
Chima Ifediora

At seven, Chima is the youngest child of Aunty Ifeoma and the younger brother of Amaka and Obiora. He is also the cousin of Kambili and Jaja. He is in primary school.

His name Chima means 'God knows best.'

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Aunty Ifeoma cites Chima's inability to tell Kambili's name as reason for Chief Eugene to allow Kambili and Jaja visit her in Nsukka. According to her, '**Chima, does not even know Kambili's name.**'

Physical description of Chima

'Chima had a skin as dark as the bottom of a burnt pot of rice, and was tall for a boy of seven.'

1. Chima is protected by the members of his family:

- **As they left the Achike home in Abba, his mother, Aunty Ifeoma held his 'hand as they all walked downstairs.'**
- **He also slept in Aunty Ifeoma's room.** Aunty Ifeoma mentions that he sleeps in her room.

Quote:

'This is my room. I sleep here with Chima.'

- **As he raced outside to catch edible insects, Aunty Ifeoma directed him;**

Quote:

"Watch that they do not fly into your ears, inugo? Or they will make you go deaf!" Aunty Ifeoma called as Chima dashed outside.'

- **When the men from special security unit from Port Harcourt came to ransack Aunty Ifeoma's home claiming she incited students to riot, she confessed that she was thankful that Chima was not awake.**

Quote:

'Thank God Chima is asleep," Aunty Ifeoma said.'

- **Obiora was also very protective of Chima.**

Quote:

'Obiora took Chima by the hand and went out to the verandah.'

- **When Chief Eugene came to take Jaja and Kambili back to home from Nsukka, Chima cried. Aunty Ifeoma tried to placate him by telling him he will see Jaja again soon.**

Quote:

'Chima started to cry; I knew he did not want Jaja to leave.'

"Chima, o zugo. You will see Jaja again soon. They will come again."

2. Chima is unusually tall for a seven-year old:

Kambili describes him as 'tall for a boy of seven' and Aunty Ifeoma mentioned to Mrs. Achike that he outgrows his trousers very quickly so she has to undo the seams of his trousers.

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'...how Chima "outfats" his clothes in a month.'

3. Chima is innocent and childish.

- **His innocence is seen in his fascination with the Achike bathroom in Abba.**

Quote:

'Chima came into the room. "The toilet here is so nice, Mommy. It has big mirrors and creams in glass bottles.'

- **His innocence is also displayed in his attitude to Father Amadi and what they spoke about.**

Quote:

'Chima jumped on him and held on.' Father Amadi

- When Father Amadi visited the Ifidiora's as he discussed with children, he spoke to Chima about the '**neighborhood video game.**'
- **He falls asleep easily.**

Quote:

'Chima had fallen asleep on the sofa' before prayers.'

- **He cried when Chief Eugene came to pick up Kambili and Jaja, but he broke into a smile when his mother was handed some money by Chief Eugene to buy him sweets.**

Quote:

'Chima started to cry; I knew he did not want Jaja to leave...Instead to make Chima feel better, he said, 'o zugo, it's enough," hugged Chima, and stuffed a small wad of naira notes into Aunty Ifeoma's hand to buy Chima a present, which made Chima smile.'

- **He constantly did what his mother told him not to do because he was very playful.**

Quote:

'He was in the garden, doing something on his knees, too, although Aunty Ifeoma often told him "Kwusia, don't do that" or "If you do that again, I will give you a knock."

- **His innocence is displayed in the ease with which he laughed.**

Like the rest of the Ifediora children, he loved to laugh.

Quote:

'They all laugh alike: throaty, cackling sounds pushed out with enthusiasm...She laughed so easily, so often. They all did, even little Chima.'

- **His innocence is again seen in his reaction to Papa-Nnukwu's death.**

Quote:

'Even Chima curled up in a corner for much of the morning, quietly drawing pictures.'

4. Chima could speak for himself

- **When Aunty Ifeoma, asked him if he had broken anything in the Achike's home in Abba, he responded,**

Quote:

'I didn't...Can we put the TV on?'

His response to his mother shows that like the rest of his siblings, he can speak for himself.

- **He also demanded for the part of the chicken that he wanted as the family ate lunch.**

Quote:

'Mommy! I want the chicken leg,' Chima said.

- **When his mother mentioned that Jaja's namesake, 'Jaja of Opobo' was exiled from Nigeria because of his defiance and his refusal to acquiesce to the British government, he remarked,**

Quote:

"That's sad. Maybe he should not have been defiant."

- **He also spoke about the tortoise's cracked shell to Papa-Nnukwu.**

Quote:

'Chima chortled. "The tortoise has a cracked shell!"

5. Chima was also very inquisitive.

- **Chima loves to ask questions. He asked his mother;**

Quote:

'What does defiant mean, Mommy? What did the king do?" Chima asked.'

- **He also asked Jaja what happened to his finger.**

Quote:

What happened to your little finger?" Chima asked.

He also asked that Papa-Nnukwu tell him why the tortoise had a cracked shell.

Quote:

'Tell us the story of why the tortoise has a cracked shell!"
Chima piped up.'

Chima actually repeated the question twice to Papa-Nnukwu.

6. He was very attached to his mother:

- **Aunty Ifeoma snapped at him when she received news that Papa-Nnukwu was sick in the village because he wanted to be very close to her.**

Quote:

'Leave me alone! Nekwa anya, you are no longer a baby.'

- **When Papa-Nnukwu told the story of the animals eating their mothers, Chima declared;**

Quote

'I could never eat Mommy," Chima said, giggling.'

- **He was also overjoyed when his mother got the visa.**

Quote:

'You got the visa!" Obiora screamed, and Chima promptly repeated him, **rushing over to hug his mother.**

- **Aunty Ifeoma asked that Chima be woken up so he would be told about Papa-Nnukwu's death.**

Quote:

'Wake Chima up, so we can tell him before the people from the mortuary come."

7. Chima loves to play

- **He engaged in card games with his older brother, Obiora.**

Quote:

'Chima and Obiora stretched out on the rug, playing with the whot cards that Obiora had discovered in his pockets.'

- **He also ran off to catch edible insects with the rest of the children.**

Quote:

"Can I go, Mom?" Chima asked. He was already heading for the door.

"Yes. But you know we will not fry them."

"I will give the ones I catch to Ugochukwu. They fry aku in their house," Chima said.

"Watch that they do not fly into your ears, inugo? Or they will make you go deaf!" Aunty Ifeoma called as Chima dashed outside.'

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- **When Aunty Ifeoma took Kambili and Jaja for a tour of Nsukka, Chima wanted to run down the hill.**

Quote:

'Chima wanted to race down the other side of the hill, the side that didn't have many paths, but Aunty Ifeoma said it was too steep.'

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8. He also given a few responsibilities by his mother.

Quotes:

'Chima plumped up the cushions on the chairs.'

'Chima, go and get me the container of water. It is almost empty, so you can carry it.'

'Keep the lamp. Jaja and Chima have a lit candle inside.'