stop for now and
stop you must, boy!

Topman walks in from one of the corridors clearly exasperated and fuming on the phone.

Bukokhuo and Aminu rise onto their feet in one swift mode.

TOPMAN

It is impossible. ..What You ask
is pushing it.

Aminu bows his head and dares not look. Bukokhuo, signals
him to leave and he gratefully, promptly leaves.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

I warned you and now I promise
you, Lagos will sink...I will...I
will...I will put the dagger
through the heart of your
President and your Nigerians who
really do not love him will mourn
him. Hypocrites!

The man stoves the phone against the wall and that does not
end it, he rushes at the phone on the floor and begins to
stump on the pieces fuming and foaming

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

I will destroy, destroy, destroy
Nigeria, I will crush everyone of
them... what...what...we... we
have done so far will look like
child's play when I'm through
with Lagos!

Maya enters the space stunned at the man's mood. She
addresses him in Hausa

MAYA

Haba, Maigida...

He turns to her and then shouts.

TOPMAN

Aminu! Where's this wasted
brother? Aminu...

Aminu promptly presents himself head bowed, hands folded.

He looks at Aminu for what seems to all like eternity.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Are you ready to pay the ultimate
price for your creator?

A hush runs through the other two present.

Topman smiles dangerously.

AMINU

If my master believes I am ready,
I am ready. Allah hu Akbar!

The bold answer shakes Bukokhuo.

Topman regards him closely and shaking his head responds.

TOPMAN
I don't think so.

AMINU goes down and grabs the man's feet desperately

AMINU
Master, send me, I'll avenge your
pains and glorify the Holy One
who made me.

Maya throws her face to the pitiable piece of spectacle
below her and turning to Bukokhuo, she sees a gutless
spectre. Then she decides to speak

MAYA
You don't want to rush into this,
Maigida?

TOPMAN
The brother's been compromised,
you know that

MAYA
No! We rubbished the report
remember? No one believes the
shop attendant and her boss.

Topman looks at her weighing the report for the nth time.

MAYA (CONT'D)
It's not being investigated. It's
dead.

TOPMAN
So there was no need to risk our
men after the shop attendant
then?

The lady Maya's face fly apart with rage. She holds her
rage

MAYA
If we are to do this together,
Maigida, then I should know about
every...

TOPMAN
What is your cause here, Maya
Osunde, Gold or Glory?

Maya feels cornered, but she decides to trade it for
verbless rage

TOPMAN(CONT'D)

Are you now beginning to care
about our cause, agent Osunde?

Maya's eyes narrow with rage

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Oh, tell me, what is the cause
for which the brotherhood fights?

MAYA

The immediate dismantling of all
western ways and
education...total islamisation of
Nigeria...

Regarding her with a mocking smile all along, the man
thinks he has heard enough, he stops her

TOPMAN

Good. So are you now a Muslim?

As if she does not hear right, she grunts

MAYA

Han?

He calms himself before asking again

TOPMAN

Have you accepted and embraced
the way of the Holy Prophet?

Maya is wide eyed, not sure where she has found herself

MAYA

I am loyal to and supportive of
your cause, Maigida! I have made
the release of your key men from
custody possible! Maigida, I've
killed for you, planned your
attacks for and with you! Do you
now doubt my...

TOPMAN

Whatever you have done, whatever
you will do, you did and will do
for MONEY, GOLD, Maya!

Total silence.

Aminu takes a scornful look to the lady.

Bukokhuo is not the less sympathetic to her.

Topman turns to Aminu. He signals him to rise from the
floor.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows48.

Taking his hand as he rises, he holds him on both sides of his face looking into his eyes, he can see resolve, readiness and will.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

You will yet serve after tonight.
There'll be better time to meet
the virgins.

Despite her disgrace, Maya feels relief coursing her entire hour glass frame.

He turns to Bukokhuo

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Bukokhuo, prepare the boy and
when the others return with the
shop attendant, brief and prepare
them on the attacks tonight.

The 'tonight' issuing from the man stuns her. She turns again to him not hiding her anger.

He claps his hands with raw excitement, heading out, but not without dragging Maya along with him.

CUT TO:

EXT **IN THE GUTTER** **NIGHT**

Fidelia crouches in the gutter shivering with dread. She hears footsteps around above her. She holds herself together. Then the steps come closer...really closer. Then something else... yes, it is real.

MALE VOICE

Look in the gutter.

She decides to crawl to a car passage under the gutter and hides there

MALE VOICE 1

Nothing, brother.

MALE VOICE

Really? You know what, get me the
Uzi

MALE VOICE 1

What for?

MALE VOICE

Stop fooling and get it!

Now she's under severe shock. She begins to sob heavily holding her mouth to avoid an outburst. When she hears the footsteps from above, she plasters herself like a cockroach against the gutter wall, side of the road quaking with dread.

The first crack of the gun shakes her. The rest is history as the rain of bullet with the deathly din takes the air. She slowly sinks into the water as bullet race through her.

MALE VOICE 1

I saw her enter here, she could not have disappeared. Bring the car. I need the headlamp to see and be sure

The engine revs and drives closer the head lamps all on. squatting, along the low line of the gutter, the older man sees an upturned body of Fidelia.

MALE VOICE 1 (CONT'D)

There! I think she's dead without bleeding...get her!

But loud blast succeeds the last word from the man and then a blinding beam of light hits the scene, the danshiki man being the one standing is felled by a bullet.

The taxi soon begins to roll and when the older man, ignoring the signal, dives into the gutter determined to get the girl, the taxi speeds off. As soon as he lands in the gutter with her, the girl rolls out of the gutter as fast as she can manage and crawls on all four towards the source of the light hoping for help...but the older man lines his gun against the edge of the gutter with an aim at the escaping girl, but he soon slumps into the gutter abandoning the gun after a few misdirected shots fly into the night's air far from the girl. The girl will not wait for any form of rescue and continues her crawl...

A voice calls out to her, but she does not care, she scales a fence and rising within the compound put up the race of her life.

OPERATIVE

Oh, for hell's shame, get that child!

Footsteps. Torchlights. Silence.

Plastering her body against a pillar, and holding her breath, she watches an operative go past her. Leaning against the pillar, she rolls over it and spying out the spaces ahead and sensing nothing, she bolts on tiptoe, scales another fence and gets onto the road.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows50.

A keke crawls by and she flags it and hops into it. Luckily the Keke is empty, the rider can hardly see her state.

KEKE MAN

Ikeja!

Letting go her breath at a gust she responds

FIDELIA

Yes, sir.

The rider wonders at the stench that fills the keke and the way the new passenger is panting. He turns to look at her

KEKE MAN

Wetin, u shit fir body...?

FIDELIA

Oga, you nor dey hear gunshots since...na the White thing dey...

KEKE MAN

Huh! Which side...where...

The bike is swaying from end to end... until she screams at him

FIDELIA

Ogaaaa, just dey go straight...and fast, dem dey inside that compound o!

The man bulleted the tricycle into the night inspired to survive.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.

RED LIGHT ZONE

NIGHT

Open on street corner lined with prostitutes lurking and some stopping and bending over cars talking with the occupants. At the far end of screen middle is a neon light advertising TODAY'S FRONT with varied image of a nude dancer.

Inside the club is slamming. The lights are flashing and zigzagging , but very few dancers are on the floor doing their thing. Barely after five days of the first and last bombing Lagos seems to be getting back to its rhythm and dance again. From afar, a group of guys at the far end of the hall are cheering. As the circle parts, a young guy and Agatha are doing an arm wrestling. The guys are cheering the her on. Agatha who in no way resembles a tommy is managing well in this game in her one piece floral mini dress.

The man is resuming the upper hand as expected, but the lady will not give in, but halfway to slamming her hand on the table top she lets out a soft seductive purr and shoots out her pebble smooth cleavage lines with the nipples clearly erect underneath the dress right in the man's stupefied face. He is distracted momentarily and within that brief moment, she slams his hand on the table top with a bang. The cheer is deafening. She stands up without much ado and picks a bottle of beer from the lots on the table and takes a long drag. She does not respond to the cheering and hailing around her. Bottle of drink in mouth, she walks towards camera, every inch a seductress with a powerful gait.

She heads up the stairs towards a door marked **EXREME X**. Two burly security guards, the burly one being male and the other, a female, exquisite female with the proper curves are posted at it. The lady stretches out her arm towards her as she approaches them. She reaches for her belt and pulls out a tiny ticket and hands it to her. She nods to the burly man and he opens the door for her to step in.

Inside the hall is a pole dance stage with young healthy girls of the cleanest sort dancing at three separate poles with some having a private lap dance session with clients at various corners. The place is dimly lit with club lights flashing on and off in varied colours. She seems to be looking for someone in particular. A young stripper approaches her solicitously, but she brushes her aside as gently as her inner revulsion can allow her. She sits at a corner and as soon as she does so, a dude joins her and begins to whisper into her ears while she keeps her eyes on a particular pole dancer. When the dude finishes talking and notices that she is not responding, he attempts a second try, then she blocks his approach with a left hand and practically 'throws' his face off her space with a

AGATHA

Back off, dude; I don't do cheap.

After a few minutes she rises and leaves the place until she gets downstairs.

Following her receding back, we see a couple at the corner of the club in a shouting match. They're both obviously pissed at each other. Neither is willing to give in. The music drowns out their voices, though, but they do not care each, wants to make an impression on the other. The lady stops before the two shouting ones and bearing her eyes on them, shakes her head and without a second look, pulls the teary lady away from the man and still shouting at her man with the man shouting back and making obscenities at her, the lady follows the drag.

We see the lady dragging the other lady away through the door and into the open space of the night still shouting back at the man who is now out of view.

JOY

Shame on you...if you can't pay
my bill don't fucking touch me
deep, loser!

Now outside for her voice to be heard, she rants.

JOY (CONT'D)

Runs doesn't mean you can just
come and run your filthy hands
all over a woman. Pull the notes
I'll pull the clothes for you,
idiot!

The other lady, Still drowning her beer turns for once to the shouting lady now

AGATHA

Come, respect yourself o. I dey
hol' you you still dey shout. Who
you dey shout for...huh,. He dey
here?

JOY

Oh, Agatha, the thing dey pain
me...

AGATHA

If you talk one word there again
as I hol' you so enh, I go forget
this bottle for your head! Wetin
dey do you sef?(hiss)

Silence reigns while the shouting lady fumes

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Make we leave, I don tell MD sey
we nor ready for work today. Make
we go Island, I get one big fish
for us there.

JOY

Enh? MD...you tell am the truth?
Naim be sey wahala dey come o,
that man nor dey forgive...

AGATHA

Before nko? Abeg go carry your
bag make we dey roll.Nor be my
own MD, forget, I know how to
dial im number correct. Abi na
stripper you wan be for life?

The other lady nods with a trusty mood.

JOY

Agatha...

AGATHA

Hm?

JOY

You ge' cigar?

The lady turns a maternal face to her and dipping her hand in her bag flashes out a packet of cigarettes and throws it to her. The other lady catches it thankfully.

Aminu now in pure white pant and shirt walks past the two ladies and regards them with revulsion. His limp is still very obvious. He heads for the fun complex. A hundred metres away is the same cab waiting.

CUT TO

INT. A PALATIAL LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Bukokhuo, Topman, and Bukokhuo, are present. Topman is on the phone

TOPMAN

I told you, Ladele, I will smoke you down... don't stop me, you've had your say...I said no deal. I know what you want, and you know what I want. You do what I want and then we can have a respite...too bad, Lagos will not only burn, I will sink it. Read your papers in the morning, sir. Good night.

He kills the line

CUT TO:

EXT

NIGHT

A UNCOMPLETED BUILDING

Jude is alone weeping, worried over Fidelia's absence.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BAR AT THE NUDE CLUB

NIGHT

Aminu gets up from the popular bar in the open and enters the gents with his backpack carrying three packs of Pringles. In the gent, he empties their crispy contents in a trash and bringing out his bagpack, expertly, carefully loads them with the explosives he has been given. He sets the timer on all to ten minutes. And puts two of them back in the backpack, hides the other in the toilet reservoir and heads out. He walks towards the main club where the massive body guards insist on checking his backpack. He promptly hands it over, when they check in and see only the two snack packs, they stamp his palm and he hands them into the club and seeing the pole dancers in the nude rattles him howbeit momentarily. From the far end of the club, Aminu sees him and his face lights up. But before he can rise from the high stool where he is sharing a drink with a lady in panties and bra, the man Aminu has disappeared through a door marked 'GENTS'. He keeps his eyes on the door briefly and soon succumbs to the nudging of his companion. He takes his eyes to the ladies on the pole while caressing his lady.

CUT TO:

EXT.

THE GARAGE

NIGHT

Some three experts are rigging two cars with explosives while another expert is giving an athletic youth instructions on the plan to bomb a location on a map spread out on the body of the car being rigged. The bomb expert finishes loading the explosive devices in a backpack for the youth. The youth carries the bag and straps it on his back, after hugging the expert and then Bukokhuo, he heads out into the darkness.

INTERIOR UNCOMPLETED BUILDING SITE

DAY

Jude is standing at the corridor of the building worries all over his face. He is watching the distance.

Tears are beginning to stream down his cheeks. He slumps on the floor crying for real.

From the shadows, he is being watched. On reverse we see it is Fidelia drenched in water and sweat, cautious, watching if she has been followed to this point by her chaser, or whether they are waiting for her inside. Relief washes over her when she makes certain that all is clear. She begins to sob heavily. She rushes towards the boy who immediately is relieved, though still crying to see her. She wraps herself round him and they both crash onto their sides and weep.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT FRONT OF THE IKEJA CANTONMENT

DAY

An old Toyota camry is stopped by the soldiers at the entrance. In the car, are Maya, and one of the three men that made an attempt on Fidelia earlier and one other silent chubby demon. Now they're in gentle youthful mode. Maya has her leg on the dashboard chewing away at her gum feeling careless.

The lead officer takes a closer look at them as they seat two in front and one at the back. Maya's careless attitude in baring half her breasts through a tight fitting laces armless top, short skirt that reveals her pure white panties showing as she raises her leg on the dashboard convinces the soldier that they are party animals heading for the officers' mess within the cantonment.

SERGEANT

Where to?

MAYA

Guests. Chief of Staff...

So willing to help, the Sergeant does not allow him to finish before releasing them to go with

SERGEANT

Chief of staff! You know your way?

MAYA

Sure.

She swears beneath her breath, and does an up-yours at the sergeant.

none in the car sees it as she does it hand out of the car and lowered, but the sergeant does. Enraged, he corks his gun at them, at that some soldiers who seem not to be watching cork their guns and stand in the way of the car.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Ah, gimme a good dick and I'll give you a scream for pux sake!

GUY

What's that now?

MAYA

How tha' fuck do you expect me to know...your beards maybe!

She opens the door and steps out with her hands in the air.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Easy, soldiers, easy...we're all plain fun-seeking civilians...

Hands raised, the sergeant beaming light on her face, she mouths *bomb in the car, terrorist* without making a sound.

SERGEANT

Sharrap!

As he approaches Maya something seems to have struck her. She screams bowed.

The other guys in the car who have refused to come out hoping Maya can settle it turn to her. The sergeant levels his gun at her and at that point the sergeant freezes. Maya comes out clear, but low

MAYA

Bomb...

The sergeant shoves her off and barks

SERGEANT

Secure this girl private!
Alright , all of you out of the car!

The two men in the car are not responding. The sergeant sees something that stuns him, as he looks at the man behind the car. The older man who is behind wheels sees that the baricade has gone down knows it is futile to drive in, while the private and one other soldier drag Maya away. As they take her beyond the baricade, just into their sentry house, the two soldiers are down, Maya sees to that. She disappears into a crowd of people moving out as the first salvo is released by the sergeant which ends the life of the man at the back seat who is trying to press the detonator on his phone. He receives a bullet in the hand and then the head, a second st but Maya is at large.

The soldiers are combing the entire place for her. They search all the cars that are held down during the attack even the booths and find nothing. As the cars all go out even so does Maya totally disappears beneath one of the cars unknown to the occupants and driver.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLIER AT THE GARAGE

NIGHT

As one of the three experts bends over the booth of the car he has just finished rigging, we see his phone on the edge of the booth dialing a number tagged **RAGGED BIRD** the moment the line is picked, he begins.

BOMB EXPERT

Where's the fellow driving this car?

Bukokhuo shoves a rather bulky fellow towards the expert.

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

Come on guy, I don't have all day!

The bulky fellow wades his way towards him.

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

Have you eaten? Are you alright?

The fellow nods.

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

Ok, you know your drill, it's at the Prime Angle club in V.I, Right, you know it very well, right?

The guy nods eagerly

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

You've no worry in the world, just drive this baby right through the gate, you show them this pass

He hands him a card

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows58.

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

You're VIP, right?

SWISHPAN TO:

EXT. BUSY TRAFFIC IN IKEJA AXIS NIGHT

The old blind beggar is listening to the rather high pitched download of the expert to the suicide bomber.

BOMB EXPERT OOV

Good, you get clearance and drive not to the parking lot, but right into the building and you press this button. Godspeed, bro. You leave now, you should be able to make it by 12 midnight, it's 11:32 now. It's peak hour for club. ..

CUT TO:

EXT. AT THE GARAGE NIGHT

BOMB EXPERT

With a bright red thoroughbred LR3 like this, you don't need to fear failure. Go, bro, it's your night of glory.

The fat fellow feeling a sense of kinship with this bomb expert hugs him for the last time in his estimation and the guy feels a little emotional towards him too, he warmly entertains the hug

BOMB EXPERT (CONT'D)

God bless you.

FAT SUICIDE BOMBER

(super-charged, screams)
Allah hu akba!

CUT TO:

EXT SOMEWHERE IN IKEJA NIGHT

The old blind beggar, no longer blind, joins the traffic as a car drives to a halt beside the road, sure that no one is looking, he dashes in with his boy guide and the car zooms off.

SWISHPAN TO:

INT THE POLE DANCE SEGMENT OF THE CLUB NIGHT

Now Aminu is worried as he takes his eyes to the wall clock. Then he looks back at the door marked 'GENTS'. Just then it creaks open, not that anyone can hear from the deafening din of the music and the voices in the club. Aminu takes his round of the place with clear disgust on his face, but Ubaka can not understand a young man who pays to enter a nude club and wears a look of disgust, heads for the gents and locks himself in there for almost ten minutes and then come back sweating and finding the disgust on his face bigger. He has seen the young man before...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A LAGOS STREET ON THE ISLAND NIGHT

The blind beggar is being led by a boy down the road when he stops and reaches for something in the folds of his dirty danshiki.

From it, a handset comes out. He speaks into it

 OLD BEGGAR
 Location confirmed...ID
 confirmed!

The old beggar, now seeing, sees one of the cars in the garage of the Brotherhood grinding to a halt at the night traffic occasioned by the queue of vehicles turning into a popular night club.

 OLD BEGGAR (CONT'D)

 Get off the line now!

SWISHPAN TO:

FLASHBACK: THE OPEN BAR DAY

At the bar earlier that day. Ubaka is watching Aminu head towards the car wash from the road. He has just turned from a little girl being led by a young lady. He has the look of someone carrying the weight of the world on his head.

As he sits at a deserted table, he pulls a backpack from his back and places on top of the table looking lost. Ubaka approaches him to talk to him, but he bluffs him and walks off heading into the convenience.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A TRAFFIC STREET IN V.I NIGHT

The blind old beggar approaches the car and sees the driver a bulky youth sweating heavily. Inside the car he can hear the sound of Islamic chant going on loud and clear. He knocks on the window, the bulky Aminu is too far away to hear. He keeps knocking until his knock becomes a bang.

When he looks out the window, the sight of the beggar calms him momentarily, he needs to give alms before the final act, he reaches for some notes on him, yea, he finds some and as he pulls out the money and hands out to him, the moment his hand comes out of the window, the beggar plucks the door open and in a flash plucks the central lock open and the other door opens with another man entering the car, before he can make out what is happening, his hands are cuffed behind him. An Anti-Bomb Squad van pulls up behind then. Within seconds the bulky youth is pulled out of the car and then, the youth leading the blind beggar thinks he sees a car with two men on the other side of the road getting involved as the doors crack open. He quickly plucks out his radio and speaks into it

BEGGAR'S BOY

Company from across the road.
Urgent and out!

Then he sees them leveling a gun to their walking legs.

He quickly adds

BEGGAR'S BOY (CONT'D)

Deadly assault imminent. Over and
out!

From across the road, the blind old man who has since released the bulky suicide to the other efficient colleague sights the men as they raise their assault rifles and leveling them at them, he sends out two sharp cracks that pluck the men down, not sure he has had enough, he docks behind the still unsuspecting bomb squad van when he makes a clean rounding from the rear, he realises that he is right as one of them is still rousing, he drops more fire on the fellow and more on his fully stretched out colleague.

CUT TO:

INT. THE POLE DANCE SEGMENT OF THE CLUB NIGHT

The PRESENT

As he raises his head, Aminu has disappeared from the front of the gents. He taps his lady to shift off her weight as he rises. The lady looks at him slightly and continues admiring her friend as she dances on the pole. Calling out to her to shake it for the boys. He is wondering where he has gone. A stripper who has just stepped out of the VIP runs her hand down his cheeks and rubs her body on him demanding a drink from him. He waves her to go get it on him from the bar man while he heads towards the exit.

From the VIP exit, Aminu sights Ubaka looking around for him, he shifts his weight so that the two strippers dancing to entice him cover his view.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE SAME

NIGHT

He gets to the stairs and see nothing. Throwing a sharp look towards the hall, he can't see any trace of Aminu.

Ubaka goes back to his seat and is wondering aloud to himself beneath the din, but he didn't see Aminu return towards the exit with the two strippers who wont let him go until they drag him into a VIP room.

UBAKA

The fellow must have run! What's
the problem with him?

Aminu bolts out of the room and heads out for the VIP while the girls run after him trying to catch him, he flings some bank notes at them...better than letting them touch him and defile his virgins prepared body

Just then, Ubaka sights him again, he dashes off his stool almost knocking his female partner down. He follows after him calling out to him. He looks back to the fellow and ignores him.

CUT TO:

EXT

OUTSIDE THE CLUB

NIGHT

A clubber is chatting up a road side hooker when Aminu steps out of the complex just feet away from his taxi and hit the road walking across as he lifts his phone sky high above his head heading towards the parked taxi. A sharp call from behind him does not move him he allows his thumb curve down towards the button

UBAKA

Hey, my guy...wait!

The guy does not relent. The other clubber busy with the hooker just turns to the running Ubaka wondering why he is running after a young man in all white raising his hand to the sky. Ubaka has only got to the middle of the road when the man in white's finger presses down on the red button of his old Nokia phone...

Now the ground on which they stand shakes and trembles violently. The night is lit by an orange ball of flame coiling and recoiling with hate. The two go down involuntarily and shield their heads. Ubaka sees himself flying in the air. Aminu is already one leg inside the taxi when he does the igniting, so he clings to the chasis and let the violent eruption impact wear out before he slams the door shut. Down there the two nighters turn their heads towards the direction of the explosion. Ubaka passes out as he knocks his head on the tar.

The old cab driver turns to Aminu with shock. Aminu himself wears that look of shock. He allows the moment act to grip him.

AMINU

Oga...oga...abeg, abeg....drive
Drive...abi you nor value your
life!

The man ignites the car and zooms off while his hands and legs tremble. Aminu is worse off; he trembles violently.

AMINU (CONT'D)

Na so! I was only there less than
2 minutes before o.

He bursts into tears.

CAB DRIVER

Oga, dis night life nor
good...but wetin be dat sef,
bomb?

Aminu does not respond; he's too locked into his 'emotions'. The old cab driver shakes his head

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows63.

CAB DRIVER (CONT'D)

Oga, na to thank God o, you be
lucky person, gan ni.

AMINU

(with voice overtaken by
grief and tears, he
calls out)

Stop. Stop stop the car.

The old cab driver obeys and pulls up by the side of the road. Aminu gets out clutching himself together as he stops to regard the night club and its complex in flame from a good distance.

AMINU (CONT'D)

Allah hu akba!

MALEEK OOV

There's no Freedom in violence,
but chains. Every single thing we
do out of hate chains us more.
The best hate does in man is
motion for vengeance and
Vengeance makes us cheap, because
it is a distraction from our
private dreams and a deformation
of our individual essence.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT THE FRONT OF THE BURNING COMPLEX NIGHT

The morning light dawns on Ubaka. He is strapped on a stretcher as medics move him to a waiting ambulance. The sole survivor of the carnage watching the demolished club house now smoking. Tears roll down the his eyes as the scenes of the previous night with him and recalls the girls on the pole, the ones giving lap dance to guests. He recollects the lady he danced with, getting up to meet her half way across the floor, his romantic lines to her and her seductive peals of laughter as she follows him to the dance floor before dutch courage inspired him to do too much around her supple body, the dancing, the drinking bar. His tears go for the friends that have died in the blast. Now police sirens, and fire brigade's activities fill the place. He closes eyes.

WIPE FRAME TO:

EXT MALEEK'S LITTLE HALL DAY

It is a small gathering of rapt attentioned devotees. Maleek is speaking to them passionately with subdued voice and mood. Agatha and Joy is one of those gathered.

MALEEK

What is not done for humanity is cheap and what is cheap makes us slaves.

MIX TO:

EXT EARLY MORNING LAGOS STREET NIGHT

We see a woman balancing a bowl on her head crying her wares

BOY HAWKER

Moimoi ekpo...

WOMAN HAWKER

Ogi re....

PALMWINE SELLER

Fresh palmwine...

All plastic kegs strapped to a bicycle, cycles away. A yellow bus drives by with the conductor screaming his destinations with half asleep and half awake voice

BUS CONDUCTOR

Mushin Olosa...

Wide shot of the street as we now have the cycling palmwine seller, the ogi selling lady, the moimoi selling boy and the destitute each is oblivious of the others.

From a low angle of elevation the Nigerian flag in its newness flutters in the wind from a flagstaff.

MALEEK OOV

Marvelous intentions sealed up in the shadows!

Soldiers at the cantonment lower the flag to half mast

MALEEK

We thought what we got at the dawn of this nation was a country blessed with hopes...but there's never a country when its peoples are sealed up in shadows of self interest at the expense of the Universal Good.

FADE OUT.

INT AGATHA'S LIVINGROOM DAY

Agatha is holding a cigarette which has burnt all out to the stub. Cross legged body arching forward in deep thought as tears pour out of her large beautiful eyes ruining her makeup and mascara bleeding all onto her cheeks and cream blouse. Her friend is sobbing face down on a sofa, on the carpet floor is a newspaper and the headline reads

Lagos Night Club Bombing: White Brotherhood claims Responsibility

Beneath the caption is a gory image of death and devastation as charred bodies and rubble stick up here and there.

In agatha's mind are the scenes of the previous night, the guy whom she won on arm wrestling, the hearty cheers, the innocent crowd, the nude pole dancers, their clients receiving laps dances from the others waiting their turn to engage the pole. The TV is on somewhere in the house and the voices are angry and protesting.

DISCUSSANT 1 OOV

This act is dastardly and is condemnable. This is not Islam. This is not the Holy prophet's teaching. History has shown that western and Islamic educations have worked together for the modern world of today. Islamic and circular scholars have joined hands in building civilisation. How can any group wake up one day to say they're killing innocent people because they do not want western education? Who are they to decide for the masses?

DISCUSSANT2 OOV

I don't know what Alhaji Tafida is talking about connivance between western and Islamic education building civilisation, but what i know is that, and i agree with the alhaji there, this act is terrorist and must be condemned as such. My worry is how the Jonathan led administration is handling this matter with kid's glove. How can the SSS claim that they are going to de-radicalise them? Isn't that madness? For God's sake these miscreants are enemy combatants And must be so handled. They are enemies of the Nigerian state, period.

MODERATOR OOV

Isn't the White Brotherhood equal to MEND and other ethnic militants? Why would you consider the White Brotherhood...

DISCUSSANT 1 OOV

With all due respect Madam moderator, while I must ignore my colleague's snipe at me earlier, I must say that MEND fights for the constitutional rights of the Niger-Delta people. These rights are humane and practicable and in fact justified by the spirit of the constitution. But The White Brotherhood?! They represent no human interest. In fact they are fighting the Nigerian constitution which is secular. This constitution in spirit and letter respects all the religions of its peoples. I am a northerner and I can assure you that this sin called The white Brotherhood is hated by the common Northerners... as for you, my friend and colleague, is Saudi Arabia not home to Islam, which government in the east enjoys so much yoking with western (American) ways than the Saudis? Study the renaissance and know very well that...

DISCUSSANT2 OOV

Sorry, Alhaji, I meant no disrespect, but I don't care what role whatever culture plays in the history is civilisation; all I'm saying is the White Brotherhood is an enemy of this country. They've murdered innocent policemen, slaughtered soldiers up north, and now they dared to bring their madness to our Lagos??? Come On, is Lagos one of the Northern states they say they want Islamic education in? This is a ploy to divide Nigeria and I don't care o! If the northern people want to allow this evil separate them from Nigeria fine by me, but they should keep this madness from the South. We like our life the way it is and we just want our leaders to be leaders, not looters and liars whether circular or religious, they are all the same!

Agatha gets up and walks into the room and slams the TV shut. Looking out the window, she sees the gateman, Sanusi clutching his transistor radio to his ears while attending to a child buying chewing gum. She heads out of the room and out of the apartment.

Just then Joy gets up weak and mournful. Agatha's familiar war motion frightens her. So she follows her down the stairs and out there, she comes too late.

Sanusi sees her and promptly turns his attention to her.

SANUSI

Ah, madam Agatha, you well so?

That creates more madness in her. The expression from Sanusi is not intended to be an insult it's a shock to see her so badly altered. He is only showing concern, but he is mistaken. All Agatha sees is White Brotherhood and the time bomb. She sends a straight jab for his jaw and follows it with a series of irate kicks before her friend can reach her and wrap her entire frame all over her to stay her.

The man Sanusi is down in his own blood too startled for words. His nose, and mouth are all oozing blood.

AGATHA

Look at me...look at me very
well, when next you see me, run,
because na me go kill you before
you plant the next bomb! I...

The friend holds her down from the next attack. A lady
comes out of the house followed by a man both in their
fifties. They are alarmed at the picture.

LANDLORD

Agatha?

AGATHA

Oga Landlord, I am not sorry o!
We better kill these animals from
the north before they kill us all
o!

LANDLORD

What now, what has poor Sanusi
done?

AGATHA

Islamic Fundamentalist...White
Brotherhood, that is what you're
habouring here. You think he's
innocent? Until you wake up one
day and find yourself dead, your
family roasted with your house in
cinders then you'll know. Vermin!
That's what they represent.

The landlady takes a sad face to Agatha and then back to
Sanusi who is now being tended by her.

SANUSI

(terrified to death)

Oga, madam, I swear, I nor White
Brotherhood o, I be Muslim, I nor
kill somebody, the Koran nor gree
me do am...Allah forbid
killing...I nor kill, Allah!.

Everyone else believes poor Sanusi, but not Agatha who
already visualises him wearing a suicide bomber jacket
screaming Allahu Akbar before detonating.

The landlord orders his wife to take Sanusi away for
treatment while he holds on to Agatha supported by her
friend Joy.

AGATHA

You believe him, you believe him,
hei, God, you people don't know
what you're playing with o.

She breaks down in tears. The landlord understands her gloom and consoles her. He is moved to tears too. Agatha's friend takes an angry face after Sanusi not fully convinced herself that he is normal, but she cannot be so overt as Agatha.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.

LAGOS STREETS

DAY

A mob is on the rampage. Area boys have found a cause for war. Every house where there is a muslim security man is attacked, anyone with a sideboard resembling a muslim devotee is attacked. They do not go inside, they simply drag the muslim security man out and lynch him. The whole of Lagos is on fire over the matter. Some house owners are shielding their mai guards from attacks and in some cases the aggrieved mobs burst into some of such houses and ransacks them for their quarry.

A newspaper headline reads:

White Brotherhood Bombings: Angry Lagos Burns Sanity

Police vehicles can be seen on streets rescuing muslim mai guards and beggars on the streets. Maleek appears on TV to appeal for sanity in Lagos.

MALEEK OOV

This is what our enemies wanted from us: insanity. They struck us so we can kill ourselves and bring ourselves to their level. The Sanusis the Mai Guard, Iliasu the Okada rider, Sule the water seller, Mainasara the beggar and their families are not the enemies. Rather they are the very targets of our common enemy. Is it not time for us to get used to the fact that these killers of the innocents are not one of us? They are enemies of Nigeria and its peoples. Is it not time we got used to the fact that Religious fundamentalism, be it Islamic or Christian together with their sponsors are haters of the poor and the innocents of the north and south, east and west, all of us?

(MORE)

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

Do you not know that their fear is that when the northern talakawas are educated the way those of us in the south are, they would lose control of them and not have tools of violence? Fellow Lagosians, stop hunting your northern brothers and sisters, channel this anger against the White Brotherhood who have no feeling for brotherliness in their devilish souls. As for the last night's bombings and the bombings of the last seven days, I swear to you, they will pay. If government will not, we will seek out the perpetrators and make them pay hard.

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

Instead of persecuting the innocent, we should make it our duty to fish out these fellows and drag them to the law. We should keep our eyes open. We should be vigilant, these are not normal times. We must collaborate to protect our civilisation...Allah Hu Akbar!

We see that Agatha still very mournful is just stepping out of a taxi in front of an electronic shop when this broadcast is going on. Some passersby stop to watch the beloved governor rally them

Tears well up in her eyes again and she recalls beating Sanusi and quickly returns to the cab, shut the door and calls at the driver to move on. As the taxi revs off the cab driver turns to her via the rear view mirror

CAB DRIVER

Madam, na where we dey go?

AGATHA

Oga, just drive anywhere, I jus' tire.

Sobbing.

Looking concerned at her

Too overpowered by her tears and heartbreak, she simply replies heavily

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows71.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Oga, I nor know ooo.

Wipes her nose with a clean hanky after blowing deeply into it and promptly replaces it in her bag and fetches another fresh one out to wipe her eyes.

CAB DRIVER

Sorry, madam.

She does not say a word, but only acknowledges his sympathy with a raise hand.

CAB DRIVER (CONT'D)

This White Brotherhood thing na nonsense politics o, some people for north nor wan' southerners to be president, North Rule from 1960 to 1999 na only from 1999 to date naim south don rule wey fire dey burn so! Nigeria, which kain country our leaders dey build so?

Agatha feels a strong urge to correct him

AGATHA

Oga, I nor care who rule Nigeria, if una like make una employ devils from hell to rule una, dat one na una toro, but to dey kill innocent people wey nor get hand for una power fight na evil and God go punish all of una!

Now the driver turns a shocked face to Agatha wondering what he had done to qualify..but seeing her overpowered by tears stops his mouth. In anger, Agatha adds

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Dem kill my papa and my mama with their demon politics, scatter my family! Now na to kill people wey dey hussle to survive for the contry wey dem don suck dry! Ahhhh, I swear, e nor go better for una o!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A COLONIAL GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENT DAY

Need to consider set extension here and use of Railway compound at Ebutte Metta or Jos

The fluttering flag continues until we see it going up steadily on a flagstaff while the Union Jack beside it is descending with the night thick behind it. At the background we see fireworks and from the speakers we hear ululation, cheers and clapping and soon, a well orchestrated rhythm takes over, drowning the happy noises. It is a songless ensemble of typical Nigerian music accommodating instrumentations and patterns from the North Middle Belt, West, Midwest, South-East, and South-South. Camera tracks back to the road and we see a huge crowd of costumed dancers from all over cultural Nigeria dancing to a common rhythm in their respective cultural styles. Everyone has the miniature flag of the new nation on his head work. They are all in dazzling shapes and forms. The music and spectacle is intoxicating. Along the road the cheering is frenzied.

MALEEK OOV

The flag...Green-White-Green,
symbol of freedom and progress of
the new black nation, black as
the loam, fertile as it's known
struck history with hope. And the
joy was intoxicating! For the
first time there was this
deceptive conclusion that the
entire breadth and length of the
new State united as one in
celebration, was in unity dancing
towards progress. How deceived we
all were!

As the crowd of revelers journeyed through the happy street, a boy hardly nine years of age is caught by the camera lens sitting on the landing at the door mouth of a humble house along the road watching without feelings. His knees are locked together, his hands clasped together on the paired knee caps. His chin rests on them and watches as the dancing and glorying play on. One of the dancers doing an Efik gyration with the enchanting pleasure of a generation sets her eyes on him. Then the whole world stops for her. Though still dancing and looking and reading what is clearly written on the face of the boy, the light of the day has immediately departed from her face. The boy soon sights her and for the first time takes his eyes up to acknowledge a presence worth it. She is still dancing and her face is split into a mix of emotions, yet the timeless beauty does not depart.

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

I remember vividly the parties on our streets that fateful day. I struggled to join in it...but all the buttons in me refused to click in. Being not used to pretending, I surrendered to the sidon look attraction and then only then did I see the message of tomorrow which is today in the charade of that day. Were we really free on that day...I mean did we become a free state at the strike of 12 midnight on the 1st of October 1960? Did every corner of the space we came to know as Nigeria rise as one to accept the challenge of a new nation free under God? What about our impressive leaders of those early days? Did they... did they know what it meant to be impersonal in the name of nationalism? Did they envisage the today into which the children of that night have grown into complex adults? Were we truly free on that strike!

Up sound of a big bell.

Reels of our independence leaders as they walk past the screen full of life and candour. Freeze image and wipe frame to the individual faces of the revelers as the old anthem plays,

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

Nigeria we hail thee, our own dear native land...though tongues and tribes may differ in brotherhood we stand...Nigerians all are called to serve our sovereign motherland...

The anthem ends with tears in faces of the people who are all in state in attention to the song.

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

The price of national freedom is not paid in the emotions we feel in the anthem, it is not paid by kissing the flag and brandishing it. The price of national freedom is not paid when we stand attention to the totems of unity.

(MORE)

MALEEK OOV (CONT'D)

Free countries paid the price when they internalised their creeds of unity. They paid the price of their freedom when they willingly threw the strength of their individualism into the national pool of strengths and brewed up a national identity resplendent in glory and representing every single individual in that geographical space, rich or poor, high or low, male or female. A space where the standards are set blindly and whoever meets up to it gains the glory. Where were we?

The Efik dancer morphing into a more mature person breaks away from the tabloid group and passing through them comes to the foreground where the flag is held high by a AMINU in NYSC uniform. She raises her eyes to it and the entire costumes of all the onlookers transform to that of the late seventies, but the costumes of the dancers remain the same and in the middle of the flag is the Nigerian Coat of Arm. Overcome with emotions, the Efik dancer raises her voice and sings

EFIK DANCER

Arise, o compatriots...Nigeria's call obey...to serve our fatherland...with love and strength and faith...the labour of our heroes past shall never be in vain...to serve with heart and might...one nation bound in freedom...peace and unity...

The boy morphs into a more mature teenager rises slowly and walks towards the Efik dancer as she fixes her teary eyes on the fluttering flag.

MALEEK OOV

Four pillars were supposed to have held this country together: Unity and Faith; Peace and Progress, and over the years, because we failed to understand the intentions of our founding principles we sought and fought hard to ensure peace and ensure unity... great has been the casualties, great has been the separation...much has been the bloodshed...

Wipe frame to reels of the first coup, the pogrom, our civil wars, destructions from ethnic rivalries, coup wars and counter coup destructions, political killings and riots over song of teenager and Efik dancer rendered rather emotively

EFIK DANCER AND TEENAGER

Oh God of creation...direct our noble cause...guide our leaders right...help our AMINU the truth to know in truth and honesty to grow and living just and true and lofty height attain to build a nation where peace and justice shall reign

MALEEK OOV

All because we do not understand the core essence of our national creed. There's no peace, there's no unity without freedom...and With freedom comes equality and peoples welfare. Freedom is humanity living as gods because humanity is godliness and godliness is promoting that which promotes human dignity by striving to actualise the commoners' hope against all odds

Camera tracks through the still faces of the dancers and drummers whose faces now wear the form of the day...gloom and pains as the Observer voice rolls on till fade

WIPE FRAME TO:

INT. AN IKEJA NEIGHBOURHOOD NIGHT

Some people are gathered in an eatery watching the Maleek video play to its end.

MALEEK (ON TV)

Fellow Nigerians, we stand at the threshold of individual and national greatness...

CUT TO:

EXT. A NEIGHBOURHOOD IN MUSHIN NIGHT

People gathered before a repairer's TV screens watching just off the road as Maleek signs off

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows76.

MALEEK (ON TV)

We either unite as one unbeatable force and fight this disease of political rascality, and thoughtlessness masking as insurgency and religious fundamentalism, and give our children a future to be proud of, or allow hatred and vengeance consume us and fall apart as a cheap puppet held together by brittle bonds. Nigerians the choice is yours.

The flag flutters on the screen with a line

NIGERIA: THERE'S NO TOMORROW BUT NOW, ACT FAST.

FADE TO BLACK.

INTERIOR BATHROOM OF A PALATIAL ROOM NIGHT

Aminu is shaving his beard facing a gilded mirror hung on the wall above the wash basin. He can hear the voices of Topman and others rejoicing

AMINU

Turns a slow deliberate attention towards them, though he cannot see them from there. He hears Topman call his name out loud with glee

TOPMAN OOV

Aminu!

AMINU

Sala'm, Maigida!

CUT TO:

INT AN OPULENT LIVING ROOM DAY

Topman does not respond, but walks away to join a group of four who now settles to a meal on the floor. Topman, big and tall in his green damask kaftan is resplendent in beauty and joy. His sideboards are matted and full. The boy plants his piercing eyes into his dull and distant pair. At the background Topman and his people are raving around jubilant. One in particular is most exultant, he is Bukokhuo.

TOPMAN

It's been a good day, brother,
come let's eat.

AMINU OOV

I'm not hungry, Maigida.

They exchange worried glances.

BUKOKHUO

(sourly to the topman in
low tone)

Brother, any fear from him?

TOP MAN

He'll eventually, someday, soon
earn his proper place in the
jihad. He's just a boy with too
much western education in him.

JOSHUA

(earnestly to top man)

But how long will it take to get
him there? Maigida, his mood, his
mood. I am worried.

TOPMAN

Sala'm, brother. Being disowned
by a loving parents is not an
easy burden to bear.

Lowering his voice now and all heads join around his

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

See the bright side. The deeper
he sinks into despair the better
for us all...when life means
nothing to him martyrdom will
enter him and the greater glory
will follow. Losing his family is
the first step. The second, he
has just taken...what was the
casualty from that club bombing
again, eighty three?

They nod with relishing approval, then a sad scowl crosses
his face

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

We lost six great warriors to the
cause last night! May Allah
accept their sacrifices

ALL

Allah hu Akbar!

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows78.

TOPMAN

How's Maya doing?

BUKOKHUO

She'll live. She's a strong,
sharp woman..wish we had many
more like her!

TOPMAN

You tell me!

He is too happy to concentrate on one issue for long. He turns to Bukokhuo and slaps him on his back cheerfully

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Now, you see, your ward does us
proud.

Bukokhuo manages a sheepish smile

BUKOKHUO

It was your grace and patience,
Maigida.

Then restlessly happy as he is, he turns to Aminu just emerging as they settle down to the sumptuous meal.

Aminu, who does not hear their discussion, turns a sullen look to them and uses a towel to dry his face as he finishes shaving and steps out of the room. Now he looks much different. Wondering what he is thinking, Topman speaks up to him.

TOPMAN

Aminu, now you're a prized
brother, therefore you need to
lie low for a while. I strongly
suggest you stay underground
until we find it absolutely
necessary to venture out again.
Now come join us, you have to be
hungry after losing all those
hairs!

All burst out laughing.

Aminu shakes it up and rises and snails towards them.

The others exchange conspiratorial glances

CUT TO:

EXT. THE RUINS OF THE CLUB HOUSE DAY

Ubaka is looking around at the ruins of his place of primary assignment.

He is soaked in tears and sweat under the noon day sun. He recollect the day he saw the place from the bus that brought him into Lagos, how he asked the driver to stop and the drama that ensued. He recalls the live band playing in the open, he recalls the lovely young ladies in their skimpy clothes serving drinks and foods to customers and taking order. He recalls the ragged guy who seneraded the clients in his old, time battered NYSC outfit who worked thus as a car wash ground overseer by day and collects gate takings at the strip club at nights. He recollects the last time he saw his face as he ran down the stairs after the strange youth with beards. The fellow hailed him and pointed the direction the bearded youth in jeans went that day. He recollects the girls dancing at the pole, the others giving lap dance to customers and the enthralled customers some dancing with the strippers waiting their turn to go on to the stage and others just drinking and gisting. He bursts into an uncontrollable bout of sobbing until he drops bewildered sundering to darkest gloom.

From somewhere within the ruins, a powerful male voice rises from the ground and approaches him.

MALEEK

In the name of the unborn
generations of Nigeria, we
condemn this evil.

Then a chorus of mixed sex voices follow

VOICES

Oh, Lord, in truth and in spirit,
we absolve our country and her
children of this sin.

He staggers to look with a tear-fogged pair of eyes.

MALEEK

In the Name of our fathers living
and dead, we denounce this evil

VOICES

Oh, Lord God, we pray that the
blood avenger should pass over
our breed and barns.

Ubaka rises to his weak feet, uncertain of his sight as a group of men and women all dressed white walk up towards him in the ruin. All eyes are dripping tears. At the lead position is a slender figure towering to almost 6 feet, bearded and clean looking. He looks fresh, sedate...but woeful now in tears.

A sharp voice from behind them cracks the peace of their rhythm.

MAYA

Hey! Hey!! Hey!!!

Not yet able to deal with the 'apparition' before him, he staggers, a confused man in a stupor to the direction of the new voice behind him. Then for the first time, he notices that a big white banner is actually spread across the ruins from end to end.

The image of two plain clothed humans, one female the other male confront him. The male has his hands on his waist looking up at the banner. Ubaka cannot tell what he is reading.

The female, obviously the leader of the two is climbing up to join them. She is well structured and obviously very fit and yet curvaceous. He thinks she should be in the beauty business, rather than national security. Whatever it is making her climb up to them does not make him happy at all.

MAYA (CONT'D)

What's all this?

Then she identifies Ubaka.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Ha, Ubaka, can you please explain to me what this is all about?

MALEEK

(voice unaffected by the interruption)

In the name of a redeemed and reborn nation, we call for justice against the evil that wrecks us so.

The two: Maya and Ubaka turn as one towards the group at the same time as the latter tries to organise himself for a verb.

VOICES

Holy Creator of the True and Eternal Light, we cleanse our land and heal our wounds.

ALL

Amen.

The Maya turns to Ubaka who also turns to her then together they turn their faces to the group.

MALEEK

Sala'm, lady and gentleman.

MAYA

It'd make so much sala'm to me and your people should you evacuate my site now. This is a crime scene, damn it!

Maleek takes a sad survey of the entire ruin until he stops at the gate where he sees a Toyota car parked, with the other agent perched against it eyes fixed on them intently. Maleek sighs heavily and turns to Ubaka

MALEEK

Your name is Ubaka, brother?

UBAKA

I... yes, but I'm not your brother.

Controlling herself with superhuman effort Maya grinds out

MAYA

Please, get out! Now.

The man Maleek signals to his group of twelve and they immediately begin to move out. But he does not yield a spot of his ground.

Watching them leave clean, she turns to him with a cold steel pair of eyes

MAYA (CONT'D)

So...you're not leaving?

MALEEK

If you couldn't stop the carnage, you think you'd rather stop the healing?

Maya's mouth hangs open with shock born of deep anger. Maleek looks at her with feelings of affection too deep for words. He stretches his hand towards Ubaka and turns slowly towards him

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Peace. Relief. Joy. Are yours, Ubaka. Let the spirit of grace and Love Eternal heal your wounds, brother.

Ubaka finds himself losing his grip on his feet. The man Maleek swiftly covers the space between them and have him fall on him. He wraps him arms round him, holds him against his well scented clothed body and hugs him tenderly.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Peace, my brother.

He allows him to sleep off and then slowly brings him down. Both Maya and her partner who has raced in to join them as the confrontation began stop stupefied at the occurrence.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Which is graver, officers, to let
the carnage happen, or to fail at
healing the wounds from the
carnage?

The two remove their eyes from the peacefully sleeping
Ubaka and then face Maleek weakly.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Our land needs healing, our
children need hope, our mothers
need consolation. What should we
do? Peace be with you, friends.

So saying, the man walks away unhurried, with all the
simple majesty of a saint.

The other two watch him leave, perplexed.

CUT TO:

EXT. BALCONY OF A PALATIAL HOUSE NIGHT

It is sunset in Lagos. Aminu is outside at the balcony the
day's issue of the daily in his left hand, but his eyes are
fixed on the setting Sun. The headline of the paper reads

EIGHTY-TWO ROAST IN BROTHERHOOD FIRE, FIVE
BROTHERHOOD MEN DIE, ONE ARRESTED IN TWO OTHER FOILED
ATTEMPTS ON LAGOS

On his face is an admixture of conflicting feelings. As he
looks at the setting Sun, Top Man whose skin seems as if it
were polished in its light glow joins him. He is obviously
exultant and boisterous. He beams with satisfaction beyond
words as he looks around with bliss written all over his
face before he perches his weight arm-wise on the opulent
banister. His eyes scanning the space beneath him as human
and vehicular traffic pass by on the lush green Victoria
Island streets.

An air of reverence overshadows Aminu at the appearance of
the eminent scholar and holy man. He promptly removes his
arms from the banister, how dare he pose...

The holy man's arm goes round his neck with a close hug
following. Holding him on both shoulders as if inspecting
him for some holy dust rubbing off on him from the recent
feat, he asks

TOPMAN

Now, now, now, brother Aminu, how
do you feel inside?

The younger man is mortified with self depreciation and
abject humility

AMINU

Humbled, Maigida.

The man's face made particularly significant by the
unmistakable dark beard is alit with a fond smile

TOPMAN

Boy! You must be kidding me!

He let him go momentarily as he raves around with joy
inexplicable. Then he faces him again

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

My God, have you been following
the news?

Aminu's eyes go swiftly to the paper on his left hand and
as if that were the cue the holy man also sees it and
snatches it from him. He looks at the headline and beams
with pleasure. Then turning it to him he pursues

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Did you read this?

Silence. Aminu just bows his head sheepishly.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Brother, Aminu, very few can
boast of this holy carnage you
have managed on behalf of Allah!
The only difference between you
and the blessed ones is the
injustice of your being alive to
see it...

He relents briefly. Placing a hand on Aminu's shoulder he
looks away with an air of reverence and then adds

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, someday, you'll earn
the uncommon honour of going in
the blaze so you have the glory
of your deeds first hand and
never leave to struggle on this
blasted side of life.

Aminu bows his head with a slight nod acquiescing. The man
nods and heads out back into the house. Then he stops
halfway and turning to him, asks

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows84.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Why're you out here when your
brethren are in there
celebrating?

Just then a sleek state-of-the-art convoy drives through
the gate into the large compound. Aminu turns back to the
holy man and makes a bland face

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

I have to leave now...but a word
of caution, brother, never you
ruin your service to Allah with
satanic remorse. Allah despises
regrets in His holy war.

He slaps his shoulder vigorously

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

This is a jihad, brother and
you're fighting right!

So saying, he leaves.

Aminu nods, inspired and then calls after his departure

AMINU

Maigida, I am ready for more.

TOP MAN OOV

You're indeed, I know you're,
soldier!

CUT TO:

INT. A POWERFUL MAN'S OFFICE NIGHT

It is a serious meeting situation. The long desk is
occupied by five powerful men and two ladies. The Nigerian
Flag, Coat of Arm, Crest of the SSS amongst other insignia
of power are strategically located. The room is spacious
and furnished with expensive leather seats.

At the head of the table is a sedate looking man in his
late fifties. He is in a foul mood as the look he throws
around the faces in the room around his table can clearly
explain. All the people have note taking gadgets in front
of them on which they tap every now and then.

DIRECTOR

How did this happen again! Were we sleeping?

All wear a glum look.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh, no you don't understand me, friends...

As if lamenting and attacking himself at the same time he explodes slamming the table with his right hand

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

How could we allow this to happen...in Lagos of all places! What happened to our assets?

All is hushed

One of them a lady clears her throat to talk. The man nods her on to speak.

AD OPERATIONS

Sir...

She looks around everyone and then continues

AD OPERATIONS (CONT'D)

We regret this, but it could have been worse, had our assets on ground not been compromised somehow. There were three operations at a time, only two discovered, the third was hidden from our assets.

The man looks around the group with this heavy emotion. He stops at the obvious point. The Director of Operations

..

DIRECTOR

And...the ones our assets were involved in failed, but this all because they were not aware of them?

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Yes, sir.

The man taps that on his ipad.

DIRECTOR

And these assets...where're they
now...you don't think they should
be pulled out now?

The Director looks up as a storm takes over his head

DD OPERATIONS

actually, boss, it's dicey...

The Director rises abruptly and everyone else rises with
him.

DIRECTOR

Dicey!

The director angles his head, looks from the Deputy
Director, Operations to the Assistant Director Operations
who are connected in the matter like a siamese twin. He
nods and rises.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh, quite! Whatever you do, end
this carnage, fast!
This meeting is over, ladies and
gentlemen.

He rises and heads out towards a door.

As everyone files out, with the Deputy Director of
operations and his assistant exchange glances, the
director's voice calls out.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Operations, please. In my office
now.

The other directors have this look of I-don't-envy-you on
their faces as they are pleased to be released from the
boiler.

The two exchange tired glances. The lady's hand goes for
the man's hand and squeezes encouragingly as they rise and
head towards the office

The director does not allow them even shut the door before
he explodes

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Lagos is burning, I can smell the
bodies, the President is drenched
in the blood and Nigerians are
talking.

He beckons them closer and they obey. The man speaks with a rage inspired low tone

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Every washed and unwashed mouth
is speaking ill of His Excellency
my President

The two exchange glances as if asking 'who doesn't know that?' Then the big man screams almost bursting their ear drums

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
And this President will not only
have my desk, he'll have my head!

The two maintain a calm composure.

The man does a silent verbless walk round the room and then perches on his desk on one arse looking at the space before him, he asks

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
How far have we gone...see, I
need the whole details, I want
the shape, the size, the smell of
the whole story.

Now the two are disturbed a little. Not that they don't trust the boss, but they are not willing to be trusty at the moment; anybody can be anything these days. The director squints with what looks like a rising rage and quickly, the DDO finds his voice.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS
We're closer than ever, boss.

The director rises on that.

DIRECTOR
Have I suddenly become a prophet,
or is it that I've heard this
before...many times?

The two operatives exchange glances. And answer in unison

DDO/ADO
this time it is different, sir

The director nods them on.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS
This is an onion operations, sir

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows88.

DIRECTOR

Oh of course, o yes of course!
Right there in the Kitchen where
one fruit escapes their notice.
Two out of three is not bad, many
would say, right?

The lady turns a surreptitious look to her boss who returns
the look before responding

DD OPERATIONS

one missing fruit is as bad as
two others found, sir

The director looks from the lady to the man with a slight
frown

DIRECTOR

Maya is one of our
best...where's she in all of
these?

The lady clears her throat and moves her finger plastered
on her hip to her boss from the prying eyes of the boss.

The Deputy Director, Operations who seems taken aback by
the twist reaches for a pack of cigarette in his jacket
pocket and holds it out to the boss. The boss waves it off
impatiently and gives him the permit to smoke. Relieved,
the man lights a stick and uses the time to explain.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS

(Turning a recollecting
face to his assistant)
Yes, Maya!

AD, OPERATIONS

Yes, boss...Maya...

The director has had enough of the fooling.

DIRECTOR

I need the full file of her
assignments in the last one month
within the hour.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS

Boss, I'll dig in and find out if
her handler would comply, sir.

ASSITANT DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS

Yes, boss...

DIRECTOR

And who's this...agent Fashanu?

The two operatives nods eagerly

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS
And he can be some shit...

DIRECTOR
Well, then, send him in now.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS
He's out in Mali, boss.

He returns to his desk and that is enough for the two to consider themselves dismissed.

CUT TO:

INT. A PALATIAL BEDROOM NIGHT

Aminu comes out of the bathroom in his shower robe using a towel to wipe his ears and neck when he suddenly stops at the sound of talking.

On his desk by the bed is an ipad playing a video. He looks in to see that some personalities are gathered in a conference style fashion in a dark section of the house he cannot recognise. They are not more than 6 men and women. They have this aura of silent, but mean power. Aminu only three of them: Topman, Bukokhuo and Joshua. The rest are unknown except two or three he sees on newspapers and TV. One of them, a very respectable government woman, is speaking

WOMAN
The government has decided to deal by offering you all amnesty. We want the bombs to stop. Taking it to Lagos was taking it too far, Maigida.

BUKOKHUO
What're the terms, Hajia? Our client would like to know, please

WOMAN
What does your client want? And..please, please, be realistic and reasonable

Topman fixes his hard eyes on the delegation while stroking his white cat in silence.

BUKOKHUO
Our client is always reasonable.

DELEGATE 1

Please, let us have proof of it.
Please, speak

BUKOKHUO

GEJ, must not contest in the next
General Elections.

DELEGATE 2

What...

Topman's look to the man is deadly and he simmers as the
lady, leader of the government delegation, pinches him down

WOMAN

Please, kindly continue, sir

BUKOKHUO

(eyes hard and hot on
the delegate 2)

We will name who becomes the next
President, Senate President,
deputy Senate President, his
Vice, and deputy Speaker of the
House and the PDP and all their
machinery must support whomever
we pick. They must win the
elections. 2, the Federal
Government will pay our
Brotherhood the sum of 100
billion Naira for our loses and
sufferings in the last three
years of struggle. This payment
must be done within the next 6
weeks with the first transfer of
50 billion payable on or before 7
days from today. 3, in line with
your so-called amnesty, none of
our members in the struggle shall
suffer any reprisal and shall be
integrated into the national life
as free and worthy citizens
deserving of all rights and
privileges and shall be allowed
to do their chosen duties to the
nation thereafter without
molestation or castigation. 4,
all persons arrested, or jailed
while serving the Brotherhood
MUST be released with immediate
effect as a sign of goodwill that
our offer has been accepted. We
shall, on our own part, cease all
hostilities across the nation.
These are our conditions.

The government side is openly livid at the offer. The leader smiles pairing her fingers on her thighs angling her head to a sad side. She sighs and looks up the other party with much self control

WOMAN

Is that it, Maigida?

Topman rises to signal the end of the discussion.

TOPMAN

My men will see you off, Hajia

WOMAN

I expected a more reasonable set of conditionalities.

TOPMAN

Tell me, Hajia, which of the conditions is not reasonable, that our clients are willing to deal and stop making this country ungovernable for your leadership, or that they're allowing you leave here alive? Which?

WOMAN

You will not threaten me, or my government, Maigida! Do not take the peace-loving nature of this administration for a weakness!

Silence, a measuring silence reigns.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Senator Lasaki, you want me to go to our President and tell him that you'd rather have blood shed than make peace in the name of the people of Nigeria?

Too angry to speak, he raises a hand and armed men emanate from nowhere ready to hurl the delegation out.

TOPMAN

Your President will be my President when he accepts my clients' conditions! As of now, you're common enemies insulting their hospitality! Get them all out of here!

The video ends. A moment of black is soon replaced by another: Topman and Joshua are naked in a sauna kissing and grabbing at each other. Bukokhuo comes into the picture carrying a tray of drinks for the three of them.

Bukokhuo joins in the sauna taking off his shower coat and resumes stroking Topman on the back. Joshua lights a cigar for Topman who takes it and begins to puff it and with the other hand carries a glass of drink. He is being treated to tender royal touches by the men he knows as his comrades in the struggle. He turns to Joshua and they engage in a deep French kiss.

Aminu can no longer look, he sweeps the ipad onto the floor in rage and raves in deep agony. He slumps in tears when he turns to the side, newspapers that litter the floor takes his attention. Their screaming headlines now begin to unsettle him. He shudders with dread and screams in Arabic

AMINU
Allahhhhhhhhhhhhh help
meeee!!!!!!!

The rage takes him and he upturns everything in the room.

Just then, Maya walks in. Then he directs his rage at her by first throwing the ipad at her with all the force he can muster, but it misses her by whiskers, not because she evades for she does not see it coming. Now ready seeing that he misses on that, he rushes at her with a straight charge, she evades him, but he breaks free from her attempt to pin him from behind, and sends her and elbow hook to the jaw, she catches him by the elbow and in one swift move, pins him to the floor face down with her knee on his spine.

MAYA
If you want to do anything useful
with your miserable life you will
listen closely to me now.

AMINU
You all are fake, liars! Thieves,
murderers for
moneyyy...moneyyyy!!!!

He cries as if about to tear his own throat to shreds.

AMINU (CONT'D)
You made me kill those people for
money.....

MAYA
I'm going to leave you now. And I
swear it if you try any move at
me again, I'll kill you and I
mean that, 'kill' you. I don't
care how much Senator lasaki, or
Maigida or whatever you call him,
values you.

Silence, but the last line delivered with so much disrespect for the name stops him and sends him thinking.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows93.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Aminu, do we have an
understanding on this?

Nothing.

She lets go of him and watches him from a corner.

Aminu does not leave the floor, but sprawls out on it
crying, lamenting

AMINU

Are there no better ways of
making money and acquiring power?

Maya finds herself feeling disgusted at the young man and
shakes it off

MAYA

Go, tell that to Maigida and
anyone around and I will gladly
pull the trigger that ends your
miserable life. Or you listen to
me carefully.

She sits on the bed watching him closely as he begins to
rise a shock spreading through his face.

DISSOLVE TO:

50. EXT- INT

NIGHT

As the sun sets we see Fidelia in a poor neighbourhood in
an uncompleted building. She is now carrying a big cartoon
on her head. Making her way through a maze of cardboard
setups. Then we hear a harsh cough coming from a corner.
She gets to a spot where her little brother curls up in
foetal posture on a flat wood. She quietly puts the board
down and pulling out a plastic bowl of rice and beans, two
plastic spoons, a bottle of Coke and six packs of
pure(sachet) water, she gently taps the boy awake. The boy
rises with a spring.

JUDE

Ah, you don't come?

FIDELIA

(Stops and turns a cold face to
him)

The boy quickly corrects himself

JUDE

Oh, have you returned?

FIDELIA

Some food for you...

She stops him as he tries to go straight for the food.

JUDE

Sorry, sister, water..I'll drink water first.

Then the boy's eyes notice the big carton. He is overjoyed.

JUDE (CONT'D)

Ooh, sister, you were able to get it...

He rushes to it, admiring it with extreme gratitude as if it were a new car she just bought.

The boy turns to her sister who has been watching him as he begins to eat.

JUDE (CONT'D)

Eat na.

FIDELIA

Please, eat.

JUDE

Sorry, sis, I stand corrected...Please, eat.

FIDELIA

How was school today, big boy?

She settles in to join in the food.

JUDE

Not bad. Thanks for your help at the home work, the score was high. I think you should think twice about staying out of school...

FIDELIA

Shut up and eat... you'll study and I'll work. Ok?

The boy looks at her for a curious while and then shrugs. Turning his face away from her he coughs some more and then a prolonged bout of sneezing follows.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
Have you finished the vitamin c
and folic acid?

Still sneezing, the boy nods affirmative. Then she realises that she has been too careless not to have bought more.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
Forgive me, big boy...I promise
to buy you more tomorrow.

JUDE
My class teacher says if I should
eat the greens like lettuce,
cucumber I could overcome the
cold...

FIDELIA
That's true, but...they're just
too expensive for us now; three
days of lettuce and cucumber
could give you one month of those
pills. But, don't worry, by month
end, we'll earn our first salary
then we can afford them

The boy nods again looking at her. He leans closer to her and kisses her on the cheek. Just as she is wondering what it's all for, he says...

JUDE
Thanks for bringing me the
bed...at least for a while...I be
sleeping on this hard wood again

She laughs heartily

FIDELIA
Then you have a lot of that to
give me tonight, big boy...see
what more I got you...

She displays him a long blue wrapper.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
You always asked for a blue cover
cloth...here it is. Got a
generous dash today from a
customer so...I bought this for
you, my prince

The boy simply stops. She drops the spoon and turns to her after a long frozen look at the cloth. Fidelia watches tears roll down the boy's cheeks.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
Come here, come here, boy...

She holds him tightly close. She moves the food aside and concentrates her affection on the boy whose eyes bleed tears now.

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
It is all well, big boy...

JUDE
The bomb...

That startles Fidelia. She starts and pulls him off to look at his face.

JUDE (CONT'D)
Are we safe?

She cannot find the words to respond to him; she is not ready for it.

JUDE (CONT'D)
Everyone in school said the muslims are planning to divide Nigeria, because the President is not a muslim and that if the South does not agree they will bomb everywhere. The muslims in our school have stopped coming, because everybody is fighting them...I don't believe that all muslims are bad, Kafayat is not bad, but she no longer comes to school

She does not know where the anger comes from, she holds him farther apart and shakes him vigorously.

FIDELIA
Stop spreading hopeless rumours.
Nobody is dividing Nigeria.

The boy is startled at the rage from his sister

JUDE
Why do you care whether Nigeria is divided or not? Since the muslims and the British united Nigeria what has Nigeria done for anyone? Driving poor people from government houses they sell to their people...what did they do with all the money sef? And then daddy and mummy... all of them die slowly in pains... Abeg joor!

Fidelia pulls him closer, and begins to tap him on his back, silent.

Looking into a sad space for a long long time silent and sad, tears coursing down her cheeks until the boy sleeps off. When she speaks she does so to herself

FIDELIA

Nigeria may not have done anything for us, but the sound of a united Nigeria is good to my ears. And... Little brother...

She looks down to him and finds that he has slept off on her breasts. She continues all the same

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

I've read many articles which say the muslims have nothing to do with these bombings. Some even say it is bad politicians....so When your friends tell you it's the muslims planting the bombs to split Nigeria, tell them I told you, muslims are peaceful people, but bad politicians, who don't know Allah, or His Prophets or His Holy Quran are the ones doing us damage.

She slowly and tenderly lays him to sleep on the new 'bed' and covers him with the new wrapper. She strokes his head slowly, tenderly as she hums a soft song. Then the blind old beggar's voice comes back to her

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

'What's it you do weell?'

She looks away to the rechargeable lamp corner of the room and...

MIX TO:

FLASHBACK INT. A MIDDLE CLASS LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

The apartment has a leatherette three and two seaters with two single seaters in the middle section, while farther down left, is a section marked off by a blue curtain stretching from slightly above the lintel level to the floor, left to right. Beyond the curtains is a dining set: four leatherette upholstered wooden chairs set around a formica topped four legged dining table. On the table is a white taffeta table piece covering it and draping six to nine inches off the sides. Arranged neatly in the middle of the table are a big plastic body flask, a salt, sugar and milk pots made of the same design and colour as the flask, a family size oval tin can, similar sized Nido Milk can, a packet of saint louis Sugar, a pack of Top Tea all nicely arranged on a clean white plastic tray. Beside the tray is a device from which spoons, knives and forks hung neatly.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows98.

And on the space between the tray and the cutlery holder is a heap of blue napkins neatly folded in their spotless cleanliness.

The sound of a sewing machine droned from the right end of the room behind the three seater. There we find an image of a happy middle aged lady sowing with an old singer machine with little Fidelia of 8 helping with some hemming at a corner. The woman wiping perspiration from her tanned face, turns a loving smiling face to her.

DEFOCUS TO

THE PRESENT SAME AS BEFORE: THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING ROOM

A teary Fidelia rests her head on her little brother's hip

FIDELIA

Thanks for today, Lord.

Sound of laughter takes her attention towards a corner and a blissful smile slits her sweet teary face as the image fully manifests...

DEFOCUS TO

EXT. OF THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING

EARLY HOURS

Fidelia leads half asleep- half awake Jude by the hand to a corner by the uncompleted building where she had stationed a bucket of water the previous night. She averts her face as the boy undresses for a bath. They're both giggling at each other as the boy keeps insisting that she should look further away. She guards the way as he has his bath. Then he finishes and hands her the bar of soap he just used. Her sponge has always been around her neck. Now it is his turn to keep the watch as she, like a full snake stepping out of its old skin, makes her charming way out of her night dress. The boy's face is fully turned from her. We see her shoulders up as she scrubs her body with the foamy sponge. Someone stirs somewhere close by within the building and the two fling their alert faces towards the direction and then that is all.

MIX TO:

INT. THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING LIVING ROOM EARLY HOURS

Camera pans on close up of the scanty clothes lying on a wooden surface close by until it ends on a tilt up of them now dressing up.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows99.

The boy is in his full school kits, while Fidelia sits in her skirt and just a camisole wearing her light, earth make up using the mirror held by one hand. The boy stands just admiring her with a distant look.

MIX TO:

INT THE SAME DARKNESS IN THE ROOM NIGHT

It is night again...the music stops suddenly. The only illumination in that cold room a halogen lamp on the fence of a house two compounds away. Fidelia darts up at the unaccustomed sound around. It is a tattered boot leg approaching very close to where she is lying down with her brother who is fast asleep. The big carton had not been got. A big finger goes to a thick lipped mouth with the hush sound following as the big man's face enters their composition space. Her eyes fly open with dread a low whimper escapes her mouth and then uses her own hand to cover her mouth at the order of the mean looking man in near rags. She can't see his face because his torchlight is full beam on her face.

FIDELIA

Who're you...what do you want?

MALE

Shhhhhh.

FIDELIA

We don't have food, we don't have money

MALE

Shhhh

FIDELIA

(hysterically now)

What do you want from us!

MALE

(menacingly)

Remove your cloth.

FIDELIA

(face in the beam of light)

What!

A sharp sound of a palm against a face rends the night air. Following this is a yelp and a sudden hush of Fidelia.

A movement is heard close by...the boy has wakened. Fidelia notices it and the torchlight momentarily leaves her face for the boy who sits bolt up now trying to acquire his orientation...Fidelia utilises the space, but the man is just too fast for her.

He uses the torchlight to hit her on her face and promptly sends a right blow to the face of the boy who passes out with a dull grunt. Before she knows it, the man is down on his knees between her legs, big hand over her mouth with a dead grip. Eyes rilling with bitter tears now, she submits to the rapist's onslaught as one of his knees prises her tighs apart most gruffly. She just lays there arms spread out. As the man begins to undo his ropes and pull down his tattered pants with the other hand, her eyes steal a look into his instrument and all she sees is black depth. A huge horror claims her face then she does the most unexpected: her left knee goes up with an unbelievable speed and force causing the man to crash over her head to the wall behind her. With the speed and stealth of a wild cat she rises and charges at the man and slams her bare foot on his face, groin, tighs , abdomen screaming at the same time horror in her head

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

Ha! Ha! Beast! Beast!

The other neighbours in the uncompleted building roused from their sleeps troop into their corner and find that she has almost messed up the rapist as the man tries to rise and fall back from every blow she is delivering with so much force and angst.

MIX TO:

INT. THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING ROOM DAY

Shot of the boy lying down with a plaster on the corner of his eye and Fidelia, a bandage on her head, a visible cut on her upper lip, sits close to him smiling down to him and singing with a dazzling smile on her face with her eyes glinting with immeasurable love as the boy slowly sinks into an overpowering pull to sleep.

MIX TO:

INT. THE PRESENT. THE UNCOMPLETED BUILDING NIGHT

Fidelia has soaked her brother's hip cloth with tears

Overpowered by grief and sleep she barely mutters

FIDELIA

For taking us this far, Lord,
thank you.

She sleeps off

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A PALATIAL, NON-PRETENTIOUS LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The entire place is white from the immaculate floor tiles to the cosy Italian leather seats, to the wall coating, drapes and all. The LCD screen on the wall, the music system close to it all is white. At the bar, also white, Maleek turns to the seated, legs tucked in Agatha and her friend Joy. Maleek manages to balance three thick tumblers reflecting their liquid contents with ice and lime.

The look of tender grace on Maleek's face is incomparable with the lost and woeful look on Agatha's. Joy is sympathetic of her friend hence the line of tear that runs and drops down her supple cheek. Maleek says nothing and drops the glasses on their trembling hands. In the face of Joy is an aura of awe for the man she sees as a prophet of God.

Maleek takes a seat directly opposite them and a soft smile lights up his face.

AGATHA

You've said nothing, Maleek.

Silence, Maleek is inspecting his drink with the sudden interest of an excited child seeing the drink for the first time.

MALEEK

You know, in the last few weeks, I taste anything and it seems there're new flavours added to them every new time. Are things around me changing, or is it I who change?

The two ladies take their shocked eyes to him and then exchange glances of ones lost.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Yes, you lost family...

He smiles to himself and then goes for another sip. He shuts his eyes with deeply feeling of pleasure coursing through his entire being coming from his face.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Bless You LORD for the grace to enjoy your Universe...

The two ladies decide to have a go at their own drinks, but they cannot feel the same way as Maleek

MALEEK (CONT'D)
(eyes still closed)
So how does it taste...any
feelings of rapture, my dears?

The ladies look at each other questioningly as if either is
losing out in the feeling and then turning back to him
shake their heads

BOTH
Normal/just there.

Nodding knowingly Maleek smiles

MALEEK
Exactly.

They exchange glances again and Maleek divides them
immediately

MALEEK (CONT'D)
From what you told me, this
sister of yours is of a slender
built, good to behold, almost
feisty and a darling from within?

Nodding Agatha and Joy make to speak, but his next line
stops them

MALEEK (CONT'D)
Purge yourself of guilt and sad
premonitions and what you deeply
seek will come to you.

That is like a slap to their faces. They swallow hard with
a grunt

AGATHA
I need my family, Maleek!

MALEEK
Be worthy of them and you'll have
them, right now, they're in the
hollow of His Palm, He Keeps them
as safe as they feel they can be,
as provided for as they feel they
can be, still they're growing
from grace to grace...ha, the
best of all is she is learning to
depend on the Universe of God.

He opens his eyes and like a sun shining through a wet
foliage, his eyes light upon Agatha

MALEEK (CONT'D)
Not they, but it's you who need
help.

(MORE)

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Purge your soul of dead thoughts,
free your heart of hatred piled
up over the years against any
conceivable segment of humanity
and government, put aside your
resentment...let your old self
die, Agatha then you'll find you
deserve a happy life and your
family will come back. Love,
Child, Love, you need LOVE, or
die.

Maleek rises.

Agatha in tears rises, too.

AGATHA

Did you say they're alive and
well, Maleek...did you say so,
really?

She locks her eyes in his hoping to hear him reaffirm it

MALEEK

This is not only from the eye of
the spirit, I too, have had my
eyes on the pair of whom you
speak...I have always blessed
them with my soul everyday
since...

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK EXT A MODERN LAGOS ROADSIDE DAY

It's a lazy morning with a brilliant sun punctuating the sound of her footsteps. She is wearing a long cotton skirt, holding her little brother by the hand. The boy is spotting a smart school uniform and strapping his backpack. '*Dreams Never die*' instrumental plays at the background. Across the road from them is Maleek in a change of outfit watching them with casual interest from inside a leather interior car. He leans against the door and is busy feasting on some ripe bananas with the groundnuts flying up and into his mouth from the cup of his hand every time he takes a luscious bite of the creamy fruit.

The usual Lagos yellow bus comes to a stop in front of them. The boy urges her to bend low, she does with an expectant smile on her face and the boy plants a kiss on her cheek and then dashes off to the bus. She breaks into a musical, hearty laugh.

The boy climbs onto the bus and then turns to her with a bye bye wave. She returns it still laughing.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK: EXT. FRONT OF AN EATERY DAY

Maleek is at this point coming out from an eatery with a bottle of water. As he unscrews the cork and sends it on a trip to his mouth...something stops him. His eyes open wide with shock...then fear...then trepidation and finally he screams out running towards camera eyes wide apart, nostrils expanding. Swishpan to:

The other side of the road. It is Fidelia running onto the road without even looking left or right. She crosses causing commotion for on coming traffic on the lane she just beat and entering the second lane forcing on-coming cars to screech off her in panic.

Maleek heaves a sigh of relief when he sees that she has crossed clean. He turns to her with a curious look..but she looks back with a mocking look and then caps it with a slim felt smile and then continues on her journey. Our man looks down and sees his bottle of water that he had thrown away in horror still pouring out. He snatches it off the ground, dusts sand and sooth off it and smiling, gulps the left over. Eyes still on Fidelia he finds that she stops in front of a shop . His eyes go for the inscription

FANCIFUL VANITIES

Fidelia stops, clasps her hands together in front of her, eyes closed with face to the sky, mouth muttering and chin quivering.

Our man's face wears a crease.

Then he takes his face back to the spot he last saw her before the madness. The spot is empty except for some smartly dressed young men walking down the road

Our man looks back to her in stupefaction, but now, she heaves a heavy sigh and stretching her legs she goes into the shop.

Now he looks back focusing his gaze to glean out something...anything. Then ...

Reverse all action in fast motion until Fidelia is back at the last time our man can remember spotting her.

Her brother has just boarded the bus and the bus has driven off. She is walking down the side of the road obviously heading home when she suddenly hears some laughter. She turns and sees these young smartly dressed dudes in a rough circle discussing animatedly. Her eyes go close to their shirts and she studies them and then the old man's voice returns...

OLD MAN OOV

What's your skill...what is it
you do soooo weellll?

She folds her hands behind her and approaches them eyes still on the sleeve of one of the young men's shirt.

The young men turn a haughty look to her, she keeps her eyes on the shirts, just the shirts.

They all stop and closely take in the image of this threadbare, yet clean and shapely, but poor looking Fidelia.

They walk past and beyond her. She looks up and heaves a sigh of satisfaction and a broad smile splits her happy face. She remains standing on the spot lost in the new inspiration flooding her head as she holds four complimentary cards on her hands. Then she turns round on the spot as the next image that hits her head is the shop...she bounds off as she gets to the edge of the road, we see our man just coming out of the eatery where he has gone to buy water and all the rest is immediate history.

The man looks at Fidelia in slo mo entering the shop with gallant, determined long strides

Maleek watches on with thoughtful wonder.

SWISHPAN TO:

INT. A PALATIAL, NON-PRETENTIOUS LIVING ROOM NIGHT

AGATHA

I did this to them...i chased
them out to a destitute life with
my unfeeling, satanic, accursed
ways...I did these to
them...little kids...how...how
old are they...kids! Ah! Let God
kill me and give them life, I
swear!

She crumbles. Joy weeps with her, holding her.

Maleek looks away from the spectacle as a line of tear course down his left eye. He promptly wipes it off

MALEEK

Your sorrow is full of self deprecation, it works nothing but grief...it is ungodly, Agatha. The hatred you live consumes you, too, my child. Repent. Allah kills none, Allah curses none, Allah punishes none. Allah is all Goodness...if you must invoke Him or His Name, feel and think Goodness, otherwise, His Majesty will never hear you because the Holy One does not behold, does not hear, does not feel, does not smell, does not taste INIQUITY.

The ladies stop and fix their eyes on him stunned.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

Allah is HOLY, blessed be His Holy Name.

Maleek's eyes are streaming with tears now.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

He will...cannot kill for He is Life and gives of Himself, to kill is to be against Himself...Anything contrary to Allah is of man, when man hates, or kill or curse in His Name, they do so of themselves. Please Agatha, refrain from the party of evil like those you hate and live good always no matter what men and society may say or do.

He kisses her deeply and prolongedly on her forehead with tears seeping from his eyes.

MALEEK (CONT'D)

(with a tear-choked voice)

Sala'am.

He heads through one of the doors.

The tears in Agatha's head stops flowing. On her knees, she raises her eyes to the clean white ceiling

AGATHA

Help me Allah, the All-Goodness,
I need your Soul and
Spirit...make me like Maleek,
please, to know, feel and do love
only and always.

JOY

(still sobbing)
Me too, LORD.

DISSOLVE TO:

55. INT AGATHA'S BEDROOM DAY

Agatha holds the family portrait and is weeping profusely as she looks from the faces of her sister and brother to those of her parents and soils it with tears.

MALEEK OOV

However bright the darkness
maybe, it can never live up to
the darkest corner of light. Our
dreams point the way to the
light. That great light that
promises eternal life. Dreams are
great. Chase your dreams, never
lose sight of them. Dreams are
the ladder to eternity. Dreams
make us humans, but there is
something greater than a dream.
Love. Love makes us all living
beings. Until you feel the love
of others other than you, and
intensify it selflessly, you
really have no freedom. If you
can't love your family you can't
even love yourself. If you can't
love yourself then you'll see
your dreams die...

AGATHA

God, with all these bomb
blasts..where are my babies? What
have I done?????

DISSOLVE TO:

58. EXT FRONT OF GIRL'S UNCOMPLETED BUILDING NIGHT

Fidelia is singing a folktale song as she rocks her little brother who is lying across her lap.

FIDELIA
Ikhian ya kpolo'o ne rha mwen

JUDE
I so'o gie.

FIDELIA
Ikhian ya ralo'o ne iye mwen

JUDE
I so'o gie

FIDELIA
Su'uwe rhie mwen

JUDE HAWKER
I so'ogie ona tan gbe o,
iso'ogie.

FIDELIA
Su'uwe rhie mwen

No she realises that boy's voice is trailing off to sleep.

JUDE
I so'o ogie, ona gie gbe o, iso'o
ogie.

She stops, kisses him on the head and begins to stroke him on the head and back

JUDE (CONT'D)
Sorry, sister, i'm so so tired,
we played football all day at
school.

FIDELIA
I understand, big boy, exams are
over so you're free to play.

JUDE
Can we pray please so I can
sleep.

She nods with a sigh

FIDELIA
Ok, love.

Then she raises her voice to sing

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
Because He lives i can face
tomorrow etc.

In her mind she sees the lady at the fabric shop as she sends her aways. She smiles to herself most sweetly and crumbling to her knees all smiling, she prays

FIDELIA (CONT'D)
LORD, kindly say 'Amen' to these
things I say to this good woman
of Fancy Vanities.
Madam, you're so beautiful and
gorgeous, may your business find
a huge increase, may all those
that owe you find grace to pay
you immediately, may the money
you earn from your business serve
you and your family well so that
one day you will become that
mother, that wife, that woman
you've always dreamt of. God
bless you. May you find and live
in love. I bless you with the
whole of my soul and spirit. I
love you.

She looks down and finds that her little brother has slept far...

MIX TO:

FLASHBACK: INT THE LIVING ROOM AT 1004 DAY

It is the same room where the little girl was sewing with a suffering woman. The door bursts open and uniformed men armed with guns storm in. A man in his late 60's barges out of one of the rooms screaming

DADDY
You can't do this! You can't do
this! I forbid you...it is
against the law...it is contempt
of court...

A hand brushes him off his feet and before his very eyes the furniture and household items start flying out of the apartment. Little Fidelia, helping mum to sew screams

FIDELIA
Daddy!!!

MUM

Stay with me, honey, stay with me.

She grabs her round the waist and holds her firm.

FIDELIA

You're a soldier man, you shouldn't beat my daddy...my daddy is a good man!

One of the officers turns to him with a scowl on his face bridging his lips with his index finger menacingly at her. Fidelia finds her beast coming out, she growls at him

FIDELIA (CONT'D)

You good for nothing beast!

Struggling to tear away from her mum. The woman holds firm, screaming at her to shut up... it is when she hears her mum sobbing that she stops

MUM

You just don't listen this child, there's nothing we can do, these are not the enemies, they're only following orders.

Fidelia wraps her arms round her mum's neck and tries to soothe her.

Just then, a younger Agatha storms out of the room weilding a stick against an officer. She is dressed in just a one-piece flowery dress barely touching her uppermost thighs. The old man understands the cause of the new rage and so rises and punc hes the officer to the ground with angst

DADDY

Slime!

He pulls his daughter behind him, posing for the blow coming from the disgraced officer who is now finding his feet. But a gun click stops all actions. A superior officer shows up, he is a sergeant.

SERGEANT

Corporal!

The disgraced officer stands at attention.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Back to work!

CORPORAL

Yes, sir!

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows111.

The Sergeant looks at the man with the look that says it all, he would not let him miss is, though

SERGEANT

You touch any of my men again, I
wont be this nice. Now get your
family out of here now!

Then looking at the younger Agatha now in trepidation he
sneers

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Get something decent on, you!

For once, young Agatha felt naked.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

You have ten minutes you get out
of here, sir.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A POOR HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT DAY

Dad's lying on a bed much older and weakened, mum is
sitting beside him stroking his forehead. Agatha and
Fidelia with their little baby brother Jude watching

DAD

This is not the country we served
with the whole of our youths and
active days...they gave us that
apartment as owner-occupiers, we
were made to believe that the sum
deducted from our salaries
monthly was meant to defray the
cost after eighteen years. We
paid for it years ago...and now
they chased us like thieves out
of it... and all the toils of
over three decades are gone...

(coughs)

Agatha runs out in tears not able to bear the pains.

AGATHA

I hate you...I hate you, Nigeria,
me, I hate you!! May God punish
you!!!

FIDELIA

Daddy take some water please.

Putting a cup of water to his lips. The old man smiles to her and turning with so much efforts to the little boy he speaks

DAD

Take care of your little brother, don't let him suffer. Ignore your sister's hate, love your country, that's the only way to avenge this indignity against us. Love your sister, no matter what she does to you. Remember us, your mother and I, we taught you to love, not hate, but Agatha hardly listens...

Fidelia breaks down in tears then she holds herself together and faces the old man

FIDELIA

Dad, you...you...you're not dying. You know that right? We don't have a house, no place to go, how can you...

The voice of Agatha enters from out of frame until she is back into shot. She is a beautiful sight to behold in her mini shorts and spaghetti top as she bends over by rage

AGATHA

The government is evil. and if you die dad, I swear, I'll become an outlaw, I'll do all in my life to destroy this country and if I can't, I'll leave and never come back...

MUM

Child! Your rage is bad! And in God's name, you'll never be an outlaw. Now come here, come here.

Agatha goes and crumbles on her mum's breasts. Also weeping, the suffering woman makes her recant.

My child, tell me you won't be an outlaw...tell me you won't hate your country, but the sins in it...please...look at your dad's suffering and promise to him you'll build a life that'll not depend on government. Promise you'll not trust government as we did. Promise you'll be a better citizen than we have been...you will not depend on government, promise me!

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows113.

Weeping profusely and shivering, she raises her face to her mum and then to dad, she nods her head and says...

AGATHA

I promise...I promise...I promise

At that the old man's smiles rests his head sideways and breathes his last. On seeing this the woman sighs heavily, too pained to cry, she snuggles towards the body and packing it to herself rocks it as if it were a baby. Fidelia drags the boy and the little boy out of the room.

DISSOLVE
FLASHBACK TO:

THE PRESENT

NIGHT

The same. Fidelia still has her brother sleeping across her lap.

FIDELIA

Agatha, how're you now? I pour my love into you, my precious sister. Let the love of life find you. Let grace and favour find you. Let wisdom and understanding find you. May you be taller than the hate that eats you up. May you find love to conquer it.

Really weeping now, but cautious not to rouse the sleeping boy

God, heal my Agatha, heal my sister, Lord... show her the light. Let her forgive herself, help me, Lord...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT AGATHA'S LIVINGROOM DAY

Looking more woebegone than before, Agatha is oblivious to the fast burning stick of cigarette between her fingers as she keeps the vision in her head forming and growing.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN: EXT FLASHBACK

NIGHT

Fidelia and the little boy are returning from buying food from a night mama put across the road.

As they are crossing, foods in a black rubber bag held by Fidelia, with the other hand holding the boy, a car comes to a screeching halt. Quickly alerted by the noise, the two look up towards the direction and see a car reversing to a halt with a lady soon identified as Agatha running towards them

AGATHA

Fidelia, Fidelia, what're you doing with my brother? So this is what you're doing with him...begging? You're running? In this Lagos? Fidelia, God'll punish you o, man snatcher! release my brother to me o! Fide...Fidelia!!!!

Stunned by the sight and sound, the two lose temporary composure and when they regain themselves like one pair of feet, they run into the darkness beyond her sight and reach.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE PRESENT AGATHA'S ROOM

NIGHT

The lady flicks the ashen cigarette from Agatha's fingers to prevent a burnt. Then and only then does she come to.

JOY

You don't want that to burn you, do you?

AGATHA

The only time I had to reconcile with them I blew it...three years now...yes nau...2008, 2009, 2010. why have I not seen them since? Are they out of town or...or...

Tears welling up in her already swollen eyes again. She slumps on to the carpet devastated.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Positive? Even adults with better resources find it hard to survive in Lagos how much more two innocent babies all alone! Oh, my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!

Seeing how bad she's taking it, the lady rushes to her and holds her, folding her arms round her, she too shedding tears.

JOY

Please forgive yourself, release yourself...you've informed the police they'll do their best. We'll also keep trying.

Then she stops as if suddenly aware of what she's done.

AGATHA

Joy, listen.

The lady stops to actually listen intently.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

I chased my sister with a broken bottle out of this house.

Then the lady shakes her head regrettably realising the grief has set in too deep

AGATHA (CONT'D)

I...I..out of jealous rage wanted to make her a scarface so none of my lovers would see her attractive anymore. She ran...the poor frightened Fidelia ran and her brother, my little Jude, followed her and all they had was what they had on them. This is the fourth year and I didn't care. I actually thought they'd be forced back by hunger. Haba Joy, how can God be Just and forgive someone for that? Even if He does, I won't forgive myself!

Silence

She gradually allows herself to lie on her side, the lady following the motion too.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Why didn't the police arrest and detain me, maybe charge me for some serious crime like 'abandonment occasioning death' is there no law like that? There must be something to charge me for here, because whatever happened to them, I caused it!

The lady can no longer stand it

JOY

Gat, please stop this nau!

AGATHA

My father died homeless, because government threw us out of the property we thought was ours as a retired civil servant. We took him home to be buried in front of his farther's house. My mum never returned to the city. I came back with my sister and brother to continue school in Lagos. Not long after that...my mum too died, leaving them to my care...

Tears running down her face afresh

AGATHA (CONT'D)

What did I do to them as a common whore? If they could see from yonder what would they think of me, what would they have wished me? Dear God, I've sinned terribly and I need the chance to undo my evils. Please, that's all i ask, not your forgiveness, but a chance to send my sister and brother back to school, to love them, to pamper them, to adore them. Please, dear God. I beg you

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.

A DARK OFFICE

NIGHT

The Bukokhuo, Joshua and Topman are in his office silent and rising as Topman rises in rage and begins to rave without words. The other men are equally boiling.

From the TV, we hear a dnthen see a presenter speaking to camera with glee.

PRESENTER

Ladies and gentlemen, don't forget this weekend, the next biggest thing in town this year, the much publicised, much awaited premier of the drama from the stable of EPML studio, FIRST CAUSE is happening at the...

Then the man stops. An idea hits him.

TOPMAN

And...the next big event in town is...

He points a finger at the TV.

The others turn to him with an awakening.

He turns to them almost cheering.

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

Yes, yes, yeeeeesss! I say, we
blow the place up!

The other two exchange glances of appraisal

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

This is going to be massive.
Let's help them advertise the
premiere send some complimentary
press adds out there, pay for
more airtime for them, send the
movie poster across internet
sites and pay for it...I don't
care how you do it, throwing some
six million naira worth of
airtime under any name, meet the
producers and ask them to print
more invites, take more
halls...I'm sure the screens can
be looped together somehow..get
pressmen to report on the
movie...hype it to the death! We
need more people in
there...imagine a thousand people
seated, watching the movie and
then boom! Boom!! Boom-
boom.boommmmm!

Excited, Joshua rises. Pointing at Topman heavily
emotional.

BUKOKHUO

You...you...you're my leader,
you're the real big man! Thank
you, thank you! Thank you!!!

Bukokhuo is inspired, he wipes perspiration off his brows.

TOPMAN

But, this time, we despatch the
boys to the virgins. Let your
ward lead this. Of course they'd
get invites to the
show...haha!!!!

BUKOKHUO

Aminu, Maigida?

They look momentarily troubled. He averts his gaze towards
the floor.

Topman looks at the two of them. He scoffs at them

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows118.

TOPMAN

Now, now, what's this, yellow
leaf?

His rising scorn soon withers as Joshua thunders

JOSHUA

For the cause all is expendable!

He turns to Topman

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Let the virgins be pleased.

Bukokhuo nods allowing it to sink in.

TOPMAN

Prepare them for the drill. How
many x can we unleash for maximum
effect?

Bukokhuo and Joshua exchange thoughtful glancing and the
man responds

BUKOKHUO

Ten, Maigida?

TOPMAN

Five plus Aminu will do. One in
each hall. Then one in the most
populated area outside the halls
just for show.

JOSHUA

Six then.

Topman walks towards the night window and sees the dark
skyline of Lagos, a smile slits his handsome, but mean face
as he nods, menacingly

TOPMAN

Let the show begin, Lagos!

CUT TO

EXT THE FUN COMPLEX. A LIVE BAND IS PLAYING NIGHT

The band lead vocalist is Ubaka. He is singing a reggae
verse of 'Son of God'. People are seated outside in the
open air eating, arguing, swaying to the tune. a man rises
to start spraying him money.

One of the delectable service ladies is promptly collecting the Naira rain. When he finally finishes the crowd hail him. Then he adds

UBAKA

Thanks for the love, people. Jah bless. That's a song I hope to record some day and I promise you all a free copy once it's out thank you. And, people, I'm not a preacher, I just want to tell you insurance is good. Without it, this business was gone. Don't think government built this, it was insurance. Thumbs up to my wise and business savvy proprietress Chinwe Esiobu. And don't forget to thank our insurance company who kept their promise

A loud applause follows that. The proprietress watches him with an air of pride fighting back tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT

THE FUN COMPLEX.

NIGHT

A live band is performing under a canopy of the newly reconstructed complex back and better. Walking round the band towards the corner and all the way to the back stage huddled between the speakers and set is Ubaka in a very emotional mood, too happy to have his place back. In his hand has always been a bottle of liqueur. As he sits, he takes a generous swig from it and sits back on the chair and watches on as the band plays. Soon his eyes closes over and his head drops to the side.

BAND VOCALS

I sey, na so e be ooo, dis worl'
na wonda oo, nobodi dey helep
person, my brpda, dis wonda dey
break my heart...

You geti fren' today, next dey im
turn im back, sake of sey you nor
geti pay(ha naira palava)dis
wonda dey break my heart

(MORE)

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows120.

BAND VOCALS (CONT'D)

Na wonda ooooo some dey sleep
unda bridge, plenti dey chop
dirty...una governmenti dey far
far, broda sista dem nor get your
time na wondaoo, the thing dey
make me cryyyy na so so hungry we
dey see, hei, na so so hungry we
dey see

(dialogue adlib as instrumental
rolls)

Na who wan helep person for
naija, na your own you deyo if
you wait make someone come helep
you, you go die troway o

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. A HIGH LEVEL, HAUTE SOCIETY PARTY SCENE NIGHT

Everyone clearly is the cream of society. Their outfits are dazzling and reflecting the bright lights. At a raised platform, a live band is performing a soulful number while the dignitaries are kissing, hugging, laughing out loud, exchanging social pleasantries. Some are seated and ensconced into discussions while many more are just following the sway of the music. The atmosphere is soaked with fun, camaraderie, and within this a sense of deep affluence flows silently. From the raised platform beside the band stage, Aminu, dressed for the event in a two-piece midnight blue suit sky blue shirts and maroon slender tie, emanates looking like a star from Hollywood. He surveys the entire place a smirk of disgust appears briefly on his face and then he steps down and heads for the exit. He refuses to pay any heed to some of the dashing ladies who pay him compliments.

CUT TO:

EXT. IT IS A RED CARPET SITUATION IN THE OPEN NIGHT

The compeers (male and female) both looking and feeling very hip are spiking up the mood of the guests who are coming in in pairs, some alone. The frenzy in the place is feverish. A crowd of young teens are busy screaming the names of the celebrities as they show up on the red carpet, both they and the press photographers, and videographers cannot cross the metal barricade made even more impregnable by a line of heavily built security opetaives.

The flash of camera lights as they snap away mix with shutter sounds and the screams.

A gay-looking male couple walks hand in hand towards the compeer and the ecstatic crowd goes mad with excitement. Throwing their kisses to the crowd and taking the comic bows only fuel their screams.

From the entrance, Aminu finds himself brush past some of the celebrities heading into the hall. His eyes are on the gay-looking couple and his displeasure and disdain is apparent. His thumb plays around the red button on his phone and some relief seem to flood his face and then taking another look up, he finds that the couple has come really close to him. One of them takes a curious look at him and tries to greet him, but the disgust on Aminu's face sets him off and exchanging curious gazes, the two hurry into the building

CUT TO:

INT. AGATHA'S LIVINGROOM NIGHT

Joy is fully dressed and face glued to the TV as Red carpet part of the show is beamed out live. She is taken in by the excitement. She looks at her wristwatch and expresses some impatience and just then the door bell rings. She turns to the door, rises and throwing her face towards the living bedroom first as if to make sure she is permitted, the bell rings again.

From the bedroom we see Agatha, dressed in a one piece shape revealing sequined dress, run out fully ready with her lean purse. She calls out as she steps out

AGATHA

Joy, abeg get the door nau!

JOY

Ok na...

As she dashes towards the door, it opens even before she can reach it and a dashing Bukokhuo in two piece expensive fabric African outfit with a cap appears smiling sweetly.

Joy stops, wears this displeasing scowl as she sizes his handsome frame all over.

AGATHA

Latecomer! You nor dey see the time sef?

BUKOKHUO

Haba, Joy!

AGATHA

Oga, so can we leave now?

The man for once notices Agatha and smiles, heading towards her with open arms.

BUKOKHUO

Oh, my hot, hot chocolate...

Wrapping her into his embrace even as she protests in reaction to his lateness.

AGATHA

Look nau, they've started...tell me how we're not going to miss the red carpet.

Bukokhuo joins his face with Joy's on the TV screen and then makes a sneer of mock regrets.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

(seeing the mock expression, she protests, stamping her foot)

It's not fair Buk!

The man turns to her calmly and holding her on both sides of the head most tenderly, plants a soft and elastic kiss on her lips.

Joy is stunned to silence at the way the man calms her down always.

EXT. VICTORIA ISLAND STREET - DAY

Maya is walking along the road towards the movie theatre speaking into her mouthpiece. She is in a jeans pant, shirt and jacket, walking briskly and speaking agitatedly

MAYA

Aminu, don't give yourself away. This is to the glory of Allah, do what you have to do. Be brave.

CUT TO:

EXT RED CARPET ENVIRONMENT OF THE THEATRE DAY

Aminu resplendent in his two piece hottie replies

AMINU

I've got this, sis.

Then another line rings, he picks it

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows123.

AMINU (CONT'D)
Yes, Maigida...Maya is on cue,
sir... yes

CUT TO:

INT. A DARK OFFICE DAY

Topman and Joshua are seated at the desk eyes on the TV watching the red Carpet broadcast

TOPMAN
We need to do this right for
Allah, brother. Be bold, be
brave.

He swallows a fake lump, sighs and lowers his head briefly for the effect to manifest in his voice

TOPMAN (CONT'D)
I know I'm not going to see you
again until we meet in paradise,
but believe I'm always with you,
brother...you've been of service
to Allah and his prophet on this
side of life. Sala'am, my brother

Joshua sits up as he sees Aminu crossing the red carpet on the screen. He alerts Topman to it who sees it and nods with satisfaction, then signals him to sit on his thigh. Joshua promptly obeys and runs his finger behind Topman's nape. Topman rubs Joshua's back softly as he speaks to Aminu

TOPMAN (CONT'D)
So where're you this moment, with
Maya?

CUT TO:

EXT RED CARPET SITUATION FRONT OF THE THEATRE DAY

The photographers are all snapping away, reporters are making their findings to television cameras, everywhere is busy

AMINU
Not exactly boss, I'm at the red
carpet going to make sure the
rigs are properly done. I've to
go now, Maigida you'll hear about
my deed from the news within the
hour...sala'am

TOPMAN OOV
Sala'am faithful and worthy
soldier!

From a corner is the bomb expert watching Aminu closely. Aminu stops to regard him briefly with a blank stare and then continues.

SWISHPAN TO:

EXT. VICTORIA ISLAND STREET DAY

The young man leading the blind beggar and a handsome well groomed man in his mid thirties step out of a squad car and head straight towards a building.

WELL GROOMED MAN
Yea, babe, I need you to
Id...don't bother, the fish swims

Just then, Bukokhuo, Joy and Agatha step out of the gate heading towards the gorgeous car Bukokhuo came in. When they confront the two men, they do not think they have any reason to worry.

The younger man steps forward across the line of Bukokhuo.

YOUNGMAN
(flashing an ID)
Mr. Bukokhuo Emumejakpor, you're
under arrest for terrorist acts
against the Federal Republic of
Nigeria. You've the right to
remain silent as whatever you say
now will be used against you in
evidence...

Bukokhuo's hands have been cuffed behind him before he can manage to comprehend the action. From across the road three blocks away, a car rolls itself towards them in silent deadly move, but the older officer has seen it all.

Agatha's mouth bursts open with utter disbelief and shock as guns come out from both back and front windows of the car. Joy is the last to see it. She throws her arms in the air in surrender, Bukokhuo turns a scathing face to them all, but the younger officer and the older scream

OFFICER 1
Dooooowwwnnnnn!!!!

Bukokhuo is brought down low while the older officer dives the two ladies to the ground.

Bullets rain across the space, but, the older officer only needs three well-aimed shots to end the assault.

The guns drop on tar, but the car heads at them and the older officer pumps bullet right into the mean driver.

The car hits the raised pavement close to the house and goes up front tyres first then full nose and then twists sideways. Beneath, the well groomed man is rising and herding the stunned ladies to a safe distance just in the nick of time to avoid being smashed by the flying impossible tonnage.

The younger office cannot get Bukokhuo off his grip as he makes his run off danger.

JOY

Iya mi o ooo!!!!

The car is a mess of a wreck. The bodies hang out of the windows. The driver is half out the smashed windscreen

Agatha, who maintains a silent perturbation all the while, bursts out sobbing on the shoulder of Joy who is too shell shocked to utter a word.

The older officer seeing how powerfully his younger partner hefts the big Bukokhuo with one hand and is still able to manage a run, he explodes with amazement.

WELL GROOMED MAN

That youngman must have more power in his slight frame than we thought!

Then the younger man realises he has not finished reading out Bukokhuo's rights to him.

YOUNGMAN

In court of law...you have a right to an attorney and if you cannot afford one, the Federal Republic of Nigeria will engage one for you.

As they take him away, Agatha stays and watches and sobs silently, but the man does not bother to look back to them.

The well groomed man walks towards Agatha and Joy. Agatha is silent, unmoving, but her eyes are pouring tears.

WELL GROOMED MAN

Be glad, young sister; it was going nowhere.

She does not look at the man

CUT TO:

EXT UNIDENTIFIABLE

DAY

A female mouth at tight close up is speaking into a mouth piece

FEMALE MOUTH

All live cameras need to be put out now. I repeat, live cameras out!

CUT TO:

INT. SSS OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS DAY

The Assistant Director, Operations is standing and looking out the window, radio in hand. The deputy Director of operations is seated cross-legged eyes on a red desktop phone as if praying that it should not ring.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS

You really believe they intend to strike at the premier?

The lady nods differentially and promptly respond to the message from the radio.

RADIO MESSAGE

One down, The bird is flying as suspected.

The man and the woman exchange a dumbfounded look. She promptly recovers to respond

ADO

Roger that. Good job, Good job. keep it up and keep us posted.

The radio squawks off. The two look to each other, the woman suppresses an outburst.

DDO

How could this be!

She places her hands on the window sill overpowered.

DDO (CONT'D)

On our homeland by our own people? How did we get it all so wrong?

The deputy director is silent nodding his sad head.

ADO

Sir, I suggest you reach the director and advise him to inform the President.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS

Nah! The boys are doing well. We do this after the fact.

She nods and seems to agree.

CUT TO:

76. INT. INSIDE THE THEATRE PREMISES. DAY

Aminu is walking head bowed while behind him are men and women in plain clothes seeming to keep their eyes on him half-heartedly.

At a corner is a young man in neat kaftan sweating and eyes shut looking up. Aminu stops before him and nods ever so slightly with the word

AMINU

Sala'm.

The shocked youth opens his eyes to see him. His face wears a momentary acceptance. He walks past and passing by another youth with his back to the wall eyes looking down at his feet. Sweat is practically dripping from his nose. Aminu goes close and whispers as he rests his back to the wall beside him

AMINU (CONT'D)

Sala'm, brother. You will be well

The fellow opens his eyes and looking at him wonders if he knows him. Aminu smiles and shows him his own detonator. The fellow is moved to tears and hugs him with a heavy 'sala'm'

In no time Aminu has greeted five youth two of which were females. He finishes and goes upstairs and from his vantage point from the third floor, looking down, the plain clothed men and women neatly rounded up all five in one smart swoop. People present eager to see the movie cannot explain what is happening. All hands cuffed to the back, chins help up, frisked off their detonators, they are all whisked away.

CUT TO:

INT. A PALATIAL HOME OF TOPMAN DAY

Maya drives into the premises full of positive excitement. She slams the door of the car shut and jaunts for the interior of the house. Then from the booth, two operatives jump out after she has gone in. First person she encounters is Man 2 in the living room watching the live TV, his top is off and his fly is open.

JOSHUA

Ah, Maya, how did it go?

MAYA

Bomb went off and the place is crumbling.

The guy's mouth goes agape and then tries to reconcile it with the show on TV

MAYA (CONT'D)

The brutes are playing you recorded videos to keep the world out of the loop. Where's Maigida

She's so excited and celebrating.

Topman appears towelling himself his cloths now fully on

TOPMAN

How did the authorities know to prepare for the recorded footage, Maya! Maya!!!

MAYA

Maigi...

From the hand towel, a crack hits her against the wall, but the second cannot register as two cracks floor the just risen Joshua as soon as the door bursts open from the unexpected side. Another crack forces Topman to dock. Looking back, Maya sees the officers have brought down Joshua one bends over her while the other dashes after Topman.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Guys, don't let him escape, leave me alone, I won't die!

The officer is still applying pressure on her chest.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Oh, no, bro, go down there keep the window... I'll be ok. I want him alive!

She shoves him off her impatiently

CUT TO:

INT. AN OFFICE WITH NIGERIAN FLAG AND THE SSS DAY

The radio message is back

The two sit up. The woman is slightly bent over it

RADIO MESSAGE

The birds are brought down...I
repeat the birds are brought
down.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS

What about Lasaki?

RADIO MESSAGE

In flight, boss, but he can't run
far he has not left the house.
House surrounded.

ADO

And Maya?

RADIO MESSAGE

A bullet through the chest, but
will be well, boss

ADO

How about the Zakari boy?

RADIO MESSAGE

In custody, boss, he's been of
massive help, boss

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS

You've done a great job so far,
guys, clean it up and
retire...and I want that sleaze
alive!

RADIO MESSAGE

Yes, boss.

The deputy director rises relieved. His assistant the lady
takes a relieved face to him

ADO

It's not over until I lay my
hands on that rabid dog, Lasaki!

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows130.

The man nods and straightens up

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS
I agree with you.

He heads towards the door

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OPERATIONS (CONT'D)
Now, I must see the boss.

DAO
Great job, boss.

The man nods and heads out

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOPMAN'S COMPOUND NIGHT

An ambulance is outside. Some squad cars including a police patrol car with an anti-bomb van are all outside. The street is cordoned off.

Medics are stretchering Maya out of the building towards the ambulance while others are carrying bodies ahead of her. Aminu is in a car between operatives eyes on her with relief and gratitude, he waves to her, she smiles back. A scene from the past weeks flashes past her mind

SWISHPAN TO:

FLASHBACK EXT THE MOVIE THEATRE PREMISES DAY

Maya is in the car with her radio poised by a pillar watching speaking

MAYA
This is the moment, Aminu, all
the operatives are watching you.
Do as planned.

SWISHPAN TO:

FLASHBACK INT. MOVIES THEATRE PREMISES DAY

Aminu has ended the radio message and looking around, sees faces looking at him. He shuts his eyes says a few prayers and moves towards the first suicide bomb ready comrade

SWISHPAN TO:

FLASHBACK EXT. THE MOVIES THEATRE PREMISE DAY

Maya starts the car and lifts the radio to her mouth again

MAYA

Guys, the boy's as identified he will look around now to be sure you're following. Be careful. Let's rock this. Confirm that all live camera feeds are cut.

A radio response follows

RADIO MESSAGE

Roger that. Live feeds off. Lead identified and followed. Over and out.

She heaves a deep sigh and let that pass. Putting the radio back to her mouth she speaks

RADIO MESSAGE (CONT'D)

Confirm pick up point, Diva and Dolce.

As radio responds, she drives off

SWISHPAN TO:

EXT THE PRESENT. FRONT OF TOPMAN'S ABODE NIGHT

Topman is being led in two of his legs hanging bay the flesh only. He is spitting out invectives with painful rage the moment he sights Maya being led into the Ambulance her arm on a sling.

TOPMAN

You!

He breaks into a deranged laugh

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

I'd been fucking my killer all these two years!

Maya waves smiley catch-ya to him

TOPMAN (CONT'D)

You fucked my feet off, devil!

Now he is really crying

Maya looks at his dragging feet and makes a mock sad face his mouth forming a teasing 'sorry, baby'

He raves on top of his voice, but the ambulance is closed and drives off with Maya. All he does is scream and rave as the van drives off and he being led away into another ambulance with armed men behind and before. All is plain clothed and civil in efficiency.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT MORNING AT THE RESTAURANT DAY

The band is packing up, and the cleaners are sweeping the compound. Just then Ubaka rouses slowly. When he first opens his eyes he starts up with shock and tries to get his bearing. When he realises that he has slept outside and all through the night, he shakes his head

UBAKA

Shayo na bastard! So I slept outside!

As he raises his eyes he sees the proprietress looking down at him from a close distance.

Good morning, ma'm.

The lady walks closer to him smiling to herself.

PROPRIETRESS

It's a very cool morning, isn't it?

Looking around. And from the distance they both can hear a voice calling out 'ogi re! And another 'moimoi ekpo'. she sees him lick his tongue at the sounds.

PROPRIETRESS (CONT'D)

I still can't get it.. with all of those noises and cold, you slept sound and snored great.

Ubaka moves his body on the seat for the first time since waking and looks towards his side with this look of nostalgia. The lady searches his eyes for a clue as to the origin of his sudden sadness.

What?

Ogi re! 'Moimoi ekpo!' they are getting closer

He rises and bowing to the lady speaks to her

UBAKA

I think you work too hard, ma'm.
Now that you have me, why not go
on short break... a visit to
Obudu Cattle Ranch would...

The lady plants a kiss on his lips

PROPRIETRESS

I understand, you talk too much,
Ubaka.

Recovering from the shock, inclines his ears to the sound
of ogi seller

OGI HAWKER

Er'ogi ooo!

UBAKA

I understand you're very
alluring, Chinwe.

PROPRIETRESS

Could you then...stay with
me...be my Chairman and run this
business as long as this earth
shall subsist, corpashion?

She indicates her entire body and then the premises as she
speaks and does as if she were going to enter into him, her
eyes on his lips all the while.

Ubaka pulls her onto himself, she wraps her leg round his
waist and they lock up in a long, long kiss.

CUT TO:

EXT. A NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET DAY

Jude and Fidelia are walking down the road hand in hand
both in haste.

FIDELIA

You know I've got to go, I'm
running really, really late. I
trust you to take the bus, hmmm?

The boy smiles

JUDE

What do you take me for, a child?

Smiling rubs his hair and kissing him, hops onto a tricycle close by.

FIDELIA

See you later, honey!

The boy waves to her and runs on to the road to flag a bus down, when he freezes. Really terrified.

It is Agatha who appears from a corner street to face him. The boy jumps back with a start.

AGATHA

Jude, I'm your sister, not some ghost... Where's my other baby, where's Fidelia?

The boy does not want to believe his eyes. He can't find his feet, he just stops on the spot and quivers with fear.

Tears form on the lady's face. She is smoking a cigarette, now she flings it away. She hears a loud choir shout of 'NO' she rushes towards the cigarette, picks it and as she rises to look, she finds the boy's spot is empty.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Ooooh, no! Where's my brother!!!!

She is really woeful and mournful. She runs around to every street corners where she imagines he could be, but draws a blank as all the distances are clear, no child.

She soon returns to the spot and breaks down

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Goddddddddd, my good Goddddddd

Her face is a maze of sorrow. She sits on the floor moaning in deep pain.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Lord, You know I've not asked You for too much in this life of mine, yet you've protected me from my darkest hours.

She breaks down some feet deeper and moans tears pouring down her face onto her breasts soaking her blouse wet. She sinks onto her knees hands clasped for supplication

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Dear God, wonderful God of mercy,
bring me and my only family
together again. Be our father and
mother...love us dearly
again....let Us laugh and play
together again... w a n t m y
f a m i l y b a c k.

As she weeps and prays on her knees, standing over her in his uniform is the boy weeping and watching her. She does not look up and continues her prayer

DISSOLVE TO:

88. INT. THE LADY'S VANITY SHOP DAY

Maleek is having a word with Fidelia at the shop. Fidelia is laughing as if recollecting something from what Maleek is saying. Then it all goes quiet as she turns towards the door

It is Agatha who enters, behind her is Joy all in decent clothing for a change.

Maleek takes a look to Agatha and then Fidelia. Agatha is weeping profusely.

Fidelia is rooted. Shop owner comes in from her office and decides to be at the silent unseen background taking all in. Just then to the pleasant surprise of Fidelia, the boy in school uniform appears from behind Joy. The girl's heart expands and almost explodes.

FIDELIA

Jude, you're supposed to be at
School!

Jude nods and turns to Agatha who goes on her knees before Fidelia.

Fidelia crumbles on her sister wrapping her arms round her and they weep. The boy joins them. Joy weeps with joy.

Maleek bows slightly to the shop owner who instantly recognises him as the Islamic Scholar on TV as he steps out of the shop speaking directly to camera

MALEEK

There is no value on a
transformed life. In the markets
of this world it is simply,
PRICELESS.

Elimihe Osezuah's out of the Shadows137.

MAYA

What do you think?

His mouth moving to form 'Allah... Hu..' but is overpowered by tears as he stretches his hands towards her from his father's embrace. The woman nods to him arms spread put she joins embrace.

From behind him, he hears the crowd

CROWD

'Allah hu Akbar!'

AGENT

Beautiful, boss...beautiful.

WIPE FRAME TO:

END CREDITS TILL FADE ALL.