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"FOR MY GIRLS"

A Screenplay for a feature film

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ADANNE a pretty, sixteen year-old with an eye-patch over her left eye is sitting on a stool and washing a mound of dirty plates in a derelict tenement compound.

Beside her, MAMA ADANNE, a heavily built 46 year-old Igbo-speaking, semi-illiterate woman is stooped over a fire, tending a large pot of stew. Opposite the make-shift kitchen is a public toilet. An UNIDENTIFIED PERSON carries a bucket of water inside the bathroom and shuts the door.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Why don't you just say your waist is paining you? See the plates you have been washing since morning!

ADANNE

(Murmurs)

See kettle calling pot black.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

You say what?

ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Mama did you see my mouth move?

Adanne rises with a stack of clean plates which she places inside a food cart/wheelbarrow.

ADANNE (CONT'D)

That is the thank you that you will tell me...

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Thank you?

Clutches her bosom and glares at Adanne.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

When you were sucking these did you tell me thank you? May craze finish you there.

Adanne eyeballs her mother with her good eye and returns to washing the plates.

CUT TO:

Adanne's brothers; ICHIE, a 13 year-old boy, IGWE an autistic 9 year-old boy and Eze a 4 year-old are huddled over a bowl of fufu and bitter leaf soup in a gloomy, drab, jam packed room. Adanne puts on her clothes in another corner of the room, and then watches the boys eat. A ray of light filters into the room as a door is opened, then a shadow falls across the room.

MAMA ADANNE O/S

(In Igbo)

Come, these children!

Man shall not live by food alone

oh! Won't you come and be going to
sell?

Ichie rises and washes his hands in a bowl of water.

ICHIE

My school fees is important to me
oh.

Ichie kicks Igwe playfully, Igwe growls at him.

ICHIE (CONT'D)

Ngwanu! Get up.

(To Adanne)

Sister are you ready? It is time to
earn our school fees.

ADANNE

Ajuju nzuzu.

So you think I am standing here
because I just like to stand? And
don't kick Igwe again! You hear me?

Mama Adanne is scooping rice from a pot into a cooler at the doorway.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

(Clapping her hands)

Ngwanu! The morning has aged. Is it
when bellies are full you will
move?

Ichie moves to lift the cooler of rice as Adanne hooks an arm around Igwe and leads him outside.

8 **EXT. MARKET/MECHANIC WORKSHOP- AFTERNOON- ESTABLISHING** 8

Establishing a roadside market scene, with traders and a mechanic's workshop.

9 **EXT. MARKET - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS** 9

Ichie is dashing through the road, selling pure water to motorists while Adanne is standing beside the food cart and dishing food to a MECHANIC in coveralls. They exchange soft smiles as she hands him the plate of food. Igwe is seated on the floor beside her, sucking his thumb as saliva drools from his lips.

CUT TO:

10 **EXT. MARKET - SUNSET** 10

DIMKPA the mechanic is a 25 year-old brawny, bearded man. He is seated with Adanne on discarded pieces of car upholstery in the mechanic workshop. They are eating snacks and sodas and passersby glance at them occasionally. Ichie and Igwe are playing in the vicinity.

DIMKPA

...Omalicham. How many plates of rice will you have to sell to complete the school fees?

ADANNE

(Sighs)

I don't even want to think about it.

DIMKPA

Have you even thought about what I told you? Imagine how it can help everybody in your family?

Adanne rises and brushes off the seat of her dress.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)

Are you leaving already?

ADANNE

(In Igbo)

He who came on a journey must return home.

13

INT. THE MALIZU'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM- EVENING - FLASHBACK 13

Adanne's DADDY/MR. MALIZU a tall, cheerful, man steps into the living room bearing nylon bags where Adanne and her brothers are watching TV. They dash to him yelling.

CHILDREN

Daddy Oyoyo!

Mr. Malizu he envelopes them in his arms. Igwe brings up the rear. Mama Adanne enters with a huge smile, covered in sweat and hugs him too, then she leaves.

IGWE

Daaaaddddy, wha di you bree?

Daddy sits and unties the nylon bag. He puts Eze on one lap and Igwe on the other.

DADDY

Before Father Christmas shows you his bag of goodies you have to sing a special song for him. Are you ready? Sing!

Ichie and Eze start to sing lustily and Adanne soon joins in. Igwe bobs his head along enthusiastically.

CHILDREN

Song: Onye na-eme mma, imeela,
imeela, imeela, imeela, imeela,
imeela. Imeela ooo, Eze ebube
imeela oooooooooo!

END OF FLASHBACK.

14

EXT. CHURCHES/WORSHIPPERS ON SUNDAY - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

15

I/E. A SMALL CHURCH - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 15

Adanne is singing in a make-shift children's church choir.

CHOIR

(Singing)

Thank you Jesus, thank you, thank
you Jesus thank you, I have nothing
to give you only to say thank you
Lord--

LOLA OLUSOLA (V.O.)
I wonder if they are laughing at
me...

CUT TO:

19 **INT. THE OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, LOUNGE- SAME TIME- MONTAGE** 19

A party is ongoing. Well dressed guests are sitting, standing around and talking [Ad-lib]. A tall, distinguished male UNIDENTIFIED PERSON mingles through the crowd, shaking hands and exchanging hugs. A huge cake is centre piece with an inscription.

INSERT: Lola at 40

LOLA OLUSOLA (V.O.)
Hmmm... They come to my house and
eat my food and they laugh at me.
They call me a man, they call my
husband a fool... and my husband...
why does he stay? How can he love
me still? Ten years after?

20 **INT. OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, CORRIDOR - EARLY EVENING- CONTINUOUS** 20

The unidentified male person- who is LANRE OLUSOLA- makes his way through a well appointed foyer towards the bedroom, wine glass in hand.

CUT BACK TO:

21 **INT. OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, BEDROOM - SAME TIME - CONTINUOUS** 21

Lanre Olusola pops his head in, a huge smile on his face.

LANRE
Babe! Aren't you done with your
change of clothes yet? Guests a-
awaiting!

Lola is startled but she rises with a smile. We see that the back of her sequined dress is unzipped.

LOLA
You know I am hopeless with zips.
Help me darling.

Lanre sets his wine glass on a side stool and approaches with a lecherous smile, rubbing his hands together.

Adanne lowers her eyes, reaches into the front pocket of her dress and brings out a mobile phone.

INSERT: Phone Screen, Dimkpa calling...

CHIMDALU (CONT'D)
(With a shocked expression.)
Ah ah! Adanne *bia ooo!* When you buy phone? Who buy you phone?
(In Igbo)
Does your mother know you have a phone?

The phone stops ringing and Adanne jumps up from the chair and faces Chimdalum with a fearful expression.

ADANNE
Aunty, the phone is not for me oh. One of my customers forgot it and I kept it for him.

CHIMDALU
(With a disbelieving expression.)
(In Igbo)
Adanne, do you think they gave birth to me yesterday? The truth!

ADANNE
Aunty I swear.

Touches her finger the he tongue and raises it upwards.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
He forgot the phone and travelled. Maybe he is calling to know where I am.

CHIMDALU
(Sneering)
Ehen? *Ngwanu za call.*

ADANNE
(Hesitantly)
(Into Phone)
Hello...

DIMKPA (FILTERED)
Omalicham, kedu?

CUT TO:

Dimkpa is guzzling alcohol and watching a football match in a sparsely populated bar.

DIMKPA

Did you go to church? I almost came to your church today o, just so I can see you small.

[INTERCUT BETWEEN SCENES AS NECESSARY]

ADANNE

You can collect it tomorrow.

DIMKPA

Did you hear me? Did your Mama make trouble for you again? Oma'm I miss you oh.

ADANNE

As soon as I come to the market, you can come and get it. Okay,
(In Igbo)
No problem.

Adanne ends the call, packs her thread, a novel and turns to leave.

CHIMDALU

Where are you going? Won't you finish your hair?

ADANNE

(Shaking her head vigorously.)
(In Igbo)

I think those ants are inside my head now. I will come back.

She leaves. Chimdalul looks on suspiciously, eyebrows raised.

As Adanne walks towards her house, Igwe spots her and leaves the cluster where Ichie and a few other boys are seated. He excitedly stumbles towards her, arms outstretched, legs moving jerkily. Adanne's welcoming smiles changes to horror as she sees a motorcycle rider speeding towards Igwe. She drops everything and waves her arms frantically.

ADANNE

STOP! STOP! STOP!

Igwe pays her no mind and in slow motion, the motorcycle clears Igwe, toppling him out of the road. Igwe hits his head on the edge of the gutter as he falls in and splits his head.

The motorcycle driver momentarily loses control of his bike but then steadies himself, glances at Igwe and speeds away. His features are hidden by a handkerchief tied over his nose and mouth.

Adanne drops to her knees and howls as Chimdalụ and other unidentified people and children run towards Igwe's prone body.

27 **EXT. LOCAL CLINIC - EARLY EVENING - ESTABLISHING** 27

Establishing injured and sick people making their way in and out of a small town clinic. A few nurses moving hurriedly.

CUT TO:

28 **INT. LOCAL CLINIC - EARLY EVENING - CONTINUOUS** 28

Adanne and Ichie are weeping hysterically as their mother paces a small reception area. She suddenly turns on Adanne.

MAMA ADANNE

(To Adanne; In Igbo)

Why were you not watching him
Adanne? Why? You know he was not
well and you let him run into the
road? Devil! Devil! You have killed
my son!

She descends on Adanne with slaps and blows and Ichie struggles to help Adanne, and receives a few slaps for his efforts. An overweight NURSE dashes out, drawn by the screams and stares briefly before attempting to shield Adanne with her body.

NURSE

(To Adanne)

Ngwanu! Run! Is that not what
children are supposed to when they
are beaten? You are just standing
there like a block of wood.

With a strangled sob, Adanne staggers to the doorway and departs. Mama Adanne collapses to the floor with loud wails.

MAMA ADANNE
(Wailing)
Ekwensu... Ekwensu...

CUT TO:

29 INT. SLUM NEIGHBORHOOD- NIGHT - ESTABLISHING 29

30 INT. DIMKPA'S ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 30

Small but well-appointed room with a few pieces of expensive gadgets, a huge flat screen TV etc. Adanne is seating on the mattress, sobbing and hugging herself, Dimkpa is seated opposite and is trying to soothe her. He eventually moves to sit beside her and puts an arm around her.

DIMKPA
Omalicham, *ozugo*. It's enough. You
have been crying all day.
(In Igbo)
This thing that happened is not
your fault oh! It is not!

Adanne bows her head and sobs even louder. Dimkpa stands with an exasperated sigh and paces the room. Then he returns and sits very close to Adanne.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
(Intensely)
Shhh. Nne'm it is enough.

He starts to get touchy as his breathing deepens and Adanne's sobs subside. He gently pushes her onto the bed, and his legs slide over hers. As he amorously covers her neck with kisses, Camera zooms in to show Adanne staring at the ceiling with blank eyes. After a beat, her features tighten and she starts to struggle with Dimkpa.

ADANNE
Oooo. I don't need this Dimkpa!

DIMKPA
Oma, let me love you, let your man
love you! Let me help you forget
your pain. Na you go chop this
body?

With a loud grunt, Adanne pulls out from his embrace and sits up with her head in hands. Dimkpa tries to pull her into his embrace but she refuses and stands with a wry expression.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(In Igbo)
Mama Adanne, it is enough. It will
get better. It is well.

Mama Adanne nods but does not raise her head.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM (CONT'D)
(Igbo intermingled with
English, Pidgin)
This woman that came to speak to
us, talk to her now, eh? They say
she helps widows, ehen talk to her!
If it's small money to put inside
the business let her give you. Or
didn't you see the weight of the
gold she was wearing? Hmmm. E
remain small make me sef answer say
I be widow.

Mama Adanne raises her head and wipes her eyes slowly.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
Is she still around?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
Ehen! Somebody that is sharing
money outside. I am just thinking
what I will tell her happened to me
to make her give me money? Eh...
Should I say my child is sick and
on admission?

MAMA ADANNE
(Her face contorts in
sorrow.)
You say?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
Oh! Nne'm oh! Forgive me!
(Slaps herself on the
forehead)
My mind was not there. Eh, don't
worry, there is no problem. You be
going first.

She herds Mama Adanne in the direction of the entrance where
a few women are milling around CHIEF MRS OKEORA, a very well
dressed woman in her late fifties.

Pictures of Lola and Lanre Olusola dot the foyer. Lola Olusola is seated and looking through swaths of lace materials and geles. Her vendor, AKUDO EKWEREMMADU, a light-skinned buxom lady in her late thirties is nursing a glass of juice and folding piles of materials.

LOLA
(Holding up a material)
This is it! Ahhh!

AKUDO
Madam the Madam! You know that I know what is good for you! When I was buying this material in Dubai, infact, as soon as I saw this one, I pictured two people-
(Holds up two fingers)

LOLA
(Frowns)
Two?

AKUDO
Yes oh! You and Mrs Kolawole! When una two go knack this lace, heads will ro...

LOLA
Abeg, abeg, abeg. How many yards do you have?

AKUDO
(Excitedly)
Just 12 yards. Only two of you will...

LOLA
(Shaking her head)
Akudo, I will buy the entire 12 yards. I cannot be wearing the same clothes with a snake.

AKUDO
(Eyes widen in interest)
Ehen? Okay oh. This one you called your best friend a snake?

LOLA
Best friend?
(Raises an eyebrow and cackles)
(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)

With friends like that, who needs enemies? I will take the 12 yards and...

AKUDO

Madam O... I don't want to do 'gbegborun' ooo... but what happened now?

LOLA

A fool at 40 is a fool forever Akudo. I have turned 40 and I can no longer be fooling myself that these people are my friends. All they do is talk about their children this, their children that...

(Getting agitated)

What about me? What about me?

AKUDO

(Exhales)

Hmmmm...Madam, I have been meaning to tell you something for a long time now, it's just that, it's personal and...

Eyes widening with interest.

LOLA

About Mrs Kolawole?

AKUDO

No oh! I only tell my clients helpful things o.

(Lowers Her voice and glances around)

About this children matter...

LOLA

(Skeptically)

You know something?

AKUDO

(Nodding vigorously)

35

Yes Ma! I know something!

35

36

EXT. ADANNE'S STREET, COMMUNAL TAP - AFTERNOON

36

Adanne is queueing at the tap for water amidst a crowd of raucous children. She stands aloof as some of the younger children stare and point curiously at her eye patch.

Further down the street on a patch of land, Ichie and a few other boys are kicking a ragged ball around. Dimkpa drives by on a motorcycle, stops and watches the boys for a few minutes before alighting and lowering a face cap over his face. He walks briskly towards Ichie.

DIMKPA
(Whistling)
Heyy! Ichie million! *Nwanne! Kedu?*

ICHIE
(Swiping sweat and running towards Dimkpa)
Odi nma... you are not supposed to be here?

DIMKPA
Ichie million! Sharp boy. I want you to give your sister something for me... Una never come sell since...

ICHIE
(Distracted by the shouts of the footballers.)
Okay what is it?

Holds out his hand impatiently.

DIMKPA
(Miffed)
Ehh? Is like that? And I was even saying that I want to buy you people a new rubber... but...

ICHIE
(With great interest; In Igbo)
You say? Ah! Uncle Dimkpa! Good man! So, what is it now? Give me.
(In English)
I will run and give her. You can even wait here so if she replies I will bring it back.

Dimkpa smiles and brings out a letter from his pocket. Then he counts four N500 notes from his wallet and hands all of them to Ichie.

DIMKPA
Give your sister the envelope, and two of those. Take one, then use the other one to buy your ball.

ICHIE
(Excitedly does a little
dance)
Thank you Sir.

DIMKPA
It's not like you people know how
to play it sef. One day, I will
come and teach your boys how to
play football.
(Points at the children;
In Igbo)
This is child's play. Alright, get
going!

ICHIE
Will you wait for the reply?

DIMKPA
No, no need. We will be seeing.

As Ichie runs off, Dimkpa returns to his bike and mounts it.

CHILD FOOTBALLER
(Yelling)
ICHIE! ARE YOU GOING HOME?

Ichie waves a hand and responds but his reply is unheard as
Dimkpa starts his bike and drives off in a cloud of red dust.

CUT TO:

37

INT. DIMKPA'S MECHANIC SHED - EARLY EVENING

37

Adanne and Dimkpa are seated inside a car in the mechanic's
shed.

ADANNE
...So, she works in Madam Okeora's
restaurant now. Goes with Eze in
the morning and comes home very
late. Plus she says Mrs Okeora is
thinking of opening somewhere for
her soon... at least that is what I
hear her telling Ichie.

DIMKPA
I know of that woman oh. She made
her money from bunkering in the
early 90's... Strong woman.

Adanne takes a sip from a bottle in her hand.

ADANNE

Eh, Dimkpa...

DIMKPA

Omalicha'm...

ADANNE

I think I am ready... for that arrangement you talked about. I didn't want do it because of IG, you know he always needed me...

Adanne breaks down in tears and Dimkpa leans forward to comfort her.

ADANNE (CONT'D)

But what good was I? I was useless, useless!

Adanne continues sobbing hysterically.

DIMKPA

Oma... why do you keep blaming yourself? It is not your fault. You tried, you tried... IG was... you know... It's okay.

Dimkpa hugs her tightly until her sobs subside.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)

But if you are ready to do this, it has to be now now oh. You know that my Uncle's family has been waiting for you for almost six months now, I have been promising them that I have a very good girl that will come and live with them.

ADANNE

School nko? They agreed about school?

DIMKPA

Ah! That was the most important thing I told them oh. But they said you will have to start from SS1 again because the secondary schools in Lagos don't admit students into SS2.

ADANNE

(Eye shining)

Ehen?

(MORE)

ADANNE (CONT'D)

Well, they might be calling me
Aunty in the class, but do I care?

Dimkpa and Adanne laugh.

DIMKPA

You will still be the most
beautiful girl in the class...
Omalicha'm.

Adanne's hands go to her eye patch.

ADANNE

Even with this?

DIMPKA

(Passionately)

Kpomkwem! How many girls wear one
eye-patch? Nne i di bad!

They laugh uproariously.

ADANNE

So, when? When should I prepare?

DIMKPA

Tomorrow...

ADANNE

(Surprised)

Tomorrow?

DIMKPA

Time wait for no man oh. Start
quickly so they can pay you salary
quickly. 20k! 20k!

(In Igbo)

Is that a small money?

Adanne sighs and reclines on the chair.

ADANNE

Okay, I will start packing...

DIMKPA

Pack what? They will buy you
clothes. Just take small things so
that your Mama, won't notice quick
quick. Even Ichie, you can't tell
him anything...

Adanne sighs and sits up.

Adanne just nods and hangs on to Dimkpa. When they arrive at the station wagon, EJIOGU, a skinny, tall man who is leaning on the car waves.

EJIOGU
(Saluting)
Dimkpa ji ego!

Dimkpa and Ejiogu exchange handshakes and back claps. Adanne stares at the people inside the vehicle- PAPILO, a young man in the passenger seat and another young man in the back seat with three young ladies.

EJIOGU (CONT'D)
I been reserve seat dey wait oh.

DIMKPA
(In Igbo)
You have done well. My girl was a little late.

EJIOGU
(In Igbo)
There is no problem. You are my man now. Alright, let her fall in.
(Calls out in Pidgin)
One passenger remain oh!

DIMKPA
Mbanu! Motor don full. I dey follow my babe oh. I don park motorcycle for Binna garage.
(In Igbo)
Tomorrow, I will return with you.

Dimkpa gestures at Adanne and she removes her backpack and enters the car as Ejiogu cackles.

EJIOGU
See love nwantinti oh! Dimkpa ji egoooo!!!

PAPILO
(To Ejiogu)
Nwanne your motor don full. Wetin dey hold us again?

Ejiogu moves around the car, shuts his booth and ensures the car doors are shut. Then he opens his door and steps into the car.

CUT TO:

42

INT. EXPRESS ROAD, EJIUGU'S CAR- NIGHT

42

Adanne is sleeping, her head on Dimkpa's shoulder. The other two ladies are sleeping as well. Splashes of moonlight filter into and illuminate the car as Papilo passes pieces of clothes to Dimkpa and the young man seated beside the two ladies behind. Camera zooms on Dimkpa as he dispassionately places the cloth over Adanne's face.

FADE TO BLACK.

43

EXT. IKENGA FOREST, AGUATA - AFTERNOON - ESTABLISHING

43

Establishes a cluster of bungalows in a gated clearing nestled deep in the forest.

44

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, A DARK ROOM -EVENING

44

In a windowless room, Adanne and five other girls are strewn on a cemented floor. They start to moan as they start to wake up. Three men are standing guard, their faces shadowed. Adanne sits up, her eyes bleary, cradling her head in her hands. She squints as she slowly looks around the room. Her eyes rest on one of the men and she staggers to her feet and as she approaches him, we make out his features. It is Dimkpa.

ADANNE

(With a husky, uncertain
tone)

Di, Dimkpa, Dimkpa?

She whimpers and hurries towards him though he does not respond. When she stretches her hands to touch him, he roughly shoves her to the floor. Adanne bursts into tears.

ADANNE (CONT'D)

(Groggily) (In Igbo)

Dimkpa, is this the Lagos? Dimkpa!

Answer me ooo, take me home ooo...

The other girls start moaning and crying too and a few try to reach the door but are violently and easily overpowered by the men.

CUT TO:

A woman's well manicured feet shod in expensive slippers clicks its way towards the door holding the girls as the sounds of their wailing echoes outside. She pushes the door open.

DISSOLVE TO:

Lola Olusola steps into her living room carrying a handbag and looking exhausted. She makes a beeline for Lanre who is playing a grand piano but halts in her tracks when she sees the half full bottle of brandy and the glass beside him.

LOLA

Babe?

(She indicates the glass
of brandy beside him)

Isn't it a little too early in the
week?

Lanre smiles, plays a jazzy note and then rises. He goes to her and tries to plant a kiss on her lips, but at the last moment she averts her face.

LOLA (CONT'D)

Ewww. I do not want those fumes all
up in my space.

Lanre sighs and goes to pick up his glass as Lola sits on the settee looking unhappy.

LANRE

You gonna come home late and rain
on my parade? Naaa.

LOLA

Rain on your parade? Hmmph! You
have accomplished that all by
yourself.

LANRE

Yeah! I have been home alone since
4PM! What was a man to do?

Lola sighs as she searches for an object in her hand bag and Lanre sits opposite her.

LOLA

Make music! I thought that was what you did? Why do I think you never even opened the door to the studio today?

LANRE

You think too much...

LOLA

...And you drink too much. How is that for a line in the new album?

They stare at each other balefully for a few seconds until Lola breaks the stare and sighs again. She rises and goes to him and sits on his legs. Then she pries the glass out of his fingers and sets it on a stool. He tries to nuzzle her but she shakes her head and pushes him off.

LOLA (CONT'D)

Calm down cowboy. You smell like a distillery and you are going to need to scrub off if you want me in your saddle.

LANRE

(Neighs like a horse and makes a galloping motion)
Giddy up, giddy up!

LOLA

(Exasperated)
Lanre, listen! God!
(She rises and paces)
I hate it when you get like this!

LANRE

(Sobering up and rising to hug her)
Hey Mama, I'm just fooling around.

Lola sighs and stares him in the eyes. Satisfied with her observation, she returns the hug and they slow dance in each other's arms.

LOLA

Babe...

LANRE

Mama...

LOLA

I have got some news...

LANRE
Daddy loves news... make it a good one.

LOLA
Oh it's good. Can you handle it?

LANRE
Daddy can handle anything. He's a big boy.

Lola disengages from his embrace but holds onto his hands. There is a huge smile on her face.

LANRE CONT'D
The Cheshire cat didn't grin quite so widely. What is up?

LOLA
I think you are going to get to play Daddy... and not just when you are spanking me for being naughty.

Lanre blinks as he tries to comprehend the information and as his mouth drops open in astonishment, Lola winks at him.

LOLA (CONT'D)
(Nodding and smiling)
Yes, Daddy.

47 INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, DARK ROOM -NIGHT- SERIES OF SHOTS

A) A girl is screaming soundlessly as Papilo makes an incision on her upper right arm.

B) Another girl is being forced to drink a dark liquid by a faceless man.

C) Adanne is lying on her back, tears streaming down her face as a man pins down her hands and ostensibly rapes her.

D) The face of the man on Adanne is revealed as Dimkpa.

48 **SCREEN CAPTION: FOUR MONTHS LATER** 48

49 **EXT. LOCAL POLICE STATION - AFTERNOON - ESTABLISHING** 49

Mama Adanne and Ichie are in the DPO's office; a skinny, bespectacled man who loves to use big words in his late fifties. He is studying a picture of Adanne clipped to a police file while Mama Adanne wrings her hands.

MAMA ADANNE
(Hesitantly)
Sir...

The DPO neither responds nor acknowledges her call.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
DPO Sir...

DPO
(With an exasperated sigh)
What? Madam, what? Do you not witness me perusing the dossier containing your daughter's information?

MAMA ADANNE
(Perplexed)
Ehh?

ICHIE
(In Igbo)
He is reading where they wrote everything about Adanne.

DPO peers at Mama Adanne over the rims of his glasses.

DPO
My officers have informed me that this is an obvious no-brainer runaway circumstance. And from the dossier...
(Indicates the almost empty file)
I am inclined and compelled to presume that, that it is indeed the case. Why you and your son...
I.C.H.I.E...
(Glances at Ichie)
Is that you?

Ichie nods gravely.

ICHIE
Yes Sir, it is me.

Mama Adanne glances from DPO to Ichie, her face screwed up in worry and the struggle to comprehend.

DPO

(Clears throat)

Yes, you and your son confirmed that certain personal belongings of the teenager in question went missing. So unless a burglar broke into your humble abode and relieved you of these items...

(Squints as he lists the items)

A blue jacket, several underwear, school textbooks and a pair of...

(With sarcasm)

Very valuable rubber sandals, I am afraid we will not be making any further entries in this dossier.

He places the file on the table as Ichie and Mama Adanne exchange perplexed looks.

MAMA ADANNE

(In heavily accented English)

Sir, DPO Sir. I not understand. Ehh, last week...

ICHIE

(Interrupting)

Two weeks ago...

MAMA ADANNE

Ehh. Two weeks ago, DPO Sir, you say, come back. We find her. We look, she come back.

DPO

Madam...

(Glances at the file)

Mrs Malizu... we do not commit our resources to locating block-headed, twitchy and silly little girls who flee their inhospitable little homes. We are here to battle the nefarious underworld, the teeming underbelly of crime in the city. And...

(He points a skinny finger at Ichie)

You had better watch this one... looks like he might be our guest in the very near future.

Mama Adanne's eyes harden as she stares at the DPO while Ichie mumbles curse words under his breath. [Ad-Lib]

Mama Adanne rises and reties her wrapper while glaring at the DPO.

MAMA ADANNE
You say Adanne block-headed?

DPO
(Rising too)
And silly too!

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
Your head is not correct. Infact
your head is carrying the block.

DPO
(In Igbo)
You say what? Come this overloaded
woman, don't insult me here.

Mama Adanne sneers at him and claps her hands. Ichie stares in horror at the two adults.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
You see it? *Onye iberibe!*
(In pidgin) (Eyes widened
and arms akimbo)
So you sabi speak Igbo?

DPO
I will not condescend to
speak gutter language with
you woman. Now you will take
your disgusting self out of
my immediate vicinity or you
will be removed forthwith!
you cannot intimidate the
police with your vulgarity!
Be gone, woman!

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
Hooheoo!
(Voice raised) (In Igbo)
Say the truth! It is money
you want! You think I don't
have money? See you! Bag of
bones. Have you seen food to
eat? Don't worry, I won't
come and waste my time here
again. You think I don't know
big people?

The door to the office swings open and two officers dash in.

OFFICER 1
Sir, we overhead a brouhaha. Who is
the offender sir?

DPO
Took your doggoned time getting
here! I told you to listen in and
barge in as soon as I dropped the
dossier on the table!
(Gestures as the heaving
Mama Adanne)
Get this creature out of my sight.

OFFICERS
'Shun sir! Immediately sir.

Mama Adanne is already barrelling towards the exit, Ichie in
tow.

MAMA ADANNE
(Mumbling in Igbo)
If you people touch me, I will bite
somebody here. If you like, throw
me in prison.

Officers follows her, making threats [Ad-lib] and leave.

DPO
WILL SOMEBODY SHUT THE DOGGONED
DOOR?

OFFICER 1
(Turning back)
Most apologetically sir.

He shuts the door.

DPO
(Shaking his head)
Hillbillies, all of them!

CUT TO:

51 **EXT. GRA, ONITSHA. - EVENING - ESTABLISHING** 51

Scenic view of the GRA in the Onitsha metropolis.

52 **EXT. CHIEF OKEORA'S MANSION, GRA - EVENING - CONTINUOUS** 52

Mama Adanne is seated on a chair under the shade of a tree
eating boiled groundnut. Eze is playing beside her while
Ichie reads a book. The gates open and a Toyota jeep drives
in. Mama Adanne rises with expectation and watches as an aide
opens the doors and Chief Mrs Okeora alights from the
vehicle. A YOUNG GIRL runs from behind the house, greets
Chief Okeora and collects her handbag.

ICHIE
That's Adanne's friend from church.

MAMA ADANNE
Sssshhhh.
(In Igbo)
Get up! Run and go and greet. Eze,
run, go and greet big Mummy.

Eze runs off.

EZE
(Yelling)
Big Mummy Oyoyo!

Ichie follows at a more sedate pace.

Chief Okeora smiles as Eze dashes up to her and greets him affectionately [Ad-lib]. She rubs Ichie's head and they all head towards Mama Adanne. Mama Adanne curtsies, a huge smile plastered on her face.

MAMA ADANNE
(Singing an Igbo praise
song and dancing)
Chief Okeora, Chief Okeora, i bu
anya anyi ji afuzo, agada gbachiri
uzo nwanyi obioma, olileanya nke di
mma, anyi n'enweghi okwu, anyi
n'enwero onu, gi ni ka'm ga-eji
toro gi, soro gi, aga m agb isi ala
nye gi ekele, Chief Okeora.

Chief Okeora sways to the song, a small smile on her lips.

CHIEF OKEORA
Mama Adanne ooooo...

MAMA ADANNE
Ma?

CHIEF OKEORA
Ogadinma ooo? It will be well.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
That is what we are begging from
God oh.
(Curtsies again)
Welcome Chief, welcome. It has been
a while since I have been waiting
for you to return from your travel.
The Children are well?

CHIEF OKEORA

Thank you. The children are very well.

(In Igbo)

You know the white man's country is not somewhere you go to today and return tomorrow. The journey is too far.

Mama Adanne nods. At the carport, the CHAUFFEUR off-loads luggage from the booth.

CHIEF OKEORA (CONT'D)

(To Ichie and Eze)

Alright, you can run to Mmirioma at the back of the house. Tell her to give you Ribena okay? Before you leave, I will give you your gift from obodo-oyibo.

Ichie and Eze speed off with glee as Chief Okeora sits beside Mama Adanne.

CHIEF OKEORA (CONT'D)

Anything new?

MAMA ADANNE

Chief, mba ooo. That *iberibe* DPO no know anything.

CHIEF OKEORA

Hmmm... So we will go to the headquarters. Are they still insisting that she ran away by herself?

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Ehen! The thing is confusing me. Blood is thicker than water. Adanne loves her brothers.

CHIEF OKEORA

But you said that after Igwe...

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Chief, even if she ran away from sorrow, she will not stay away this long. Five months Chief! No, that's not the daughter I trained.

CHIEF OKEORA

(Pensively)

You have spoken like a mother, but now think like the police. Is it possible there is a ...man involved somewhere?

(In Igbo)

Mama Adanne, I have heard stories!

MAMA ADANNE

(Sighs) (In Igbo)

I am only a woman, I do not know everything, I am not God. But I know that all is not well with my daughter.

CUT TO:

53

EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE -AFTERNOON

53

A gaunt Adanne is seated on the floor in an untidy, open compound dotted with shabby bungalows. Behind her NKOYO, a short dark woman in her early twenties with low cut hair is weaving Adanne's hair. Nkoyo is heavily pregnant, and Adanne has a very visible bump too. They- as are most of the women carrying out various activities-washing clothes- fetching water- conversing- in the space are dressed in identical checkered, faded gowns.

ADANNE

(Scratching an arm covered with bites and sores)

...So, this is your 4th baby in...

NKOYO

I no know. E go be 4 years now. No be 9 months pikin dey stay for belle?

Adanne grimaces as Nkoyo pulls her hair.

ADANNE

Heyy! Easy oh. Na human being hair you dey pull.

NKOYO

Na u dey worry yourself. Wetin u dey use hair do? Who dey look your face for here? You no go cut this hair make person rest?

ADANNE

Hmmm... Nkoyo. Leave this hair matter abeg. My Daddy loved my hair plus when I leave here, I don't want Ichie to laugh at my 'ogo.'

NKOYO

(Sighs)

Adanneeee. I like you shaa. Only one belle you still carry you dey talk say, 'When I leave here?' No be like that oh. Me, e remain one before I go. And na to pray say you go dey born boy sef oh. You...

ADANNE

(Spits)

God forbid!

(Raises voice)

God in heaven forbid it! I would rather die than...

The other ladies turn towards them with interest and Nkoyo puts a hand over Adanne's mouth.

NKOYO

(Alarmed)

Ha! Ada! No land me for wahala here oh. Me I wan do my own jejely comot.

A hush falls over the compound as the MIDWIFE - an old, bent, wrinkled woman steps outside a room and shuffles towards the outhouses. Adanne stares at her with hatred.

ADANNE

(Whispers)

That one... what is she waiting for before she dies? To get older?

NKOYO

Adanne! I don beg you now! No dey talk anyhow. That woman na winch! Ogbonge winch! She fit know whether na boy or girl person carry for belle. Abeg, dey talk small small.

ADANNE

(Sighs)

But how you make that kind mistake? You agreed to do this?

Glances over her shoulder at Nkoyo.

NKOYO

Which one be dis? I say person meet me where I dey hustle for Delta state, tell me say make I help am carry one belle, e go pay me 500g. I say okay. E come say make I come, make e take care of me as I dey carry the belle... gbam! Na im be dis oh. Na the taking care be dis.

ADANNE

The money nko?

NKOYO

Dem say na after I born this one, they go calculate am, join, give me.

ADANNE

(Turns to face Nkoyo, disbelief etched on her face)

And you believe them?

(Scoffs)

That is what my Daddy calls a 'cock and bull' story.

NKOYO

My Daddy, my Daddy, my Daddy...

(With a smile)

Where this your Daddy dey sef?

PAPILO, a brawny, dark skinned man with a scarred face- steps into the compound from the direction of the outhouses slowly followed by the Midwife.

PAPILO

Heyyy! These toilets dey smell.

(In Igbo)

Can't you people smell this thing I am smelling?

Points to a cluster of girls.

PAPILO (CONT'D)

You, Immaculata, Uje, Chiemelie,

Swings his gaze around and spots Adanne.

PAPILO (CONT'D)

Adanne... Make una go fetch water, wash up those toilets now now.

Adanne's face contorts and she fights back tears. Papilo moves past and as the Midwife passes by, she turns and stares at Adanne for a moment. Then she moves on and re-enters her room.

Adanne rises slowly assisted by Nkoyo, her hands clutching her womb.

DISSOLVE TO:

54

EXT. OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, THE COMPOUND - EVENING

54

Well-manicured and ringed hands are placed around a bulging stomach clad in white and as the camera zooms out, we see that Lola Olusola is pregnant and standing at what is ostensibly her baby shower. Everyone is dressed in white, gifts are stacked to one side and there is a cake shaped like a bunny.

MRS TEMI KOLAWOLE, a cheerful, tall, attractive woman in her early forties approaches the Lola, dressed in white and bearing a colorfully wrapped package.

MRS TEMI KOLAWOLE

My darling, my darling! Mama ibeji!
See how you are shining! Ah!

They exchange affectionate hugs and Mrs Temi gingerly keeps her gift on a table, opens her designer handbag and brandishes a selfie stick.

MRS TEMI KOLAWOLE (CONT'D)

Oya! It's time to disturb the
'gram. Let us flood the timeline!
Hashtag...

(In Yoruba)

What will we use as hashtag sef?

LOLA

Ahh! They are plenty!
#PreggerThings #YummyMummyLoading
#LolasBabyShower #Letsgothere...

LANRE (O.S.)

#Itsamiracle, #Howdidthishappen

Temi and Lola turn as Lanre approaches, nursing a wine glass.

MRS TEMI KOLAWOLE

(Laughing heartily)

I will tell you how it happened...

(In Yoruba)

Since you now don't know.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Play! Every time play! Have you asked me whether I have eaten? *Mgbo*, Ichie?

ICHIE

Mama, is it me that said it? Ehhh, you cook in a restaurant now, you have eaten.

Mama Adanne sighs wearily and reclines on the chair, whilst fanning herself with a piece of paper.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

You see now, if Adanne was here...

Ichie rolls his eyes and goes to one side of the room. He opens a bowl and peers into it.

ICHIE

(In Igbo)

The food we remained in the morning is still here?

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Oho! You people are now wasting food? Food that I suffered to prepare, it is still remaining? *Ngwanu*, prepare to eat it for lunch and dinner if possible.

Eze starts crying and throwing a mild tantrum.

EZE

I want to go and play, I want to go and play...

Mama Adanne ignores him, her attention solely on Ichie.

MAMA ADANNE

Ichie, *bia*...

Pats the space on the mattress beside her.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

Come and siddon here.

ICHIE

(Apprehensively)

(In Igbo)

(MORE)

ICHIE (CONT'D)
Don't slap me oh! Ehen, nobody
should slap me oh.

He shuffles towards the space indicated and sits, his hands
shielding his face.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
My first born son. Ichie million.
The child that makes his mother
proud.
(In English)
What that thing your Daddy call
you?

ICHIE
(Suspiciously)
...The heir to the throne?

MAMA ADANNE
Ehen! That one too.
(In Igbo)
Ichie, I want to ask you a
question. Please think well before
you answer that question. I am
begging you in the name of God.

Mama Adanne glances at Eze who has quietened and is lying on
the mattress and lowers her voice.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
Ichie... does Adanne have man that
is liking her? Or want to marry
her? Giving her small small
something? Eh, boyfriend?

ICHIE
(Jerks in surprise and
averts his gaze from Mama
Adanne)
Eh, mmm, I don't kn...

MAMA ADANNE
Ichie! Biko!
(In Igbo)
Tell me the truth!

ICHIE
(Eyes downcast, he
mumbles)
I don't know if he wants to marry
her oh, but there is one...

MAMA ADANNE
(Clapping her hands
impatiently)
(In Igbo)
This child speak up! Is there a
frog in your throat?

ICHIE
(Louder)
Dimkpa. That is his name.

MAMA ADANNE
(Struggling with emotions
of anger and
disappointment)
Ehen. Dimkpa.

Mama Adanne folds her arms and stares into space for a moment. The room is deathly quiet.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
He lives where?

ICHIE
It is near the market we used to
see him. He is a mechanic.

MAMA ADANNE
(Shuddering)
Mechanic! *Ngwanu*, let's go.

ICHIE
Go where?

Mama Adanne slaps Ichie with both hands, on both sides of his face. The boy howls and scrambles away, tears springing into his eyes as he cradles his face.

ICHIE (CONT'D)
Mama! What did I do?

Eze wakes up and starts crying again. Mama Adanne scowls at both of them and picks up her handbag.

MAMA ADANNE
That is for asking *iberibe*
question.

CUT TO:

Dimkpa is dressed in a grimy coverall and tinkering in the bonnet of a car. His APPRENTICE is under the hood of another car. A loud bang startles him and he drops his tools and glances around. Mama Adanne is standing near the entrance, wielding a large spanner. Ichie and Eze are standing beside her. Dimkpa is speechless and motionless.

MAMA ADANNE
 (Advances towards him,
 spanner in hand)
 Where Adanne dey?

Dimkpa retreats a step. His apprentice slides out from under the hood and is watching, perplexed.

DIMKPA
 (Stammering)
 Eh. Who? I don't...

ICHIE
 (Belligerently)
 There is no need to lie Uncle
 Dimkpa. I told her everything.

MAMA ADANNE
 (Menacingly)
 I no ask question? WHERE MY
 DAUGHTER DEY?

DIMKPA
 Ah. Madam. Ichie's sister? The...
 (Indicates with his hands)
 ...young girl wey dey sell rice?

MAMA ADANNE
Ajuju nzuzu.

Mama Adanne raises the spanner and brings it down on the side mirror of the car Dimkpa was working on. It shatters and everybody cowers.

DIMKPA
 (Sputtering)
 Hey. Madam!
 (In Igbo)
 You know how much that thing is?
 You will pay oh! What do you think
 you are doing?

MAMA ADANNE
Ajuju nzuzu number 2.

Mama Adanne raises the spanner again. Passersby have started to gather and regard the unfolding event with interest.

DIMKPA
(Spittle flying and veins bulging)
Madam *mba*!
(In Igbo)
Ichie warn your mother oh! I will injure her oh. I will injure somebody here!

MAMA ADANNE
(Cocking her head)
Where Adanne dey?

DIMKPA
Madam I no know!
(In Igbo)
Is it me that is training your daughter for you?

MAMA ADANNE
Ajuju nzuzu number tiri.

Mama Adanne brings the spanner down on the head light. It shatters and Dimkpa leaps forward towards Mama Adanne but is restrained by his apprentice. Mama Adanne raises the spanner and adopts a fighting stance.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Beckons on Dimkpa)
(In Igbo)
Come, let me break your head.
Idiot.

DIMKPA
(To the crowd)
(In Igbo)
You people are watching this woman?
When I injure her, nobody should talk.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON FROM THE CROWD
Answer the question now. Where Adanne dey?

DIMKPA
Madam! I don't know where your daughter is! I used to buy rice from her and dash her my change sometimes...
(In Igbo)
Did I do something wrong?

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

Yam and goat cannot be left to stay
in the same place together.

DIMKPA

(Desperately)

Everybody know me. Na here I dey.
This na my shop. Since...

He casts a glance at Ichie's direction but the boys are no longer there. They have wandered away to watch a few boys playing football.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)

...Since they stop to sell food for
market, I never see am... Madam
that is the truth.

Mama Adanne stares coldly for a few minutes and then she throws the spanner in his direction. Dimkpa and his apprentice scramble away as it lands with a clang.

MAMA ADANNE

(Coldly)(In Igbo)

Pray. Pray very hard that when I
find my daughter, your hands are
not soiled. Because, I will destroy
much more than this rickety car
(nkirika motor).

Mama Adanne turns on her heel and walks away as the crowd starts dispersing. A few boys walk up to Dimkpa and he starts explaining/conversing. [AD-LIB]

DISSOLVE TO:

58

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL -EVENING

58

A hall-like hostel space strewn with mats and bedraggled mattresses. A few mosquito nets are strung up, slippers, buckets and up to 15 ladies in varying stages of pregnancy are lying throughout the space.

Adanne is lying beside Nkoyo trying to cover her legs in a threadbare wrapper and taking swipes at mosquitoes. Nkoyo keeps clutching her waist as she tries to ease the apparent discomfort of her bulging belly.

NKOYO

...But why you say na your fault
your Daddy die? People dey die Ada.
Na so life be.

ADANNE
(Touching her eye-patch)
So why did God punish me for it?
Why has my Mama punished me for it
everyday since it happened?

NKOYO
Ha! No be accident?

59 **INT. THE MALIZU'S FLAT, KITCHEN - EVENING - FLASHBACK SCENE 9**

A modest, empty kitchen. Zoom in to the switch of the gas cooker. It is turned on. The top of the gas cooker is covered in water that is leaking from a kettle.

ADANNE (V.O.)
...So playful, so forgetful, so
iberibe. I left the gas cooker
turned on.

Daddy steps into the kitchen. A more carefree, slightly younger, better dressed version of Adanne, appears at the door of the kitchen, laughing.

ADANNE (V.O.)
I had been having difficulties
lighting the gas cooker... so I
went to call my champion.

Daddy strikes a match and an explosion occurs.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

CUT BACK TO:

60 **INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL -EVENING**

60

NKOYO
(Mouth open)
Im burn, die, like dat?

ADANNE
(Cynically, wiping her
eyes)
No, im burn, im come resurrect. E
be phoenix.

NKOYO
(Pointing at Adanne's eye-
patch)
Ehen?

ADANNE
Something entered my eyes when the
kitchen exploded. Mama pulled me
out, all of us. Except...

61 **INT. MALIZU'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - MORNING - FLASHBACK SCENE 1**

The charred remains of the building as officials in reflector vests and safety boots walk through the rubble. Mama Adanne is covered in soot as she stands, watches and weeps. Her tears clearing lines through the soot on her face.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

CUT BACK TO:

62 **INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL -EVENING**

62

NKOYO
(Hands folded above her
belly)
Chaiiii!!! Chaiiii!!! Na im come make
you follow that yeye man run comot
for house?

ADANNE
Ah! Nkoyo your question no dey
finish today?

UJE, a pregnant woman in her mid-twenties lying next to Adanne, raises her head and hisses.

UJE
Abeg, make una dey talk small
small. Person wan sleep.

NKOYO
(Pointing and glaring at
Uje)
Heish! Heish! Park for your lane
wella before I slap spit comot for
your mouth! You know whether I go
come back after I born dis pikin?

ADANNE
(To Nkoyo)
Fighter! Everything no be fight!
Make we sleep.
(To Uje)
Sorry oh.

Adanne stretches out on the mattress and spreads her wrapper over herself. Nkoyo hisses.

NKOYO

This Uje na nonsense girl. She know
say I no fit sleep, she no go leave
Ada make e gist me?

ADANNE

(Chuckling)
Nkoyoooooooo...

CUT TO:

63

EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE - MORNING

63

The inhabitants are going about their daily chores, sweeping, fetching water and the like when a car drives into the compound.

Papilo jumps out of the car and starts yelling at the ladies.

PAPILO

Inside, inside, move, move!
Lockdown! Make I no see anybody
outside! Move!

The ladies drop everything and hurry to the hostel entrance. Adanne assists Nkoyo who is moving very slowly and they wind up entering last. Just as Adanne turns to shut the door behind her, a Toyota Jeep also pulls into the compound.

64

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

64

The ladies sit in silence in their hostel and wait as wails and cries resound from the adjoining bungalow. Adanne is sobbing quietly and closing her ears to the sounds. Nkoyo tries to distract her.

NKOYO

E be like say I see that your bobo
for the car oh...

ADANNE

(Anguished)
Nkoyo abeg...

NKOYO

(Indifferently)
E go soon end, no cry... So wetin
the yeye man tell you make you gree
follow am...

ADANNE

Nkoyo!

NKOYO

Cry no dey help anybody. Talk, make vex vex you.

ADANNE

He didn't tell me anything okay? I killed another member of my family and I decided enough was enough!

NKOYO

You? You no fit kill anybody Ada.

ADANNE

(Shakes her head sadly)
An okada hit my brother when he was coming to welcome me...

NKOYO

...Dem kill the okada man? Hope say dey mob am die. Abi im begin beg?

ADANNE

Beg? He ran away!

NKOYO

Heyyy!!!

The other ladies turn and glance in Nkoyo's direction.

NKOYO (CONT'D)

(Eyes bulging)
Hit and run! Na im you come gree comot for house? Hiannn... I dey smell fish for hia ooo.

ADANNE

(Smiles sadly)
Nkoyo...

NKOYO

Check the thing na! The bobo be want make you comot house. Just like that okada kill your brother, you comot house...
Your bobo get okada?

ADANNE

(Mouth hanging open)
First, he's not my bobo. Second, that's not even possible... Dim...

NKOYO
(Rolling her eyes)
Wetin? E love you too much to hurt
you? E get okada? E get friend wey
get okada?

ADANNE
(Quietly)
Yes... yes. He has a motorcycle...

Adanne cradles her head in hands and starts rocking herself
and moaning. Nkoyo stares aghast.

ADANNE (V.O.)
...And he also knew that Igwe was
the reason I wouldn't leave home.
What have I done?

NKOYO
Ah, sorry. You never think am
before? Sorry oh. At least you don
know say no be you kill am.

The hostel door is opened and Papilo pokes a head inside.

PAPILO
Lockdown don end. Resume your work.

The sounds of cars revving and driving off are heard behind
him.

DISSOLVE TO:

65 **EXT. LAGOS CITY METROPOLIS - AFTERNOON - ESTABLISHING** 65

Establishing shots of Victoria Island, a high end shopping
street.

66 **INT. V/I, HIGH-END BABIES SHOP - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS** 66

Lola and Temi Kolawaole are browsing through supplies for
babies. Temi picks up a beautiful pink ballerina gown.

TEMI KOLAWOLE
Babes... is it gonna have a V or a
D? I am so itching to buy a bagful
of these.

LOLA
Buy what you like Temi, me I have
told you we are flying blue. I can
keep those for next time.

TEMI KOLAWOLE
Ah! You didn't tell me you had gone
for the scan... Lanre must be so
thrilled. #Minimeloading.

LOLA
(Absently picking up a set
of blue onesies)
Mmmm... he's alright. Doesn't mind
either ways.

TEMI KOLAWOLE
He shouldn't... did you take a 3D
scan of our lad?
(Excitedly)
Let me see! He must have all his
bits in place at 7 months.

LOLA
I didn't take a 3D anything Temi. I
didn't even do a scan.

TEMI KOLAWOLE
Duh! How do you know the sex of
your child?

LOLA
(Smugly)
I just do... God told me.

TEMI KOLAWOLE
(Mouth hanging open)
Lolade. Are you joking? Now a god
is talking to you?

Lola shrugs and heads into another aisle and Temi Kolawole
follows. A shop attendant moves their heavily laden cart
after them.

TEMI KOLAWOLE (CONT'D)
What? Next thing you will tell me
you didn't take your routine drugs
and you will give birth in your
bedroom?

LOLA
(Balefully)
Yeah, so? What do you care?

TEMI KOLAWOLE
(Stops in her tracks)
What the hell is wrong with you?
You are a friggin' Pharmacist.
(MORE)

TEMI KOLAWOLE (CONT'D)
Your first child might not be the
right time to go herbal! Or
whatever else this is about...

LOLA
(Gets into Temi's face)
You are so right! I am a
pharmacist, and I know exactly what
I need! You know what I don't need?
A trophy wife telling me what I
need!

Lola stomps off, leaving a shocked Temi staring after her.
The Shop Attendant with the cart wavers between both women,
trying to decide whether to follow Lola or stick with Temi.

DISSOLVE TO:

67 **INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, BIRTHING ROOM -EVENING** 67

Nkoyo is in distress. She is having difficulties with her
delivery despite the Midwife's calm and practised attentions.
Nkoyo screams and her moans reach a crescendo and then start
to fade away as the life ebbs out of her.

68 **EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE - EVENING** 68

Adanne, Uje and Chiemelie are pacing with worry as darkness
falls. At the door to the birthing room where Nkoyo labours,
Papilo stands guard.

UJE
She no dey too shout again...

CHIEMELIE
(Hopefully)
Chukwunna! Make e be say the baby
don turn ooo.

ADANNE
(Eyes hollowed with fear)
Turn? The baby needs to turn
somewhere?

CHIEMELIE
(Nodding gravely)
Ehen.
(She exemplifies with
Adanne's stomach)
Baby suppose lie straight, like
this, but Nkoyo pikin no put head
down. So, e suppose turn...

UJE
(To Chiemelie)
No make the pikin fear na. I trust
Midwife. She go turn the baby.

As she speaks, the door to the birthing room opens and an exhausted Midwife steps out. The room behind her is dark and silent. The Midwife inclines her head a few times at Papilo and then proceeds towards her room without a glance at the girls.

Uje puts her hands on her head and Chiemelie whelps. Adanne stands clueless, watching the door to the birthing room eagerly.

PAPILO
(To the girls)
Oya, lock-down! Enter your room
immediately.

Chiemelie starts weeping as she heads in the direction of the hostel. Uje puts an arm around Adanne and gently drags her away.

ADANNE
(Resisting)
Wait now! Won't we welcome Nkoyo
again? You said we will take care
of her!

CHIEMELIE
(Wailing; In Igbo)
Plus the child and the mother? No
one came out?

ADANNE
(Perplexed)
What is she saying?

Adanne glances towards the birthing room where Papilo is preparing a body bag made from rice sacks.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Staggering as realization
dawn)
I thought you all said the Midwife
was a witch...?

Adanne screams and starts to fall to the ground but Uje supports her.

UJE
(Grunting)
Chiemelie abeg come help me.

Chiemelie joins in supporting the near-hysterical Adanne who is howling.

PAPILO
(Angrily)
Who be that bush baby? Shut up! Una
still dey here?

Papilo approaches the trio menacingly and they increase their pace, still supporting the bereft Adanne.

CUT TO:

69

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL - AFTERNOON

69

Adanne lies unmoving, eyes filled with tears. A plate of watery beans and a small orange are on the floor beside her but she does not acknowledge it. A few girls stare in her direction as they walk around but no one makes any attempt to approach her.

The door opens and the Midwife accompanied by Chiemelie step into the hostel and head towards Adanne's prone form. The Midwife stoops at Adanne's side and attempts to examine Adanne's stomach but Adanne slaps her hands away fiercely.

CHIEMELIE
(Startled)
Ah! Adanne!
(In Igbo)
Let her check if your body is
alright now.

ADANNE
(Sitting up and shifting
away from the Midwife)
E be like say you don dey craze. Is
this creature a doctor?

Midwife rises and glares at Adanne.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Scoffs)
I am not afraid of you!

CHIEMELIE
(Horrorified)
This small girl shut up!
Don't you know that when you want
to give birth, your life is in this
woman's hands? Treat her with
respect oh.

ADANNE
(Deflated)
Chiemelie please carry this woman
and go... please.

Midwife points at the plate of beans and at Adanne then indicates a feeding motion.

CHIEMELIE
Ngwanu, chop food. If you no wan
eat, your baby wan eat...

ADANNE
(Bitterly)
My baby? You mean their investment?

Uje enters the hostel licking an orange and observes the ongoing discussion.

CHIEMELIE
Adanne no be grammar be dis one!
(Indicates Midwife)
She no go comot until you begin
chop oh!

UJE
(Jutting in)
Eh! That food go don cold. Make I
go turn am for fire.

She brushes past Chiemelie and picks up the plate of beans. Midwife nods and turns to leave.

UJE (CONT'D)
No worry oh, I go feed am sef.

Midwife leaves and Uje turns on Chiemelie.

UJE (CONT'D)
Wetin dey do you? You want make Ada
quarrel the Ma?

CHIEMELIE
Na make she die here better? 2 days
person wey get belle never chop?

ADANNE
(Singing softly, as tears
stream down her face)
"Onye na-eme mma, imeela, imeela,
imeela, imeela, imeela...

Her voice breaks and Uje sighs, and leaves with the plate of food while Chiemelie watches Adanne in despair.

Well-appointed event hall. Women are seated around banquet tables listening attentively as Chief Okeora makes a speech from the podium. The stage is covered in a backdrop.

INSERT: OKEORA'S CENTRE FOR GIRLS

Mama Adanne is manning the food service centre with two ushers. Ichie is wiping dishes while Eze fiddles with the spoons.

CHIEF OKEORA

(Into microphone)

...it will provide shelter for the abandoned girl-child, the maltreated girl-child or even the one that has gotten pregnant out of wedlock. It is time we stop letting our archaic culture define how we treat our female children.

As her speech continues in the background (inaudibly), MRS NKEMAKOLAM rises from her table and goes to exchange greetings with Mama Adanne.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

(Cheerfully)

My friend! Ehen! See you oh. You didn't even come and greet me for connecting you to Chief Okeora.

Mama Adanne wipes her hands on her apron with a smile.

MAMA ADANNE

Ah! Mrs Nkemakolam.

(In Igbo)

Did I see your face again? How are you?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

I am fine oh. You are just there enjoying oh. You didn't remember your Sister-in-the-Lord.

MAMA ADANNE

(Chuckling)

You go come to the restaurant now... 51 Iwekam road... Let me make correct bitter leaf soup for you...

They both turn to face the podium as Chief Okeora's speech becomes audible.

CHIEF OKEORA

...If you will join me and pledge
to make our society safer for our
daughters, please rise to your
feet...

Mrs Nkemakolam waves at Mama Adanne and returns to her seat
as women rise, and the sound of chairs scraping floors echoes
through the hall.

71

I/E. BUSY MAIN ROAD, ONITSHA- EVENING

71

An station wagon over-loaded with pots, pans and other
culinary implements. Mama Adanne is seated in the passenger
seat beside a nondescript DRIVER. Ichie is cradling Eze's
head in the back seat which is also stuffed with table
covers, cartons of water etc.

MAMA ADANNE

(Glancing back; In Igbo)
Has he slept?

ICHIE

(Glumly staring out the
window)
Yes Mama.

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)
I know you people are tired, let's
drop off these things in the
restaurant oooo... the whole of
tomorrow you people can rest. We
won't go to church.

Ichie mumbles an inaudible response.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

Nna'm?

ICHIE

You know it's you fault eh? It is
you that caused it.

MAMA ADANNE

(Perplexed)
Gini is your fault?

ICHIE

(Agitated)
YOUR FAULT MAMA! It is because of
you Adanne ran away!

(MORE)

ICHIE (CONT'D)
Because you hated her! So she ran
away and left us!

Ichie starts sobbing brokenly and Eze stirs. The Driver
glances from mother to son and then concentrates on his
driving. Mama Adanne's mouth hangs open.

MAMA ADANNE
(With a small voice; In
Igbo)
Ichie... what did you say to me? Is
it me you opened your mouth and
spoke to that way?

DRIVER
(Shaking his head)
That's what we are saying about the
children of this generation. See
how this idiot is shouting at his
mother...

MAMA ADANNE
(Glaring at the Driver; In
Igbo)
...Who is the idiot? It is your
sons that are idiots...

DRIVER
Ehh! You say...

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
This man, drive the motor I paid
you to drive. Who called you into
this matter? Respect yourself and
mind your business.

DRIVER
(Sputtering)
See this foolish woman! You know I
have your type at home?

MAMA ADANNE
(Fingers splayed out and
pointed at the Driver's
head)
Thunder fire you ten times! What
type? Heyyy!
(In Igbo)
See this wretched man! Can you
carry me? It is only a strong man
that can carry me ooo... Does your
strength reach?

Eze sits up and stares in bewilderment, while Ichie wipes his eyes and attempts to cover a small smile.

ICHIE
Mama, *ozugo*...

DRIVER
(In Igbo)
I will just throw all your load on the floor and drop you here...

MAMA ADANNE
See *gwongworo* you are using to do guy...

Driver screeches to a stop and parks the vehicle by the roadside. He leaps out and goes to untie the bundle at the boot. Utensils fall to the ground with a clatter and Mama Adanne hurries out. She stares and starts picking up the objects and placing them side by side. Ichie opens the door and helps Eze out.

DRIVER
(Carrying a bundle of table clothes)
(In Igbo)
See how a woman is talking to a man? Is that how you speak to your husband at home? If I scatter your face with slap now...

MAMA ADANNE
(Straightening)
'Mad man!'
(In Igbo)
That's what Mr. Malizu will call you... are you my husband? Come, let me see the hand you want to use and slap me.

Driver enters the car and leaves. Mama Adanne tidies up and goes to stand beside the boys who are sitting on some coolers.

ICHIE
Mama... see what you have done?

MAMA ADANNE
(Waves him aside; In Igbo)
Leave him. We will find another car...

Mama Adanne arranges a cooler beside the boys and sits.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
See... don't be like these men who
think that having a penis makes
them better than a woman... Was
your Daddy like that?

Ichie shakes his head.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
Would Mr. Malizu throw out a woman
with children from his car in the
evening?

ICHIE
But Mama... you insulted him...

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
Ehen? Didn't he insult us first? So
if a girl insults you, you will
start talking nonsense? You will
slap her?

ICHIE
No oh, Mama! I won't!

Mama Adanne nods with satisfaction and rises to flag down a
vehicle which slows to a roll.

72 **INT. ADANNE'S HOME, ROOM - NIGHT**

72

Ichie and Eze are fast asleep and snoring slightly. Mama
Adanne is reclined at the edge of the mattress, the tears
streaming down her face are lit up by the light of a lantern.

MAMA ADANNE (V.O.)
I mourned him too long. My Dimkpa,
my English man.

73 **INT. MALIZU'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - MORNING - FLASHBACK SCENE** 3

Mr. Malizu rises to pull up a stool as Mama Adanne enters
bearing a tray of food. Adanne arrives bearing a jug of
water. The trio are beaming.

MAMA ADANNE (V.O.)
(In Igbo)
Adanneya! My heart! I missed Daddy
so much. My heart broke in so many
places... I could not fix it, so I
broke yours too... as if you were
not fragile already.
(MORE)

MAMA ADANNE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I hit you everyday until you
crumbled and scattered like dust...

CUT BACK TO:

74 INT. ADANNE'S HOME, ROOM - NIGHT

74

Mama Adanne's body shakes with muffled sobs.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
It's true, it's my fault. God,
forgive me... don't take her away
too! Ah! I can't bear it... I won't
bear this one again...

Camera pans to show Ichie's face. His eyes are open.

75 EXT. DIMKPA'S MECHANIC SHED - AFTERNOON

75

Ichie with Eze in tow arrive at Dimkpa's workshop dressed well in school uniforms. Dimkpa is seated on a bench with OBUMNEME, an unattractive lady in her early twenties eating snacks and drinks. The Apprentice hovers nearby, tinkering.

ICHIE
...Dimkpa...

DIMKPA
(Startled)
What is it now?

Dimkpa rises quickly, his snacks falling to the floor. The bench topples and Obumneme falls to the ground. Dimkpa ignores her and glances around fearfully.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
Where is your mother?

ICHIE
My mother? She did not follow us
today...

DIMKPA
Ehen? What do you want? Is it not
the money I was giving your sister
that put me in trouble?

ICHIE
(Heaves a sigh)
...We want you to help us beg
Adanne...

Dimkpa freezes in his tracks as does Obumneme. Ichie inclines his head towards Eze and they both kneel.

ICHIE (CONT'D)

Please, beg her for us. Tell her
Mama is sorry. Let her forgive and
forget. Let her remember us... her
brothers...

Ichie's eyes fill with tears.

OBUMNEME

(Perplexed; In Igbo)
What is happening?

ICHIE

I know you gave her one phone...
please call her...

OBUMNEME

Heyyy!
(Claps hands; In Igbo)
I said what is happening? You gave
who phone?

DIMKPA

Ichie...
(In Igbo)
I don't know where your sister
is... and I didn't give her any
phone. Maybe she stole your Mama's
money and bought phone and lied...

ICHIE

(Angrily rising and
pulling Eze up)
Uncle Dimkpa! How can you lie like
that?

DIMKPA

Bia! Comot for here! If you came to
beg for money, beg. Otherwise, get
out!

ICHIE

(Fiercely)
You are a liar! Maybe Mama is
right! You took Adanne somewhere! I
will tell her not to believe
anything you say.

Ichie turns and drags Eze away. Obumneme turns on Dimkpa, eyes blazing. Her voice though barely audible carries to Ichie as the camera pans away.

OBUMNEME

Dimkpa! Dimkpa! Dimkpa! How many times I call you? You dey buy phone for girls but na meatpie you dey for me?

76

EXT. DIMKPA'S MECHANIC SHED - MORNING

76

Two policemen accompanied by a Detective inspect Dimkpa's workshop but the place looks deserted. The Detective takes notes in a pad while the policemen make inquiries from PASSERSBY [AD-LIB]. After a few minutes they re-enter an unmarked vehicle and leave the scene.

77

INT. MOTEL - AFTERNOON

77

A shabby motel room with the curtains tightly drawn. A news broadcast is ongoing on the television. Dimkpa is seated and unmoving on a settee in the shadows.

NEWSCASTER ON TELEVISION

...The Anambra State Police Command has announced the beginning of it's crack-dawn on kidnapping and other related cases with 'Operation Helter-Skelter.'

ON TELEVISION: Scores of half-naked suspects are being paraded at the police station.

NEWSCASTER ON TELEVISION (CONT'D)

...The Police Chief also calls on well-meaning citizens to support Operation Helter-Skelter. He specially commended Chief Okeora, a girl's rights Activist who has been at the forefront of the move to fight the increasing cases of child abduction.

A hiss emanates from Dimkpa's corner of the room and he raises the remote control and mutes the sound on the television. In the shadows, he retrieves a phone from his pocket and dials a number. He places the phone to his hear.

DIMKPA

(Clears his voice; Into Phone)

Hello... I don't know if you know that I know what you know, but if you know, then I know.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (FLICKERED)
I know that you know what I know,
but if I know then you know...
Ozo...?

DIMKPA
Madam, it is me.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (FLICKERED)
Any report?

DIMKPA
Madam, e get as things take be ooo.
I never see am like this before. I
no even fit go my shed, I no fit go
my house.

78

INT. A WELL-APPOINTED SALON, ONITSHA - SAME TIME

78

A large salon with several customers being attended to by stylists in uniform. At the far end of the salon, in an enclosed cubicle the Unknown Woman sits on a swivel chair, facing away from the entrance. Only the top of head and her arms are seen. The camera quickly moves past her table, glancing past but not stopping at a 'FLIER for the OKEORA CENTRE FOR GIRLS.'

UNKNOWN WOMAN
Have you been charged with a crime?
Is there a manhunt out for you? Why
are you panicking?

INTERCUT BETWEEN SCENES AS NECESSARY.

DIMKPA
Hmmmph! Madam, I heard the police
went to my shed, so I say make I
comot for house too.

UNKNOWN WOMAN
Then you must be drawing
unnecessary attention to yourself.
I have warned you about living
above...

DIMKPA
Madam! I never even buy myself
anything! Me wey I dey save for my
Christmas travel. Na that last girl
I bring, im Mama...

UNKNOWN WOMAN
What?! The mother of one of your
investments knows you? How?

Motel Room. Dimkpa rises and paces.

DIMKPA
Na long talk oh. But Mama Adanne
and her children come fight me for
shop so I believe say...

UNKNOWN WOMAN
(Coldly)
That investment must be terminated
immediately. When is it due?

DIMKPA
E be like say na December...

UNKNOWN WOMAN
Good. Retrieve asset, terminate
investment immediately after. They
always move on when they see a body
to bury.

DIMKPA
Definitely Madam...

UNKNOWN WOMAN
You have to do it yourself. Make it
clean work... You know now that I
know.

DIMKPA
On it Madam... I know now that you
know.

END OF INTERCUT SCENES.

79 **EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS, ONITSHA - MORNING- ESTABLISHING** 79

80 **INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CP'S OFFICE - MORNING- CONTINUOUS** 80

Chief Okeora and Mama Adanne are ushered into the office of
the COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, a short, stout man of northern
extraction with a pronounced accent- by a smartly dressed
FEMALE OFFICER who salutes before taking her leave.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(With a pronounced accent)
Please...
(MORE)

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (CONT'D)
(Indicates the chairs
opposite him.)
Sit. Chief Okeora...

Chief Okeora nods her head at him with a smile as she sits.
Mama Adanne copies her.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (CONT'D)
So good to see you again. You are
well? The family?

CHIEF OKEORA
We are all well Commissioner. Thank
you for meeting with us...

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
Ah! Chief Okeora. Can I refuse you
anything?

CHIEF OKEORA
So...
(Indicates Mama Adanne)
You remember Mrs Malizu?

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
Of course.
(Looks through a file on
his table)
So, I directed the DPO in charge of
that district to investigate the
mechanic and... you know what? Let
me invite him in.

Picks a phone and dials.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (CONT'D)
(Into Phone)
DPO Anya please. Kindly send him
in.

Chief Okeora leans in to Mama Adanne and they exchange hushed
words. [AD-LIB]. The door opens and the DPO steps in. Mama
Adanne is startled to see him. The DPO salutes.

DPO
Sir?

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(Indicating a chair beside
Mama Adanne)
Please sit. We would like to hear
from the proverbial horses mouth.

Mama Adanne and the DPO glare at each other as he proceeds to the seat indicated.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (CONT'D)
...You may go ahead...

DPO
Upon the directives issued from this hallowed chambers, the vigilant and diligent men from District 8 Police station, embarked on a conscientious search...

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(Interrupting)
Ehh. DPO Anya... one might be speaking but not communicating. Who is your audience?

Mama Adanne cackles and claps her hands but immediately quietens when Chief Okeora glares at her.

DPO
(Stiffly clears throat)
We embarked on a mission to accost one Dimkpa, M, a mechanic whose place of business is at Ohafia Market. However to our dismay and utmost consternation, we discovered that the intended 'apprehendee' had cleared out, taken to his heels. Who...
(Turns his gaze on Mama Adanne)
I pray may have alerted him? Could it be the unconstrained actions of one interfering with police business?

MAMA ADANNE
Me? I went to infestigate.

DPO
Investigation is the purview of the duly trained men and women of the Nigerian Police Force!

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
Ei! Ei! What are you two going on about? Mrs Malizu found a suspect, your men did not immediately apprehend the suspect. Suspect is on the run. *Shikena!*

MAMA ADANNE
(Quietly)
Oho...

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(To DPO)
A man who runs usually has
something to hide. Follow procedure
and report.

DPO
(Rises and salutes)
Yes sir!

81 **EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE - EVENING**

81

Adanne is heavily pregnant and she waddles as paces the open space, with obvious discomfort. It starts to drizzle and most of the ladies move inside the hostel.

CHIEMELIE
Ah! Rain for inside December.
(Inhales deeply)
Ahhhh! Hmmmmmm... E be like say make
I eat this smell!

Glances towards Adanne who makes no move to head indoors.

CHIEMELIE (CONT'D)
Ada ooo. You wan catch cold? You no
go enter house?

Adanne shakes her head and turns away. Chiemelie shrugs and goes indoors and after a cursory look around, Adanne starts waddling in the direction of the outhouses.

CUT TO:

82 **EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, BEHIND OUTHUSES - CONTINUOUS** 82

Adanne peers through the bamboo fencing behind the outhouses, then starts pushing them, checking for weak spots as the rain dribbles down her face. She sees a little opening under the fence and she kneels and starts digging. The sand is soft and comes away easily in her hand. She digs ferociously for a few moments, and then inclines her head as though she has heard a sound. She rises awkwardly and then turns, raises her cloth and bends over the hole as though stooling. Moments later, Papilo runs in.

PAPILO
(Furiously)
Ada! Ada! Where you dey?
(Sees her)
Wetin you dey do there? You dey
craze?

ADANNE
(Grunting)
Papilo... abeg...

Papilo freezes in his tracks and observes her.

PAPILO
Na shit you dey shit? For ground?

ADANNE
(Grunting and screwing her
face)
Abeggoo ... e hold me. Gimme
chance now.

PAPILO
(Retreating)
I go tidy your fuck-up... make I
see anything for there when you
finish.

83

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, MIDWIFE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

83

Almost bare room with a narrow bed, table and chair and a
dane gun resting by the wall. Midwife is stirring a brew in a
pot over a camp gas while Dimkpa drinks from a glass of
palmwine at the table.

DIMKPA
...So Madam don give order...
collect asset, terminate
investment. Na so e go be.

Midwife nods gravely, never taking her eyes off her pot.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
Na food be that thing? Smells
nasty.

Midwife rises and goes to her door. She opens it and beckons
on Dimkpa to leave. He chuckles as he rises.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
Na the secret of your long life be
that? Give me small now, make me
too dey kampe like you...

Midwife's face is expressionless as she shuts the door behind Dimkpa.

84

EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE - EVENING

84

Dimkpa surreptitiously follows Adanne as she heads alone towards the outhouses. Before she turns towards the back, he whistles and she jumps.

DIMKPA
(Looking contrite as he
observes her swollen,
disheveled state)
Omalicha'm...

Adanne flinches and steps backwards, hatred blazing through her eyes.

ADANNE
You must be mad to call me that.

DIMKPA
(Glances around)
I am sorry Adanne. I am so sorry.

ADANNE
(Disbelievingly)
Sorry? For what? Which of the evil
things you have done are you sorry
for you monster? Kidnapping me?
Raping me? Or...
(Tears fill her eyes)
Killing my brother. You killed him
didn't you?

Dimkpa sighs and bows his head and Adanne moves and pummels him with her fists.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Crying and punching
Dimkpa)
What did Igwe ever do to you? What
did my poor little brother ever do
to you?

Dimkpa holds her balled fists and whispers in her ears.

DIMKPA
Oma, I have done bad things. I
know. But this one I cannot do...

Adanne detaches her hands from his, and steps backwards.

ADANNE
Oh... there is more?

DIMKPA
(Glances around and nods
gravely)
After you give birth...

He uses his fore-finger and circles his neck.

Adanne whelps and clutches her stomach.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
Sssshhh...

ADANNE
They will kill me? You will kill
me? Why?

DIMKPA
I won't let them, Oma. You will
escape from here.

ADANNE
(Confused and weary)
So now you will help me escape?
Why? You gave your life to Christ?

DIMKPA
...Because sometimes, enough is
enough... Look, I will draw
something for you tomorrow. Go
inside, Papilo will soon come out
for head count.

Adanne glares at him and spits in his face.

ADANNE
If I had a knife, I would stab you
in the face.

Dimkpa wipes his face with the sleeve of his shirt, gently
takes Adanne's hand and steers her in the direction of the
hostel.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Almost inaudibly as the
camera pans away and
focuses on the door to
the outhouse)
I have one question...

A few moments later, the door to the outhouse opens and the Midwife steps out.

DISSOLVE TO:

85

INT. OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, BABY'S ROOM - SATURDAY MORNING

85

A heavily pregnant Lola Olusola is in a well- adorned baby's room with decor and paint in shades of white and blue. She sits in a rocking chair, folding dainty blue shorts and shirts. A soft orchestra song plays in the background. Moments later, an obviously drunk Lanre opens the door and stumbles into the bedroom clutching a bottle of vodka and two glasses.

LOLA

(Aghast)

Lanre! It's barely 10 am. Don't you have a wedding to perform at by noon?

LANRE

(Slurred voice)

Just want to click glasses with my beautiful wife...

LOLA

(Hands raised)

Lanre, please! Don't bring your filthiness into my baby's space...

Lanre ignores her and falls into a bean bag, spilling baby paraphernalia over the place.

LOLA (CONT'D)

(Hands fisted)

Please don't make a mess. The maid won't come in till Monday...

LANRE

Oh! And why is that?

(Laughs drunkenly)

To think that you have been so afraid all these years that I was going to get some maid pregnant...

LOLA

(Coldly)

What does it matter what I think? Or thought? Our baby is almost here and that is what I am all about... and what you should be about too!

Lanre sits up and places the bottle and glasses on a furry rug, then he places his head in his hands. Lola winces.

LANRE

(Sobbing)

Babe... that is the thing... I don't understand how this is our baby...

LOLA

(Incredulously)

I didn't hear right...

LANRE

(Sobbing miserably)

Babe... I am sterile. I have been sterile since I was 17... So please, tell me. Whose baby is this?

LOLA

(With a strangled laugh)

Vodka has eaten deep into your brain dude. This is not even funny.

Lola tries to resume folding the clothes but her hands are shaking perceptibly. Lanre rises and comes to kneel in front of Lola. He takes her hands in his.

LANRE

My love... whatever you had to do is not your fault... I lied...

LOLA

(Hyperventilating)

What... what... are you... saying?

LANRE

I had mumps when I was 17... swollen testicles... and...

Lola shoves him aside and struggles to her feet.

LOLA

We did tests! We saw doctors...

LANRE

Babe please...

Lanre tries to hug Lola but she slaps his hands away.

LOLA

You are a bloody liar!!!

LANRE

(Sighs)

We are both liars Lola. Now please can you drop your lies? Who is the father of your baby? Maybe I can thank him, you know?

Lola starts sobbing and Lanre leads her back to the rocking chair. Then he returns to the beanbag and pours himself a generous quantity of vodka.

LANRE (CONT'D)

Want one?

Lola shakes her head, and continues sobbing quietly.

LANRE (CONT'D)

Okay... I am listening...

DISSOLVE TO:

86

INT. A BUSY MALL, FOODCOURT - EVENING - FLASHBACK SCENE

86

Akudo and Lola are seated at a table in the food court eating. Camera pans out to show a woman approaching them but her features are not visible. Her size is indiscernible in a flowing boubou and her eyes are shielded by dark sunglasses. A huge multi-colored shawl is wrapped around her head and neck. She sits at the table too.

LOLA (V.O.)

... Akudo told me she knew a Madam that ran a maternity home that has been a huge help to childless couples... She asked me if I was interested... of course I was.

Unknown Woman reaches into her bag and brings out a bag containing plastic bottles. She hands it to Lola, and writes out a prescription on a piece of paper.

LOLA (V.O.)

Monies exchanged hands, promises were made and I finally met with someone from the maternity home who gave me the brews I needed to repair my womb... The lady assured me that it would work. I just could not undergo any medical checkup or scans because that's what has been damaging my womb. All the drugs and medications...

END OF FLASHBACK SCENE.

CUT BACK TO:

87 **INT. OLUSOLA'S DUPLEX, BABY'S ROOM - MORNING**

87

LANRE

... And you believed her?

LOLA

What's not to believe? I took the
brews, I got pregnant... or did I?

LANRE

Well, most assuredly not by me.

LOLA

Are you sure? Couldn't...

LANRE

A miracle have occurred? You know
how I have prayed all these years?
(Straight face)
But no, no sudden miraculous
visitations occurred. Tests have
remained the same.

Lola bows her face in her hand and sobs quietly.

LANRE (CONT'D)

(Sighs)

So, how much did this immaculate
conception cost us? And what the
hell is in there?

88 **EXT. OKEORA'S RESTAURANT & EATERY - AFTERNOON- ESTABLISHING** 88

A large restaurant with a pleasant landscape and large car
park. Well-dressed patrons move to and fro the entrance.

89 **INT. OKEORA'S RESTAURANT & EATERY - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS** 89

Mama Adanne is behind the counter in a busy, large, well-
appointed restaurant. Waiters briskly move to and fro bearing
trays of food. Camera pans to the entrance as Mrs Nkemakolam
enters. She spots Mama Adanne and heads straight for her.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

(Voice raised)

My friend ooo... is this where you
are?

Patrons turn to look at Mrs Nkemakolam but she is indifferent. She walks quickly towards the counter.

MAMA ADANNE

(Smiling)

Ah! You come?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

(In Igbo)

When you promised me bitter leaf soup? How won't I come?

MAMA ADANNE

(Gesturing to one of the waiters)

Mrs Nkemakolam, please sidon for table. Let me send you food.

Mrs Nkemakolam smiles widely and glances around.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

Ah! For me to sit on table like customer? No oh. Let me come and sit with you inside.

(In Igbo)

Let's be discussing while I eat now. Or are we not friends?

MAMA ADANNE

(In Igbo)

If that's what you want?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

Ehen.

Mama Adanne gestures at a SECURITY GUARD and he opens the door to the service area.

CUT TO:

90

INT. OKEORA'S RESTAURANT, SERVICE AREA - AFTERNOON

90

Piles of plates and bowls and coolers of food are neatly arranged. Mama Adanne sits at a small table with Mrs Nkemakolam who is leveling a mound of fufu and bitter leaf soup.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM

...But you didn't even tell me about this your daughter's case.

(In Igbo)

I didn't know it was you when it was announced in church.

MAMA ADANNE
(Shrugs; In Igbo)
Is it not only good news one goes
about telling people?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(Picking her teeth with
her fingers)
True talk. Because sometimes, na
the person wey dey help us dey kill
us...

MAMA ADANNE
Ehen?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
Ehenu! This your Chief Okeora you
are following up and down, have you
sniffed her hands?

MAMA ADANNE
(Aghast; In Igbo)
You say what?

Mrs Nkemakolam reaches for a bowl of water and washes her hands. Then she tears a sachet of pure water and takes a long drink from it. Mama Adanne watches her in consternation.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(Clears throat)
It is as if you don't watch the
news. Kidnapping is a big
business...

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
You are talking nonsense. Don't
people look at the faces of those
they want to kidnap? Do you have a
brain? So Chief Okeora who has all
this money will kidnap my daughter
so I will give her what? My
millions in the bank?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
Do I know? So what do you think
happened? Have you and the police
discussed it?

Mama Adanne rises from the chair and reties her wrapper.

MAMA ADANNE
You don chop finish. I am busy.
(In a sing-song voice)
(MORE)

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
Okay, thank you, bye, come back soon.

Mama Adanne walks towards the door and opens it.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(With a sweet smile)
This soup is too sweet, I will definitely come back.

Mrs Nkemakolam rises, picks up a second sachet of pure water, opens her hand bag and drops it on top of a multi-colored shawl.

91 **EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, BEHIND outhouses -EVENING** 91

Dimkpa is using a shovel to create a large hole under the bamboo fence. When the hole is large enough to accommodate a human being, he scatters the sand around and then uses palm frond leaves to shield the hole.

As he examines his handiwork, he hears a sound behind him and turns quickly. Papilo is standing behind him, a menacing look on his face as he wields a machete.

PAPILO
(Gesturing at the palm fronds)
Wetin you think say you dey do?

DIMKPA
Which kain question be that?

Papilo approaches him menacingly, machete raised.

PAPILO
I say wetin you dey dig for here?

DIMKPA
Abeg comot that thing for my eye.
This is the hole.

PAPILO
Why you no just tell am say you go thief the gate keys from me?

DIMKPA
Ah! Too easy. The other investments go know say person help am. They have to think she ran away by herself.

(MORE)

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
She fit even tell person say she go
run. This hole is the evidence.

Dimkpa glances at the machete in Papilo's hands as it starts
to drizzle.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
You don sharpen them? One touch oh.

PAPILO
(Nodding)
Ready for action... Mama Nurse?

DIMKPA
She dey on standby. The belle don
ripe.

Dimkpa glances around again, stamping the sand with his feet
and swiping rain water from his face.

CUT TO:

92

INT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, HOSTEL -EVENING

92

Papilo is doing a head count. As their names are mentioned,
the girls respond with present. Sounds of thunder and a heavy
downpour are audible.

PAPILO
Adanne... Adanne?

Papilo strides towards Adanne's space and watches as Uje
shakes Adanne awake. Adanne groggily sits up. Her stomach
straining against her gown.

ADANNE
Ehh?

PAPILO
Answer your name! Adanne?

ADANNE
Oh. Present.

Papilo hisses and returns to the middle of the hostel. Adanne
slowly turns on her side and goes back to sleep.

93

EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, BEHIND outhouses - RAINY NIGHT 93

Adanne's silhouette moves through to the palm frond covered
holes. With a grunt, she pulls them away and steps back in
shock. The hole is almost full of rain water.

She hesitates for a moment, and then she gingerly slides into the hole. For a long moment she is submerged under the swirling water, but she eventually emerges grunting and spluttering as she squeezes under the bamboo fence to the other side of the fence. She rises, glances around and pulls herself out of the hole and disappears into the jungle beyond.

94

EXT. IKENGA FOREST, AGUATA - RAINY NIGHT

94

Adanne is staggering through the trees, her steps getting slower and slower as the rain pelts down, her hands clutching her abdomen.

ADANNE (V.O.)
(Looking behind her)
I can hear them coming. My life is
over.

Adanne drops to the forest floor, screaming and clutching her stomach. Behind her, the Midwife drops a bulging raffia bag to the ground and points the dane gun in Adanne's direction. She fires a shot and hits Papilo who is quietly creeping up on Adanne.

ADANNE
(Screaming and raising
hands in supplication)
Please, please...

With a blank expression, the Midwife cocks the gun, raises it again and points it in Adanne's direction.

DIMKPA (O.S.)
Papilo! Papilo! You bring gun come
here? Na wetin we plan? Papilo?
Abeg wait make we collect the
asset!

Dimkpa rushes in on Adanne's screaming form.

DIMKPA (CONT'D)
Papilo...

The Midwife shoots him and he falls at Adanne's feet. Adanne shrieks even louder.

ADANNE
(Writhing in pain)
Mama moo... Daddy'm moo... What
is happening?

Midwife carefully lays her gun against a tree, and from the raffia bag she retrieves a tarpaulin sheet. She sets the sheet under a canopy provided by a cluster of trees, and pulls out a torchlight.

Then she walks up to Adanne, grabs her by the armpits and supports her to the tarpaulin sheet.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Groaning and rocking
herself)
HMMMM... hMMMM... Chim oooo.

The Midwife reaches into her raffia bag and produces a packet of Lucozade Boost; she tears open the top flap with browning canines and pours the liquid into Adanne's mouth, almost choking her. The rain has reduced to trickles.

The Midwife positions herself between Adanne's legs and after a moment she slaps Adanne's thighs and nods vigorously.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Delirious with pain)
Leave me ooo, leave me. Stop
beating me! Can't you talk? Talk!
Talk!

The Midwife stared at Adanne and after a moment she opens her mouth and points inside. Camera pans in... The Midwife does not have a tongue. Adanne is trashing and takes no notice. The Midwife stares at her sternly and slaps her across the face.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Howling)
Heyyy! Mama oooo...

The Midwife is agitated. She points two fingers at Adanne's eyes and then at her eyes. Adanne's starts to pay attention. The midwife makes a pushing motion.

ADANNE (CONT'D)
(Grunting)
I... should... push...

Camera pans away to as Adanne's howls seem to echo throughout the forest.

From Adanne's hazy, sleepy POV, she watches the Midwife drag Papilo and Dimkpa's bodies away. Then she sleeps off.

Adanne is asleep on a wrapper and covered by another wrapper. In front of her, the Midwife cradles a well-covered baby. Her raffia bag is slung over one shoulder and her dane gun over the other shoulder. She gently nudges Adanne who wakes up with a start and a small cry.

ADANNE

Why... where are you taking him to?

The Midwife shakes her head and smiles sadly. She drops a scrunched up N1000 note beside Adanne, points towards one direction and walks away.

ADANNE (CONT'D)

(Rising and starting to
cry)

Give me my baby, he's my child...
bring him back.

The baby awakes and starts to cry but the Midwife does not look back. She moves briskly and soon disappears into the forest. Adanne makes to follow but stops in her tracks and returns, still sobbing. She picks the money and picks up the wrappers and a packet of Lucozade Boost and a few packets of biscuit tumble out. She quickly opens the packets and eats some. Then she ties the wrapper over her soiled gown and stumbles in the direction the Midwife indicated.

ADANNE (CONT'D)

(Singing weakly)

Onye na-eme mma imeela, imeela...

FADE TO BLACK.

96

INT. HOSPITAL, DIAGNOSTIC/EXAMINATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

96

Upscale hospital diagnostic/examination room.

Lola is lying on a bed as a SONOGRAPHER examines her swollen stomach with an ultrasound machine. Their FAMILY DOCTOR, a bald-headed man in his early sixties stands beside him, examining a file and looking very worried. Lanre watches wearily and speaks to the Doctor quietly [AD-LIB]. The Sonographer concludes his examination, wipes down Lola's stomach and moves away. Lola sits up. Her face is bereft of makeup and her eyes are swollen from crying.

LANRE

(To the Doctor)

Same result?

DOCTOR
(Shakes head gravely)
Same result. There's nothing alive
in there.

Lola bursts into tears and Lanre attempts to comfort her.

LOLA
(Spluttering)
But... I don't understand... the
maternity called me and told I was
due to deliver ...

LANRE
Can you stop already with this?
There is nothing in there! God!

DOCTOR
(Calmly)
Where are you supposed to deliver?

LOLA
(Glancing around)
They sent me a text, it's on my
phone...

DOCTOR
Then I suggest you make it a date.
We need to know what sort of
devilish trickery is going on...

LANRE
(To Lola)
You go there, you go without me. I
am done with this mess...

Lanre stomps out of the room as Lola shouts after him.

LOLA
Don't you dare walk out on me Lanre
Olusola! This is your fault, you
lying bastard...

DISSOLVE TO:

97 **EXT. ONITSHA METROPOLIS - SUNDAY EVENING - ESTABLISHING** 97

98 **EXT. SUPERMARKET - SUNDAY EVENING - CONTINUOUS** 98

Mama Adanne steps outside a supermarket carrying two bags of
pure water and dressed strangely in an ill-fitting shirt and
trouser.

She carries the bags near the road but doesn't enter any transportation. Instead, she turns and observes the well-appointed salon beside the supermarket whilst clutching a large handbag.

INSERT: 'For My Girls Beauty Salon.'

99 **EXT. FOR MY GIRLS SALON, PARKING LOT - SUNDAY EVENING - CONT'D**

Mama Adanne is hovering outside the salon, ostensibly waiting for a vehicle to transport her and a few bags of pure water. She watches as a group of stylists [in uniform] leave chattering noisily. The lights in the salon start to go off and Mama Adanne hurries to the door.

CUT TO:

100 **INT. FOR MY GIRLS SALON - SUNDAY EVENING - CONTINUOUS** 100

Mrs Nkemakolam is humming to herself as she shuts down the salon. She turns when the door opens and takes a moment to recognise Mama Adanne.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(Surprised)
Mama Adanne? My friend. You have gone global oh. You now wear trouser?

She approaches Mama Adanne with a huge smile and her arms outstretched for a hug. Mama Adanne remains standing stiffly and clutching her handbag.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM (CONT'D)
This life; so because I came and ate free food in Okeora's restaurant, you hunted me down to retaliate.
Well, you are late oh, my stylists have gone home for the day.

Mama Adanne walks through the salon slowly, then she pulls out a chair and sits.

MAMA ADANNE
(Icily)
I know your stylists have gone...

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
Ehen? Oho!
(In Igbo)
(MORE)

MRS NKEMAKOLAM (CONT'D)
You came to apologize for getting
angry when I was trying to tell you
...

MAMA ADANNE
(Pensively; In Igbo)
Do you think there is any
difference between killing a goat
and killing a human being?

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(Startled)
Human being ke? Do you know what a
human being is?
(In Igbo)
Something that God created?

MAMA ADANNE
God created everything.

MRS NKEMAKOLAM
(Resumes shutting down and
switching off lights.)
My friend, I am tired, make I lock
shop go house. I get appointment
for Ministry early morning on
Monday...

Mama Adanne rises from the chair and Mrs Nkemakolam shoves
the chair back into position. When she raises her head she
see Mama Adanne in the mirror, standing close behind her, a
butcher's knife in her hand.

MAMA ADANNE
I asked you a question... Madam
Ikenga.

101 **EXT. IKENGA MATERNITY HOME, OPEN SPACE - EVENING - FLASHBACK**

Dimkpa is pulling Adanne towards the hostel.

ADANNE
(Whispering)
Can I ask you a question?

DIMKPA
(Whispering)
What? I have talked too much!

ADANNE
Who runs this place? Who wants to
kill me? Who...

DIMKPA
I can't tell you that...

Adanne pulls herself out of his grip and walks to the door of the hostel.

ADANNE
Then I don't believe a word you
have said...

As she puts a hand on the knob, Dimkpa hurries to her side.

DIMKPA
(Reluctantly; very low
whisper)
She has many names, but I know her
true identity. Just for insurance.

102

I/E. SERIES OF SHOTS

102

- A) Unknown woman in salon turns and it's Mrs Nkemakolam.
- B) Unknown woman in busy mall, stops to re-arrange her multi-colored shawl and it's Mrs Nkemakolam.
- C) Woman's feet arriving at the Ikenga Maternity home- camera pans to show a shawled Mrs Nkemakolam.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

CUT BACK TO:

103

INT. FOR MY GIRLS SALON - SUNDAY EVENING - CONTINUOUS

103

Mama Adanne has a hand over Mrs Nkemakolam's mouth and the knife to her throat. Her face is devoid of emotion. They are still facing the mirror.

MAMA ADANNE
(Con conversationally; In
Igbo)
I grew up in a house where we
reared native goats. Killing goats
was my breakfast, lunch and dinner.
I could kill them in my sleep...

Mrs Nkemakolam mumbles and struggles. The knife slices her neck slightly and a trickle of blood drips down her neck. Her eyes bulge and Mama Adanne smiles.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

(In Igbo)

I sharpened this knife every evening after I returned from visiting my daughter in the hospital...

(Chuckles)

My sons thought it was to kill a Christmas goat... well...

Mrs Nkemakolam raises her hands in supplication and mumbles again.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

(In Igbo)

You are begging me? There is no need. In your next life, you will be wiser.

With practised ease, Mama Adanne slits Mrs Nkemakolam's throat from ear to ear. The blood spurts and covers the mirror. Mama Adanne gently lays the body on the ground. She walks to a washing point and rinses her hands and the knife. Then she unbuttons the shirt -she has a gown on underneath- and carefully wraps the knife in it. She removes the trousers, folds it into the bag. Then she switches off the last light and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

104

I/E. FOR MY GIRLS SALON - MORNING

104

Police vehicles swarm the parking lot and the DPO and the Detective march purposefully towards the entrance. A few stylists are standing around looking worried.

The DPO enters into the salon. The blinds are drawn so the morning light has not filtered in. The Detective goes and opens one of the blinds and the light spills in, illuminating Mrs Nkemakolam's rigid body. The Detective's eyes widen and he squats beside the body.

The DPO steps outside and beckons on one of his officers.

DPO

Detain everybody in the vicinity for questioning. They are all suspects until duly absolved of criminal involvement.

The officer barks an order [AD-LIB] and the other officers start rounding up everybody in the area.

Mama Adanne is at a kitchen sink scrubbing down a butcher knife. A goat's bleating can be heard. A WAITER/ASSISTANT CHEF, steps in, holding a knife and rummages in a cupboard.

MAMA ADANNE
Wetin you dey find?

ASSISTANT CHEF
The knife wey we dey take kill
goat... this one no...

MAMA ADANNE
(Turning and brandishing
the butcher knife)
No be the knife be this? Every
time, you people will not keep
things well...

Assistant Chef gently collects the knife.

ASSISTANT CHEF
Thank you Ma.
(In Igbo)
This knife is the goat-killer.

Mama Adanne turns away with a small smile and glances directly into the camera.

MAMA ADANNE
I know.

Cartons and boxes are packed up and the mattress has been rolled up. Ichie and Eze are leafing through a book when the door opens and Mama Adanne slowly walks in, followed by Chief Okeora. The boys look expectantly at the door as a gaunt but clean Adanne walks in.

EZE
(Excited)
Ada!

Eze runs to Adanne and envelopes her in a hug. Ichie looks at her for a long moment, his eyes filling with tears until Adanne beckons on him with one hand. The he hurries to her and squeezes her tightly.

MAMA ADANNE
(In Igbo)
Easy oh Ichie. Nwayoo.

Chief Okeora whispers [Ad-lib] to Mama Adanne who nods.

CHIEF OKEORA

(Rising)

Ichie, Eze, come and start putting
things in the truck.

Ichie and Eze slowly disengage from Adanne's arms, carry some
bags and follow Chief Okeora outside.

Adanne glances around but refuses to look her mother in the
eye.

ADANNE

Where are we moving to?

MAMA ADANNE

Chief Okeora gave us a flat in one
of her properties.

Adanne nods.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

She give you 'schoolership' too.
All of una to go school for free--
to even *mahadum*.

Adanne nods but doesn't seem interested as she turns to
leave.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

Ada'm--

Adanne halts.

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)

(Teary)

(In Igbo)

Ada please forgive your mother.
Forgive me my daughter.

Adanne turns back to her mother her eyes glassy with unshed
tears.

ADANNE

I am sorry I killed him Mama. I
didn't want him to die--

Mama Adanne rises and approaches Adanne.

MAMA ADANNE

Sssh. Which kind talking is that?
You did not kill him my child.

(In Igbo)

(MORE)

MAMA ADANNE (CONT'D)
How could you have? A child that
loved her father so much? It was
the devil that caused all that.

Mama Adanne tries to hug Adanne but she sidesteps the hug.

ADANNE
(Weeping)
I'm sorry Mama. Igwe--

Mama Adanne wraps Adanne in her arms and rocks her gently.

MAMA ADANNE
Adannem! Adannaya! Adaora!
Adaoyibo'm! Nwaoma'm! Nwanyioma!
Nwa eji eje mba!
(In Igbo)
It is enough. God had punished our
enemies.

Adanne finally puts her arms around her mother and holds on
as they sob quietly.

FADE OUT.

106

CREDITS:

106

As the credits roll, men of Operation Helter-Skelter tear
down the Ikenga Maternity home.

Adanne is standing with Mama Adanne and staring at the open
door to the Midwife's empty room.

Chief Okeora gently assists the Ikenga girls into a waiting
bus.

THE END.