

I LOVE YOU



BY

Oni Oludamola Olukunle(07061275703)

All characters of this story are all encompassed in the writer's imagination, and roles played have no connection to anyone that goes by that name, either close or distant from the writer. It was written without any preference of religion, and in no way meant to defame religion, perspective, belief or location.

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Episode 1

I was at awolowo hall annex when my phone rang. It was hadizat. I stood away upright from the pole I was resting on, cleared my throat, trying to bring out my very fine masculine voice

Me; hello (I finally said)

Hadizat; how are you?

Me; am fine

Hadizat; uhmm!!! Thanks for how you comforted me after CHM102 exam.thank you

Me; what are we friendship for (I said jokingly)

Hadizat; "I LOVE YOU" (she said out of the blue)

Coughing was all I could do and immediately hanged up the phone. i can't find words to express how I felt that moment; perplexed? Dazzled? Surprised? Flabbergasted?, all these are understatement, because I was laughing and questioning myself at the same time, if I heard the right words, looking at my hisense HS-U601 phone, as if hadizat was inside.

After bumping into series of people as the thought ravaged my mind, I finally got to my room in awolowo hall block 2.

I asked myself, "why did I cough", this isn't the first time I'd be hearing the word, the previous occasions had been from my mum and my aunty in the US, but this is different. It was from hadizat-my best female friend.

We were both freshmen in the faculty of clinical sciences (medicine and surgery). I had sometimes seen her in classes but didn't talk to her. Soon practicals started. On the day for physics practical, we were both assigned to the same group alongside some other classmates.

Being the only male, in my group, I had to man up to the lead the group. Instructions

were given and the mechanics (pendulum) experiment started. Of all the girls, she was the only one that queried and questioned about my every move, she would threaten to do another set if I didn't listen. She must be a brainy I thought (which she is). Practicals ended and I ran up to her as she was about climbing down the stairs of white house

Me; " am Kelvin "

Hadizat; " yes, I know, I saw it at the back of your manual"

Me; " uhm !! Which hall do you reside? "

Hadizat: " moz "

Me; " oh! That poult..... (I almost said poultry).. "I stay at awo" I continued

She only nodded.

"Can we be friends?" I finally said, hoping she won't misunderstand the type of friendship I meant (I had always being the one to make friends with ladies that are brilliant). Alright she said before bidding me farewell as she turned towards fajuyi hall. And since then we had been friends. So close that other people(not only classmates) thinks we are dating. But now she had said this huge statement, and how this word had taken a toll on me surprised me. I thought they said " men are always affected by what they see and not what they hear ',but why am I an exception to this law or theory. Or is the law that "to every law there is is always an exception" coming into play

Episode 2

I got up from bed the next day around 6am. At around 8:47am, I got dressed to go for my BOT 102 exam. I got to ODLT in less than ten minutes. I saw my best friend, akmed as I fondly called Ahmed. He was the one with the highest aggregate score among medicine part 1 students -302. He was sitting on a bench (am not sure if the structure was meant to be a bench) made with concrete, facing the entrance of the premises. He got up and with smile, gave me a shoulder to shoulder hug. He was always jovial, one would hardly believe he was the best amongst us

Ahmed ; “how far na guy?”

Me :I dey o

Ahmed : “o boi, this your dressing, nawa o. no be exam you come do? Abi una get service immediately after this paper?”

I looked at myself and smiled. I was dressed in my baby pink shirt, ash trouser and black shoe. I myself didn't know what made me dress like that, after all we are in exam period. Even during lectures, I had always dressed corporate on Mondays and Tuesdays, dress almost down on Wednesday, and completely down on Thursday and Friday, moreover, today is Friday when most students were on native attires.

I sat down beside Ahmed to scan through his note once again. Few minutes later, hadizat walked into the premises, there was no abnormal hype in her dressing, it was just the normal 'Friday hadizat'. She came nearer to both Ahmed and I. I don't know why I felt sweaty all of a sudden.

“Good afternoon’ she greeted us, as she forcefully sat between Ahmed and I, the normal way she'd do. There was no anxiety on her face, she was kind of indifferent, but why am I the one having ocean of anxiety flooding some millimeters beneath my face's skin. The ocean of anxiety was frequently letting out sweat out of my face, just as the ocean splashes up when it hit the rocks on the shore.

Bode the class rep came out, “the invigilator is around!”

“oh! Its 9:30 already?” ahmed said as we stood to go into the lecture theatre.

The exam lasted for one and half hours. I had finished answering my questions about twenty minutes to the end of the paper. The rest of my time I spent looking at hadizat who was sitting around 30~ from my direct north, some rows away.

Her light face was glowing as it protruded out of her hijab. She occasionally smiled, probably she saw some ridiculously simple questions.

We submitted and got out of the hall.

Hadizat: Kelvin, lets go to bank area

Me: good idea, I also want to withdraw

As we got some few step away from the hall towards the general direction of the entrance of amphi theatre, bode shouted from behind "part one couple! I see you oo". We both laughed, as he had always been like that. But these words carried fresh meaning to me this time. Am not sure if it did to hadizat. She was as if she never said those words yesterday.

After we were done at bank area around 12 noon

Hadizat: "let me just go to the mosque,its almost 1pm"

Me: "should I follow you?"

Hadizat: ahah! Pastor! Mosque?"

Me: (on realizing what I just said) oh! Well, can't I go to preach there?" (I quickly added jokingly)

She waved at me as we parted ways at sports complex.

I walked towards SUB, thinking, " how on earth did I suggest to follow her to the mosque?"

How come this statement of hers' is making me lose my self, making me lose innocent Kelvin!!!

Episode 3

Oga emma shook me to life, as I woke up Sunday morning at 7:15 am. I jerked fully awake on realizing what time it was. I can't be late for service which starts at 7:50 I RCFOAU if I want to get a seat in BOOC.

I brushed my teeth and got some water to rinse my face, got dressed and bolted out of the hostel.

I walk-ran to the venue of service, got a seat in the back roll luckily. "thank God, I wont be watching from tv today" I thought.

I ran through my whatsapp messages before services commenced. Tons of messages were already waiting, about 70 from my class group, 250 from a news agency group, 20 from a fellowship group, but the one with the least number of messages-1 was from hadizat, I quickly opened it to see the content

It read thus : "happy Sunday dear".

Now what isee is also affecting me – dear?. Not that she doesn't use the word before but it now seem to connote a deeper meaning. Even though I was the one who first send the greeting before, seeing her send it first this time, what could have prompted her?

My fantasizing was impeded y the arrival of the Sunday school teacher, who also happens to be my first FBS(foundation bible school) teacher. She had talked about faith.

Praise and worship started the service proper with oga demola leading the praise team of my beloved chosen generation choir. I really loved to join them after I was through with FBS, which ended during lecture free week. The service was awesome as usual. Our FBS certificate was distributed to us that day. Our set was considered the fewest, despite the fact that we are 200 in number.

During the announcement, the gen sec read a portion that goes thus :

“ this is to all awo hall brethren, thank you for making it to the last hall meeting, we urge you to join us again, next Saturday at the field behind block 3, A.K.A san siro. You are blessed. We love you gidigan like ki lo le to be”

I knew the message wasn't for me as I had attended hall just once when we first came to campus. But on hearing the last sentence of that announcement, I remembered the words from hadizat “I LOVE YOU”. I hit my head hard to shake off the thought, it was so hard that my friend paul asked me “ hope all is well?”. I only gave a nod in response.

The service ended soon, and after- service activities were going on. Some people going for different sub-group interviews, some buying and selling. Fellowship president taking pictures with interested FBS graduants. After taking a picture with the president, I left for the hostel alone, as paul was still having his interview at the follow-up and counseling stand.

I took selfies at motion ground and sent the best to hadizat on whatsapp with a message “ happy Sunday too”. Why did I send a picture? I asked myself.

Oga emma was already back when I got to the room. With the smell of stale beans filling the room, as he was warming the thing. I climbed my bed after pulling of my shoe to rest a bit. I fell asleep eventually.

Waking up around 6pm, I decided to cook as I was very hungry. When I was done eating, I decided to go read at awo café, though I wasn't having a paper the next day.

When it was 11:55pm, my phone rang, waking up the guy sleeping beside me.

Me: “hello hadizat”

Hadizat: “how are you? can you come to anglomoz?”

(Anglomoz; car park of both angola hall & moz hall.....Anglomoz the lovers hub, event centre, car park)

Me: sure

I had been the one calling her out whenever we were to meet at anglomoz, and it was always to either greet each other when we resume from strike or holiday, or to exchange notes. But why is the reverse the case now. Why did she call me out? And at this time?

Episode 4

I ran back to my room to change into my palm slipper from the rubber slippers I was wearing . I sprayed my #600 hot ice perfume, brushed my hair, put on my cardigan that my friend blessing in UNIBEN likes

On getting to anglomoz, I saw her standing near a table that had been used by those that had an event the other day. I got to her

Me: "hi" (short of breath)

Hadizat : Hi

Me: you are just coming from first bank lecture theatre?

Hadizat: yes

Me: you called?

Hadizat: (she checked her wrist-watch which says 12:01) happy birthday!

Me: oh! Whao! So you remember?! I didn't even remind you, thanks so much

She hugged me and sang the birthday song for me (still hugging me). Since it was dark, I comfortably hugged her back. The side of her head that rested on my chest must have made her hear my heart that was racing so fast.

When she finished singing, she wanted to loose the hug, but I held her in that position and she stayed. I didn't know what came over me. It was as if my hands were rebelling my heart, not letting go.

We stayed in the position for like 5 minutes, silent. Then she finally said " I hope you would let me breath". "oh! Sorry" I replied as I loosened the hug.

She retied her pashmina that she used to cover her hair. "so how are we celebrating today?" she asked, "well, we read" I said, cos my pocket was almost exhausted.

She promised to treat me out during the day. She touched my cheek and left for her hostel. I watched her enter into the poultry, oops! Sorry, hostel, with my hand on my cheek, as if to hold the warmth of her hand forever down on the cheek.

I was startled when my FBS teacher tapped me

Ms.titi : Kelvin what are you doing here?

Me: uhm! I came to return a friends note.(OMG!! Did I just lie?!)

Ms. Titi: ok, I came to get risky burger too, do u want too?

Me: sure

She got me mine too, and I escorted her to her hostel- alumni hall, and went back to awo café, packed my books, I was done for the night.

I prepared my concoction rice(the one I learnt from google in first semester) as I got to the room, watched one episode from “to the beautiful you(Korean movie)”, ran scales on the bass guitar P.lekan gave me, and played some grooves with oga emma as he practiced his keyboard, that late night(well, we can’t call it late in OAU). Most of my roommates that had papers that morning were out reading and others sleeping. I soon joined the sleeping roomies at around 3am

A call woke me up that morning, I rushed to pick the phone, hoping it was hadizat, but it was not, it was my parents.

“happy birthday son” they both chorused. My younger sister also shouted at the top of her voice so as to be heard. It was a hearty greeting.

Deep down me I said, “am sorry, I didn’t expect your call”. The call ended and I checked my time, it was already 10am. About an hour later hadizat called

Hadizat: are you ready?

Me: give me thirty minutes

I met her at yellow house basement, and we took 'town gboro' to town from SUB.

She took me to various shops around post office, bought a couple of t-shirts and trousers for me. I got a little bit scared as the bill was closing down on 10k. "Who would pay?", I asked.

"chillax" she said, placing her hand on my chest, and chillax it was.

We were walking up the street to get some footwear, we saw apples and decided to buy, she bit a part of it and gave me to eat, which I did.

"thank you for kissing me" she said as I had eaten from the same spot she ate. I just laughed.

Suddenly, a range rover parked behind us, and the male voice from the car called "hadizat!!!!". She turned to see the caller and she ended up being shocked, her mouth agape. I bent to look, who was it?

Episode 5

Recovering from her shock, she quietly said “dad!”. I stooped to look again, the person was dressed in the black and white robe of a lawyer with that cap of theirs on the dash board. He was a judge.

Dad: I called you five minutes ago, and you said you were on campus, even in your room how come you are here now?!. Just get into the car!!.

Hadizat only stammered a few words that I can't decipher, turned to me and enveloped some few #1000 notes in my hand and entered into the car.

I watched as the car drove away, it was a car registered in osogbo.

She had once told me about her family, the dad was a judge in osogbo, the mother a trader and all her elder brothers were in the UK. Being the youngest and only girl, they had somewhat restricted her movements, forcing her to stay indoor.

I counted the money, it was 5k, to get shoes. I got the shoes and went back to school.

What she spent on buying me things in less than two hours was more than my monthly allowance.

I got to the room, met banky who just got back from his 10am paper.”how was it I asked”.

Customary of all students, “it was fine”, he replied.

I dropped the clothes and shoes on the bed, banky rushed over

Banky: “you got all these from who?”

Me: (I smiled a little) hadizat.

Banky: bad nigga, you see?! I don't tell you since, make you date that girl. Don't come to school to only read. Socialize! Have fun!!

My laughing continued. Oga emma put on his keyboard (you'd wonder if there's always light in my school, sure!) and played the birthday song, as other roomies sang along. I was thrilled, 'how did they know?', facebook?! I didn't tell them for the fear that they would bathe me in water.

Oga emma came over after the rendition and whispered into my ears "2 cor 6 vs 14". What does it say. I carried my bible to check, as I got to the chapter looking for the verse, my phone rang. It was hadizat. I dropped the bible-closed, went outside to receive the call. We talked for three minutes.

She explained that her dad got angry a little about her, lying and that he threatened to reduce her allowance from 60k to 50k. what a difference!. She told me not to cook that night as she would be taking me to eat at new buka.

I got back to the room, completely forgetting to read the bible passage.

9pm came longer than I expected, I wore one of the shirt, jean trouser, and the all-star shoe she bought for me.

We met at awo café, and we both went down to new buka. I ordered moderately, but she cancelled it, and did the ordering to her satisfaction.

When I checked what was on the table aside the cake which I doubt we'd both finish, it was around 5k in worth.

We ate amidst jokes, stares and winks.

We went back to the hostel, so as to read for PHY 106. We got to anglomoz and she shook my hand, and left. I was still standing, staring at her leave, when she suddenly turned and called out "Kelvin!", she started coming back, but what was she coming back to do?

Episode 6

She got to where I was standing, stared at my expressionless face for a while, rose to her toes and then pecked me, or should I say kissed me on my cheek, because it lasted a couple of seconds. She then said “goodbye” and turned to go. I wanted to draw her back, to really kiss her but something was saying “Kelvin, don’t do it”, another was saying “you love her, call her, kiss her, tell her you love her”.

I just stood there, lost in my thoughts of million issues. It was as if fire works were going on in my head. I stood speechless.

Snapped back to life by the sudden movement of rats in the nearby bush, I shouted “sarang haeyo”, I know it was a safe way to tell her I love her, since I know she doesn’t watch Korean movies.

I walked to my room thinking about all that happened, on my way, I saw some people praying on the field between block 2 and annex. That was my prayer spot when I first resumed. I used to pray, study, and go to fellowship (that even my roommates know the four places I could be on campus), but now going to Sunday service is all that’s left with me.

I felt I was looking back, loving the world, lusting.... but suddenly, this thought came “after all, we were told to love our neighbour as our self, and am not fornicating”.

I just walked by to my room as I plugged in my earpiece, listening to Christian rap by Lecrae- my best rap artist.

We were through with phy 106. It was kinda hard, with questions we were not properly taught how to solve, popping out, I guess we are becoming stalites gradually.

I looked around as I got out of the hall, looked around but couldn’t find Hadizat, asked a couple of classmates, finally, Tope said she saw her go downstairs. I looked down from the verandah of yellow house where we had the paper, I saw her come out of the reception downstairs, I called her, but she only made some gestures with her hand which I don’t understand. Is she avoiding me? Or was she

embarrassed with what she did yesterday? If she was I ran after her to tell her it was okay. I caught up with her at yellow house basement, hadizat! I called out. She stopped.

Hadizat: oh! Kelvin, am sorry, I have to go.....

Me:where? Are you avoiding me? If its about yesterday, am fine. In fact, am here to tell you this...

(I bent over and gave her a kiss on her cheek)" I love you"

Hadizat:whao! Thanks, but actually, I wasn't avoiding you. I got a call from mum to go and see my grandma here in IFE , she took ill and was hospitalized yesterday. So, am rushing oer to see her state of health. I'd call you when I get back.

All she said wasn't making sense to me. I was thinking about what I just did as I watched her go.

Why did I do that? Surely that wasn't planned. Something within me had shouted "Kelvin" as I kissed her, I think it was blessing's voice.

I walked to my room, partly happy and partly sad. I thought "should I call blessing?(my friend in UNIBEN), and tell her all that is happening to me?. How would she take it?!. I was ashamed of telling my deeds to her. I had known her since jamb class, and I know she'd scold me if I told her such. But I had told her most things about me, even my 'ordinary' friendship with hadizat. She knows things about me, that even my mum doesn't know.

Fortunately or unfortunately, my phone rang, it was blessing. She hadn't called n along time.

Our talk on phone is always long that even #200 call card is barely enough, we mostly talked with free airtime, whatsapp had been helpful anyways.

Me:hello

Blessing: ore mi! how are you

Me: fine, you?

Blessing: good. You sound dull, whats wrong?

Me: uhm!! Its.....

Did I tell her?

Episode 7

Me: nothing, I replied

We talked long as usual, I even had to call her back as her call card got exhausted. She told me she was through with exams and would be going home- akure, the next day. "I would be home too next weekend" I said.

Blessing had always been like an elder sister to me, even though I was 3 days older than she is. I felt bad doing(or feeling) what she would not approve of, lusting.

As I got to the front of health centre, I saw paul come out from the way leading to ETF hall.

Paul: Kelvin, you didn't come to exam prayer meeting yesterday, and I was planning to give you a birthday present.

Me: oh! I had to do some reading.

Paul: happy belated birthday.

Me: thanks so much

I kept feeling bad coming in contact with these people as I walked towards my room, after the chit-chat, I felt like am becoming different from them.

It was around 5pm after I woke from my sleep, that I saw hadizat's message that she had sent some one hour ago, "she died" it said. Who died! I asked my self, oh! Her grandma that took ill. Well I wasn't that sad as I never knew her, but hadizat must be sad, as she was always fond of her.

I decided to call, but her phone was switched off, tried and tried again, but all to no avail. Even her facebook and whatsapp accounts were offline.

Till Friday, I didn't hear from hadizat, I was really worried, I had hoped I could be of comfort to her. And I didn't know her grandma's house.

Thank God we weren't having any left that week, and the last paper was on Monday. I hoped that she would be okay before then.

At around 10am that Friday morning, ahmed came to my room with his laptop

Ahmed: guy, how u

Me: I dey oo

Ahmed: how ur g.f?

Me: who?

Ahmed: dey there dey form, who else but hadizat?

Me: u no well!! U sabi Gloria na? she sef dey take am whine me, when I go greet am for where she dey plait her hair. una see me as I propose to her?.i no date am oo!!!

Ahmed: but u like am?

Me: well....

Ahmed: you see!! Abeg make we play winning eleven jare

Me: sure, but go easy on me oo

Ahmed: ur command is my wish, abi how dem dey take talk am?!

Ahmed was not only a bookworm, he was also a gameworm, god of games.

We played 9 times and I got defeated 9 times.

We soon got tired and had indomie with garri for lunch

While eating, paul called, "hope you haven't forgotten about tonight's concert? He asked. " sure, how could I forget, when chris delvan would be coming".

We finished eating and ahmed left.

As I was washing the dishes, an unknown number called.

Me: hello, pls who am I speaking with?

Hadizat: its me, hadizat

Me:oh hadizat!(surprised and happy). Where have you been, have been trying your number but its not going through. Even your roommate- sayo said you have not returned to the hostel

Hadizat: uhm! Am sorry, I lost my phone after texting you that day in a bus. I just retrieved my contacts today. How are you?

Me: am fine, you?

The long chat continued, and she said she was around now, I tidied up to meet her at anglomoz. I saw her

Me: are you sure you are fine? You look thin already

Hadizat: the stress at grandma's place, with the burial and other rites going on. Can you hang out with me later tonight? I need to get some air

Me: well, am kinda having

Hadizat: pls, don't refuse me (she cut in)

What should I do? Hang out or concert?

Episode8

The answer didn't take long, hang-out it was.

I met her later that night and walked towards SUB, the bar was our final destination.

The bar was blasting with Nigerian pop music, I could tell who was singing- olamide(shakiti bobo). I didn't have those kinda songs on my phone, but I hear when my roommates play them, he was banky's favourite artist.

I felt queasy from the smell of beer and cigarette, I never imagined that students could lead such a frivolous lifestyle on campus. Well, here I am too.

I soon got used to the atmosphere there.

Looking through the drinks in the transparent fridge, I couldn't locate any soft drink and simply went back to my seat. Looking around for hadizat, I spotted her dancing with some random guy. She saw me staring, and then came over

Hadizat: ain't you drinking

Me: there is no soft drink here

Hadizat: (laughing loudly) does this place look like awo hall butterfly? this is a bar Kelvin, what do you expect?

She offered me her drink, I drank after hesitating twice, I felt a burning sensation on my tongue as I took the drink. It felt like my tongue was burning. She made me take more sips. She pulled me up to dance, I felt dizzy as we danced for like 5 minutes, it felt like the floor beneath me was rolling faster than the normal earth's rotation. The floor disappearing and reappearing, soon I began to stagger. I got out of the room and went outside to get some fresh air.

Soon I saw paul coming from the store some few metres away from the bar, he was heading back to amphi theatre- the venue of the concert. He pulled out his phone. Suddenly, my phone rang, it was paul, he must want to find out if I was in amphi. Instead of either picking or hanging up the call, I ran to the hostel. I couldn't afford him seeing me in that state. I was ashamed.

Saturday morning, I woke up to see 25 missed calls on my phone, 20 from hadizat and 5 from paul. I felt a slight headache as I rose up and got some water to drink.

I thought about what happened the previous night, hadizat seemed more like a pro, it must have been her fourth bottle she offered me, and still looked okay at that.

I couldn't find any comparison between the present hadizat and the hadizat of 1st semester. She was an indoor girl before resuming school(her testimony), but on resuming, she seem to wanna know the world out there. Why I am not happy is that I find myself being drawn along, and not being able to stop myself makes me feel more miserable.

I missed the following Sunday service, so as to prepare for my final paper- ssc 102(flimsy excuse, what's there to read in economics)

After the paper, hadizat made a suggestion that we celebrate ending part one at new buka, 9pm.

We got there holding hands and walked past the restaurants and straight to the bar. I saw banky there. Trying to avoid been seen by him, I drew hadizat to a table in a dark corner.

Few bottles of beer and a bottle of wine soon arrived the table. Hadizat started with the wine. In less than an hour, I was through with four bottles and ordered for more

Hadizat: can you handle it?

Me: sure(by now, my vision was doubling, if I remember correctly)

After, I had taken six bottles, we decided to leave, hadizat help me walk.

The following morning, I woke up with headache on a bed I knew wasn't mine, hadizat was also beside me.

Where was i? what happened overnight?

Episode 9

Just then, I saw a lady dressed in white, it was a nurse, I saw a POP cast on my leg. "How did I get here?", I asked myself, I woke hadizat who was sleeping on the chair beside me with her head on the bed.

Me: hadizat, wake up!

Hadizat: oh! Kelvin, you are awake, feeling better?

Me: what happened, why am I here like this?

Hadizat: am sorry, when we were going back to the hostel yesterday, you stopped to vomit, as you wanted to get up, you leg slipped and you fell into the nearby gutter, so a passer-by and I brought you here- school health center.

Nurse: are you feeling better? You will not be able to leave here today, and drugs would be prescribed to you.

I wanted to sit up, but the pain in the leg wouldn't just let me drag the leg up the bed. Hadizat held me down.

Me: did my phone ring?

Hadizat: yes, a person named paul called

Me: what did he say?

Hadizat: I told him you got injured and that you are in the health center

Me: oh! Thanks. Have you been here since then?

Hadizat:sure, how could I leave you?

Me: thanks , but go freshen up, you look ugly

Hadizat: you are not serious, I think your leg is feeling all better that you can decipher beauty. I'd be back

She gave me a gentle pat on my shoulder and left.

An hour later, Paul came in.

Paul: Kelvin, are you ok? Heard from your friend that you got injured. Are you better?

Me: yeah, thanks. She told me you called earlier today

Paul: have these, you've not eaten right

It was a paper bag filled with pie, biscuit, and gala and pepsi drink

Me: thanks man, IFE-igbeyin no catch you?

Paul (he laughed). Thank God. I had called earlier to let you know that I'd be leaving for Lagos today

Me: so fast?

Paul: my parents want me home as soon as possible

Me: ok.

He kept my company for some twenty minutes and then left.

I used to be like that too in first semester- going home as soon as exam ends, but that can't be the case now.

I imagined how I must have behaved the previous night, I must have said jargons.

I used to castigate all those I saw in movies that fell, rise or slept in gutters, streets and misbehaved as a result of being drunken. But here I am suffering an injured leg as a result of being drunk. What a shame! Tears rolled down my eyes towards my ears. I cried for what I was becoming. How do I stop all these? I asked myself.

Just then, hadizat came in. quickly wiping my tears, I said “welcome”.

Hadizat: why are you crying?

Me: no, am not crying

Hadizat: don't lie to me, I can see it in your eyes.

Me: look at me (I burst into tears again)

She sat on the bed, came closer and hugged me and started combing my hair with her hand

“am sorry, its all my fault” she said.

Suddenly, I pulled her face nearer, she stared and I started kissing her. I didn't know what has gotten into me, but I continued. She didn't resist and I continued. Soon I started caressing her. The pain in my leg was gone as I sat up on the bed.

Suddenly the door opened, shock gripped us

.

Who was it?

Episode 10

An elderly nurse came in. she was suprised meeting us like that, but instead of apologizing, she started bashing us with words.

“are you kids okay? What do you think you are doing here? Does this place look like a guest house to you? This is an hospital!!! Is this why you have been sent to school? You were meant to come and read and not this! Where is morals in Nigeria?!”

It was written all over her face that she was pissed, that she just dropped the prescriptions and wrote how I’d use them on the paper.

When she left, we both burst into a little laughter, whats so funny about the whole thing?! I couldn’t tell.

Hadizat sat back on the chair, took the list and decided to go and get the drugs at the health centre pharmacy. When she left, my mind went back to the event of the past five minutes- the kiss. It was my first time, but “I enjoyed it” I thought.

I was angry that the nurse came in to interrupt the ‘fun’, and I was as well thankful, because I don’t know what I might have done.

I lay down on the bed looking blankly at the ceiling, when my phone rang. It was my dad calling.

Dad: hello son

Me: hello dad

Dad: hope you are good

Me:yeah

Dad; I hope you are through with exams now?

Me: yes, I finished my papers already

Dad: so, when are you coming home.

Me:probably weekend, cos we have village evangelism in our fellowship. We'd b going to villages here in osun state

Dad: ok, that's good son, doing the will of God is good thing,keep your good attitude. See you

Me: ok dad

Dad: wait! Hope you have transport fare

Me: yes I still have 2k

Dad:good, because mimiko hasn't paid our salary oo

Me: (laughing) same here, aregbe too is a block head.he doesn't pay. All is well.

Dad: amen, bye son

Me: bye

I drooped the call, gave the air an upper cut in jubilation. I had successfully bought time to stay with hadizat.

Hadizat came back with the drugs, her face long.

Me: why are you wearing a long face?

Hadizat: my mum said the driver is almost at ife to take me home today. She got to know that I was through with exams from my uncle-HOD of med rehab

Me: really?(trying to cheer up). That's good then, at least you would have lesser stress travelling

Hadizat: what of you? When are you leaving?

Me: well, I'd wait till weekend I already told my dad.

Hadizat: I hope your leg would have been better ten, and I'd miss you.(she then gave me some money) take this

Just then, her phone rang, the driver was around, she gave me a hug and left. I watched her walked towards and out of the door. It was as if the holiday would be more than one month. I wanted to stand up, hold her and kiss her, but my leg wouldn't just let me.

I was discharged on Thursday, and the cast was removed on Friday. I had spent all remaining days on campus ,sleeping, eating, watching films and going to the bar, afterall, hadizat gave me 3k before leaving. I got so used to beer during these days. I left for home on Sunday morning.

Home sweet home?

Episode 11

Only the early days of holidays were fun. The whole family welcomed me, I hardly did any chores. Mum was always asking “ what would you eat?”

Mum noticed how I sometimes limped due to the pains in my leg. I told her I fell down on the hostel stair case while taking water up to my room.

“pele, shey o sa ti toju e dada?” she asked

The rate at which I cooked up lies, impromptu, amazed even me myself. I used to find it difficult to lie before, but that was a thing of the past now.

“ it’s true when they said, it’s sometimes good to lie than to tell the truth” I thought.

I didn’t join the local choir when I returned home. I just sat in the congregation during Sunday service and midweek services(which my dad forces me to go)

The zeal to worship God was no longer in me. I found spiritual things tiring that I could no longer do them. I don’t pray, sing nor study the bible.

In the second week of my arrival, I got thirsty, of alcohol of course. I decided to go the bar some few streets away. It was an evening, around 3pm. No one was at home. Customers were not much at the bar, the perfect time to drink without anyone noticing. I ordered a plate of pepper soup along side the drink.

I relaxed watching the TV, when suddenly I heard someone call my name, it sounded like my dad. He never passed that route when coming from office with temi- my younger sister. But that day the route

he passes was blocked due to an accident that had occurred and caused traffic jam, and he then used this route, and then stopped to get somethings in the nearby shore beside the bar – 3 storey (as he explained to mum later).

I couldn't believe my ears, there was no lie to cook up, I was caught right in the act.

I came out of the bar looking like a sheep drenched in the late night rain. I looked down as if his eyes were at his feet.

Dad: Kelvin, what are you doing here?

Me: uhm! (I couldn't say anything, stammering was it all)

Before I finished stammering, his left hand landed a slap on my face. While still rubbing my cheek to ease the tension caused by the thunder that fell on it, dad pulled me by the shirt into the car.

We got home, dad simply went into his room, temi was just staring at me, didn't know how to comment to the whole thing.

I waited hours for dad's call, but he didn't. He simply acted like nothing was wrong. This gave me even more fear.

At ten o'clock, when we put off the generator , he called everyone to the sitting room.

Dad: Kelvin, explain where I found you to everyone

(I looked up, "so he hadn't told mum" I thought, as I looked down again)

Me: 3 storey sir

Dad: doing what?

Me: (I was silent)

Dad: didn't you hear me?

Me: drinking...ing sir

Mum: what?!!!! (she stormed over and gave me 'abara' on my back)

Mum started vituperating as she cried "you went to a bar? Are you crazy? Who taught you to drink? Is that what I told you to go do in school? After all have told you?! You are a disgrace....." (I cant even remember all the spiteful words she said, as regret overcame my hearing ability)

Temi was asked to take mum inside. Dad locked the door leading to the hall way, and then gave me a beating of a life time, I shouted that even neighbours asked "what happened " the next day. He then advised me.

Everyone changed to me, even temi (dad must have suggested it, as a way of punishing me).

Hadizat had called, and subscribed my phone for me, as mum wasn't responding too.

This system had been a very effective way of punishing me.

It was the last Sunday service, I got to the church just before the end of workers meeting (I was doing all I could to get on the good side of my dad)

During the sermon, I was touched.

I felt terrible for all I was doing. The pastor made an altar call. I responded, was prayed for and counselled.

"I want to turn a new leaf" I told myself.

How firm will this resolution of mine stand?

Episode 12.

Holidays were over(even though my days at home were not 'holi' at all). Students were back to campus.

Freshmen were in school two weeks earlier than the stalites. My bed space in my room was already given to another student. Hadizat had rented an apartment in town. But I decided to squat in my room.

I wasn't even eager to call hadizat. She called to tell me she was around and staying in town, but I didn't tell her I was squatting.

Lectures started, and I was always bolting out of class in the early days of lectures, to either go eat or go to lecturers to solve the problem of my physics practical result(it wasn't released).

Oga emma had graduated, banky also got a final year student bedspace in faj. Only sola and I remained in the room, even tobi and collins got a room in town. Two weeks into resumption, hadizat had been tailing and disturbing me, but I always found ways of avoiding her (long distance relationship isn't the best she must have thought).

One day, I went to anglomoz to get risky burger. On my way back to awo café, I bumped into someone, on picking my stuff that fell on the ground, I rose to see that it was hadizat. I wanted to walk away, but stayed.

Me: what are you doing here?

Hadizat: "staying over on campus to read" she said, as she looked at me innocently (that look is always somehow, it always make me wanna laugh)

Me: ok, see ya.

Hadizat: "Kelvin" she said, grabbing my hand. " what did I do? Why have you been avoiding me since resumption? Why? Did I offend you?"

Me: no, you didn't offend me, its me, i..... I don't want to do this anymore

Hadizat: do what?

Me: us! The relationship between us, this lustful relationship

Hadizat: lust?

She paused for a while and then drew me to a solitary place

Hadizat: Kelvin, tell me you don't love me

Me: see, I love you as a friend, but not the kind of love you expect from me. Am not ready for that kind of love, am sorry.

She held my hand as I wanted to go

Hadizat: ok Kelvin, but I want you to know this, I sincerely love you and I will still do, even if you try pushing me away. You are the best thing that has ever happened to me. The moments we shared will be a memory I'd hold forever. Thanks for making laugh heartily"

Then she left, I wasn't sad because I had told her it has ended between us, I was sad because she was sad. Isn't this love?

I went to the common room to eat my already cold food with a drink. Later went to continue reading at awo café.

I was still at the introductory part of my keith moore clinically oriented anatomy textbook. I couldn't concentrate anymore. Whenever I saw a letter that starts with the letter 'H', I'd remember hadizat

I kept remembering the look on her face as she spoke those last words of her's.

I just got up, carried my books and to my room I went.

Tom (freshman): k! you are early today. Hope nothing?

Me: nothing jare, I just dey tired and distracted

Tom: distracted? Noise at awo café?

Me: no jare, am already accustomed to the noise there, once my earpiece is on, that's all.

Tom: then what?

Me: well, I met hadizat, the girl I used to practically date last session.

Tom: why did you break up?

Me: the relationship was going romantic, and I didn't want that, so we broke up, or should I say, I broke up with her, but I don't know what had made me this sad about the whole thing.

Tom: really? Mehn! If person tell me say pastor k don date before, I no go believe oo.

Me: (I laughed) well, old things are passed away.....

Tom: ok, on a more serious note, if you think you 'd be sad by not being on speaking terms with her, then why don't you just be friends, and draw a clear line in the relationship.

Me: but.....

Tom: trust me. That's the solution to your distraction

Me: thanks

I climbed my bedspace(the reading table beside the window), lay down, thinking " is that the right thing to do?"

Episode 13

I took tom's advised and told hadizat on the phone that we should be just friends again. She was so happy that she jumped on my neck when she saw me the next day.

We started gisting, going to class together, leaving classes together. Accompanying her to the bus stop to get a bus when going home. We became good friends again.

Soon, I started visiting her house in town. It was located around lagere. It was a typical girl's room, with pink and white every where, even the bathroom slipper was pink.

One Friday evening, I was coming from ahmed's house in town, and then decided to stop at hadizat's.

It was already 5pm when I got to her place. She offered me indomie and egg just the way I loved it.

Before I finished eating, it started to rain, heavily at that. I decided to a wait a little longer.

She put on her system

Hadizat: you watch Korean movies, don't you?

Me: sure they are my favourite. Wait!, I thought you don't watch them?

Hadizat: well, I decided t try them out last semester, as you always talked about them. And since them, have been in love.

Me: really?(I laughed) blessing made me into a Korean addict too. City hunter was my first.

She played the movie, it was "dr jin". I had wanted to watch the movie for so long.

After watching for a couple of hours, I checked my time, it was already some minutes to ten

Me: hadizat, I need to go before the gate is locked by 11pm.

Hadizat: ok, or would you like to copy the film to your phone?

After sending it, she put off her system to escort me.

Just then, we heard some noises from the people in the room closer to the main entrance of the villa. In less than 1 minute, someone was already banging on hadizat's door. On hearing "open this door or I'll tear it down" I knew the villa was being attacked by thieves. Hadizat was already terrified as she hang on to my cloth from behind.

Hadizat: "what do we do now?" She said in a low tune

Me: I think it's better we open the door. Before they force it open themselves.

My legs shaking as I moved closer to the door, I finally opened the door, two guys(I can't even tell their complexion) entered, pointing torches at our faces.

Man1: both of you, lie down!!! (he roared)

Hadizat was already on her knees before he said that. I joined her. I almost pee on my body that day. I only saw this in movies. I wasn't sure the weapon they were holding, but even their voices is enough to terrify me.

The second man ransacked the whole room, finding hadizat's phone, laptop, power bank and 10k.

The other man came closer.

Man2: boyfriend stand up.

I couldn't say I wasn't her boyfriend, but I knew he was talking to me, as I was the only guy there apart from them.

I stood up gently as I did when my father finished flogging me the other day.

He searched me from head to toe and took the eight hundred naira left on me, my wrist watch and phone, leaving my earpiece and charger.

They went out after leaving instructions that we should neither shout nor come out, while pointing the gun at my head(now I can tell, because I felt the hollow mouth and cold nature)

The raid on the villas in that area lasted about 1hr 30 minutes, and now it was already 11:20 pm. I couldn't go back to campus. Hadizat just sat shaking on the bed.i went close to comfort her. She checked her quran and saw that her atm card was still intact.

" I'd withdraw for you tomorrow. You can stay here tonight"

"What could I have done?"

After about an hour, we lay down to sleep. Hadizat on her 3.5 inch bed, and I on the rugged floor.

The night was chilly due to the evening rain.

she gave me a spare blanket, pink colour of course, soon power supply was cut off. She put on her emergency lamp, and we slept.

What happened overnight?

Episode 14

We had sex that night. It was my first, but am not sure it hadizat's. I couldn't tell because of the relatively dark room, and she woke up earlier and might have taken care of any blood stains.

Hadizat woke me up at around 8am that Saturday morning. I was reluctant to stand up, wanting to sleep longer, hoping the deed of the previous night should have been a dream. But it was not, with hadizat smiling brightly in front of me.

I couldn't say much, "good morning" was it.

She gave me a new toothbrush and a towel to go and shower, but I refused.

I rejected the breakfast she offered too, and went back to campus.

I just got to my room, took to my bed, staring blankly at the ceiling, thinking of what I have done.

Different thoughts came to my mind,. Creating fear.

"what if she gets pregnant?"

"what if she had STD?"

"God must be angry, oh! I have sinned!!"

Some minutes later, a message entered my phone, it was from hadizat. It read thus: " I love you". I couldn't reply the message. Evidently she doesn't know what love is, "this is lust" I told myself. I couldn't think straight.

I tried calming myself down, that it was alright but I knew it wasn't. even tom knew something was wrong, but I couldn't tell him, I am pastor k!.

Suddenly the thought came, " didn't you enjoy it?". I wanted to smile but on remembering " thou shall not fornicate!", I put my hands on my head.

I decided to call blessing and tell her what was going on. The phone rang, and she picked immediately.

Me: ahnahn!! Were you waiting for my call?

Blessing: (she laughed) no o, I was playing subway surf. Do you know I made an high score of 3.99 million?

Me: eh! Na cheat u dey use?

Blessing: see this guy oo,I resemble you? I be boss! Wetin be your own high score?

Me: 388,000

Blessing: well you try sha. ..but I don't think discussing subway surf is why you called me. Hope nothing, am seeing masquerade in the afternoon oo.

Me(stammering)(I couldn't bring myself to tell her) uhm! How was your EEE 271 test that you were preparing for when I called last?

Blessing: fine jare. Any test yet?

Me: no, but soon

Blessing: pls call me later, extra class things.

I hanged up the call. I couldn't tell her. I can't afford to lose hat smile on her face. She had always comforted me in hard times, hoping I'd become Mr. perfect for my Ms perfect.

But here I am, being a jerk! Having illicit affairs with a girl, risking the feasibility if my dreams.

When class resumed, I had gotten over my regret, and had even come to terms with it. We continued our friendship, infact, we were practically dating. The pastor title my classmates called me was lost. Now, I have hadizat.

Some weeks after the big event(sex), I just got back from a test of an elective course(hadizat doesn't offer that elective- SEP 001). A message entered my phone, it was from her. I eagerly opened it, it read thus:.....

Episode 15

I eagerly opened it, it read thus: “hi dear, how are you doing? I miss you”. I was happy.

The following day, I returned from where I went to meet a secondary school senior at sports, I got to the hostel and my phone beeped. It was a message from her, I opened it, “Kelvin, am pregnant!”. It first didn’t make sense to me, I read it again and suddenly decoded all the meaning (she’s pregnant. I had sex with her, she’s telling me, that means am responsible) “ah!” I shouted. I switched off the phone, restarted it, checked the message again, it was still, “am pregnant”.

I started pacing up and down in my room(none of my roommates were around). I didn’t know what to do at first.

After about 30 minutes of being blank, I decided to call her. The phone rang for a long time before she picked up. She sounded not too well (like I care. Am in trouble!)

Me: hello

Hadizat: hello(sounding really tired and sleepy)

Me: hadizat, I received a message some minutes ago, am not sure if you sent it, or its just one of MTN’s frustrating messages?!

Hadizat: I did.

Me: are you for real? You are pregnant?!

Hadizat: yes

Me: for who?

Hadizat:ahnan!! Who else, you of course

Me:(I shouted as if am just getting the message). Wait, where are you now, I need to see you now

Hadizat: health centre

Me: what?! What happened ?

Hadizat: come here first

I got there in less than 5 minutes. She was admitted into the same room I was when I broke my leg.

She looked fatigued on the bed.

“ when I got back from class, I decided to fetch water, then is suddenly collapsed, I woke up here surrounded my villa mates. And the doctor said I was pregnant and collapsed due to stress” she narrated, when I asked her the reason she was laying sick on bed.

I just listened blankly. I thought of my parents, how would they react on hearing this?. I sat down, my alarm rang, it was time to go for the last lecture of the day. I just dipped the phone back in my pocket.

Thirty minutes later, bode called me, “ guy you no come class?, your g.f nko?, see that baba wan do test now oo”

I got a grip of myself, ran to the venue, did the test, and just plodded back to the health centre.

I told hadizat about the test, “ I’d reschedule” she said. Yes, she only needed an health centre report.

Minutes later, the door flung open, it was the judge from last time, hadizat’s dad! Followed by a woman that looked like grown up hadizat.

Mum: Hadizat, omo mi, what happened. How come??!!

Dad: you are pregnant?! Or is the doctor wrong?

(I lusted behind them, looking)

She only made gestures with her head, to confirm what the doctor had said

Dad: who is responsible? Who is that imbecile?!(he said, raging)

(my shoulders shuddered at this question)

She looked in my direction, and her parents too, they just noticed my presence

“ I should have gone out” I thought.

Dad: so you are the one that impregnated my daughter? How dare you?!

(the mother came to me, locking me by my shirt at the collar)

Then the nurse and the doctor came in

Doctor: hello sir.

Mum: doctor, see my life (she said, crying)

Dad: doctor, welldone sir. Please what can we do?

Doctor: how do you mean sir?

Dad: you should understand now

Doctor: (smiling) we don't do that here sir. And moreover, I'd strongly advise that nothing of such be done, apart from being against the law of man and God, it could also be detrimental to her health. In worst case scenario, death!

I just stood there thinking “ so am becoming a father! At 19?”

The father turned to me

“ you want to destroy the life of my daughter?! I will deal with you, I will show you!!”

“ what do you mean?” I thought

Episode 16

That day I went back to my room, disorganized – mentally, physically, academically, spiritually, psychologically, name it. “ the thieves caused it all” I thought.

I went to class the next day, and she wasn't in class. She must still be resting at health centre.

Few days later, my dad called. I wasn't sure if he was aware of the situation yet, so I didn't pick up, as I cant bear to hear the words he'd say, but sooner or later we'd have to face off.

I tried to concentrate in classes, but it was all to no avail. Even sometimes I skipped classes.

My roommates noticed, and asked what had happened, but I just wont tell. I only spoke to 'D boy' my school father, “calm down” he said. But how do I calm down when danger is surely looming, its imminent I would be disowned by my father if he heard.

“ah! A child that impregnates or is impregnated under my roof, will have to leave, two generation parents can't live under my roof. Kelvin, you are a man now o, if you near a girl, she'd get pregnant oo” he had jokingly said during the period I was writing my WAEC. I knew him, he was a disciplinarian.

The following week, the HOD of my department called me, and told me the school's PRO would like to see me by two that day.

I got to senate building, entered(my first time of entering the senate building)).

As I got to the PRO's office, I was taken aback to see my dad, my mum and hadizat's mum. “ good afternoon sir” I greeted, as courtesy. I knew ' gobe ti sele'

My mum already had grief written boldly on her face, my dad looking fierce

PRO: you are Kelvin right? How are you

Me: fine sir (abi I don fine ni)

PRO: yes, I called you here in view of what happened between you and Hadizat. Mr. Adegbolahan here has accused you of raping his daughter. Is that true?

I couldn't believe what I just heard, rape?!

Me: "no sir, I didn't rape her oo" I said, with my eyes wide open, and neck stretching forward.

Hadizat's dad: yes you did, how else would you explain what had happened?

Me: "but sir..... did Hadizat say this?", I asked, trying to prove him wrong

Hadizat's dad: yes, she did.

My mum sat down, wailing.

Me: but that's not true, Hadizat is my girlfriend (my dad turned to look at me as I said this) how could I rape her?

Hadizat's dad: no need to argue about this, by tomorrow afternoon, you should receive a summon letter from the court.

Here my dad came in, in the conversation.

Dad: sir (facing Hadizat's dad), please can't we solve this amicably out of court? As the boy had stated, they were dating.

Hadizat's dad: no! we won't settle anything amicably, the boy must be jailed!

Mum's wailing became more, more loud. I soon started crying. It was like a drama to me.

PRO: Kelvin, in view of this the school will be given you leave of absence for the time being, and if found guilty, you will be rusticated. Take this letter to the dean of student affairs.

I got the letter and went out dumb founded. I later went to the health center to ask hadizat if she truly said those words, I got there and was told she was discharged already, her number wasn't going through. I went back to the room, wishing for the ground to just swallow me. I lay on my bed, looking like a prisoner whose execution day is tomorrow.

I got myself thinking " what have I gotten myself into, I should have resisted the devil, I should have fled from the appearance of evil. Would I survive this, would I be a able to return as an OAU student?"

Episode 17

Court proceedings started the following Monday. I saw bode amongst the audience around. Hadizat's dad was present, but not as the presiding judge. The clerk stood up ,after I was called into the suspect chamber, and asked

Clerk: you Abiola Kelvin, are accused of raping Ms. Hadizat Adegbolahan. Are you guilty or not guilty?

Me: not guilty

Clerk: my lord he says he is not guilty.

Arguments ensued between the two lawyers – prosecuting lawyer and my lawyer – my dad(I didn't tell you he was a lawyer?).

Dad called out bode to witness about my relationship with hadizat. "they are dating" he said, but the prosecuting lawyer had countered the motion by saying " they might be dating, but Kelvin had forcefully had his way with her and that is tantamount to rape. The girl in question is a young 17 year old girl, as a girl well trained at home, she would not want that kind of intimacy at that ' innocent' age".

I stood there, surprised, amazed. Just like I had felt when she first told me "I love you", but this time, it was tears that flooded my eyes. Hadizat?!!! When she was the one that caused it that night. How foolish I had been?!!!.

The case was later adjourned. My dad was able to secure bail for me, but my international passport was seized.

Home was terrible. Mum was always nagging. Dad was giving me the 'silent mode' punishment.

Mum: Kelvin, how could you do this to us?! Despite how we are struggling to give you a better life. Now see what you have turned your life, our family into? Shame on you!!!!

She cried the more, there and then, the name “gamalin 20” came to mind.

My inner man broke down on his knees, crying, even though I was still standing.

I couldn't look into the face of my beloved temi anymore. I had changed from the Kelvin she used to know. Every day at home, the whole world seem to be booing me.

One day, my dad called me after we had put off the generator, he sat me down

Dad: Kelvin, explain to this house what you have done?

I just couldn't say anything, he pounced on me and gave me a hell of a beating, and finally pronounced, “no matter the verdict of the court, tomorrow, you are no longer a member of this family, I disown you”

Mum pleaded as she cried, but all to no avail, dad was rigid in his decision. Temi was crying too, staring at my face as she did. Tears flowed down my eyes uncontrollably.

The next day, we left for osogbo early in the morning.

That day hadizat was in the audience.

I felt relieved that she was I court and she would testify that it wasn't rape. She avoided my every gaze, then I felt really uncomfortable.

Soon, she was called by the prosecuting lawyer to testify.

Lawyer: can you tell the court your relationship with Kelvin?

Hadizat: my boyfriend

Lawyer: what happened on the night of September 30 2016?

Hadizat: thieves came to our villa, while Kelvin was around, and he had to stay over the night

Lawyer: the sex that later ensued, was it rape or you both were having fun?

Hadizat: (Sobbing) r....ra....rape

Lawyer: from the victim, we have ascertained that the deed was a rape. I implore your lordship to give the right judgment so that this rapist won't go unpunished, serving as a deterrent to all those that have it in mind to take advantage of young girls.

From where I was standing, I shouted "hadizat!!!!!!", I couldn't believe my ears, and am sure you aren't believing your eyes now.

There and by, I was sentenced to six years in prison, with hard labour.

As I was being taken away, I met hadizat

Hadizat: am sorry (sobbing)

What was she sorry for?

Episode 18

Nigerian prisons were just like I had seen on tv, terrible, really terrible : maltreatment by the warders, overpopulation of the cells, even the watery beans is real. The cell was just a bit bigger than my room in school, we were 25 inmates there.

We defecated into a bucket in one angle, and took turns to dispose it. I was forced to do it most times, as I was the youngest, and also a freshman. I was given a terrible matriculation ceremony.

Meals were mainly watery beans, rice came once in two weeks. It was in there I first had eba and water, when an older inmate took my okro to add to his own.

Houseflies ravaged the cell in the afternoon, while mosquitos take over at night. The situation in there is indeed inimical.

I had met a friend, John while we were on the field working one day. He was about my age. We became close, and I asked him how he got the prison. "I couldn't further my education, because of money problems, and no job to do, so I was introduced to a group of friends, not knowing they were robbers, on realizing, it was too late to back out, as my life was at risk. We went for robbery one day and we were caught. Three of us were killed while trying to escape, only two of us were arrested" he explained.

Mum visited me every month, but dad never did. Paul visited me once. But none of these visitations were painful as when Blessing visited me, either directly from school or on holidays. Bro Victor (her elder brother) had once followed her, telling me all was well. She is the most important friend in my life. I hate her seeing me in that condition. My beards sprouting scatteredly, my hair unkept,, and my pimples getting more violent.

The first day she came, was bitter.

Me:(surprised to see her) how come, what are you doing here?

Blessing: I called your number several times, your younger sister eventually picked up, a particular day. And she told me all. Kelvin, what really happened? This isn't he Kelvin I know.

Me:(sobbing)

I explained all to her, how it all started, and what was really the case that night.

Whenever she came, she would hold my hands to pray. And I'd cry with my forehead on her hands.

After serving a year in prison. A call came to me through a warder from the chief of the prison, while working on the field.

I got to the small office, me some other prisoners there

Chief: yes, welcome. In case you don't know, today's date is October 1, 2017 – independence day. And in commemorating the day, the governor – Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola has granted you all freedom.

Shouts of joy filled the room, as the other inmates jubilated.

I just bowed down, crying. Blessing's prayers were answered.

We signed necessary papers and were released.

Other prisoners found their way as we came out of the gate. I stood there blankly, knowing not what to do.

Later, I went to a nearby UBA bank to make some withdrawal over the counter, and went to akure, not to my father's house, as I wasn't welcome there.

Where did I go?

Episode 19

I got to akure and went to my aunty's place at Oshinle. Her husband is a pastor in RCCG.

I knocked on the door, she opened and shouted "Kelvin". At least, she was happy to see me, since she hugged me.

Aunty: how come? What happened?

Me: I was released today.

She called her husband from the room, " daddy tobi!, Kelvin is here o"

Dady tobi: Kelvin, you are here, how are you?

I was welcomed into the home, given food (iyan and egusi), I had come right on time.

They called and told my dad I arrived, "I don't care" he had said.

I was to stay with my cousin, tobi in his room. I unpacked the small bag I recovered from the prison.

My phone(I got another one after the incident, with hadizat's help of course), earpiece, wrist watch etc.

My aunty subscribed for me two days later, as I got a new sim (dad had taken the old sim).

Mum soon came visiting, she hugged me tight, and weeped on my shoulders again (her weeping always breaks my heart)

Mum: "my son, hope you are good" (how mothers can miss their child!), she said while turning me a around to check out my physical state. Your dad is still angry, he is so stiff, stay here for the meantime till his anger is pacified. I'd try and persuade him.

I knew she was just saying that to cheer me up, dad rarely rescinds on his decisions.

She spent the whole day with me and went back home around 7pm. She promised to bring temi on her next visit.

Few days after my arrival, daddy tobi called me. We sat on a bench outside the compound.

Daddy tobi: Kelvin, I guess you have learnt your lesson? You have seen what lust has brought upon your life. Your education is at a stand still, in fact, now you have been expelled from school. Your father disowned you and now the devil is really happy.

(Tears started flowing again)

"now tell me, what do you want to do with your life? You can't just sit at home and do nothing.

Me: I don't know yet sir

Daddy tobi : returning back to your first love, Christ, is your best bet. you need to receive the life of Christ again. Right now, the devil is looking at you, he has succeeded in pulling you down to the miry clay he is. Destroying your life fulfilling his part of john 10:10 in your life. He has killed your spiritman, stolen your salvation, and destroyed your destiny & purpose. But to have life abundantly, you need Jesus! Jesus loves you, are you ready to accept him?

(I wept bitterly and said a yes. He prayed for me and went in)

The following day, I went to the church, prayed sorrowfully, confessing all my sins to God.

Tears flooded the whole place, as I lay on the altar

“ dear God, have mercy on me a shameful sinner.....”

After about an hour, I dozed off on the altar. I dreamt and saw a man, that his body emitted a glorious light, I couldn't behold. Seated on a great throne located between four cherubims. I saw Jesus.

And he said “ I LOVE YOU”.

Then I woke up, rejoicing, “ jesus loves me!!!!”. I went home and narrated all to my uncle.

The following day, my dad and mum came, “ we have come to take our son home”

It was Jesus!!! He did it!!! Suddenly I remembered Tye tribett's song : “if he did it before, he'd do it again, same God right now, same God back then”

But has my story ended? NO!!!!!! why was hadizat sorry the other day?

Episode 20 (end)

My life was getting back to normal, except for the fact that am no longer an OAU student.

I started receiving love from home again, and my spirit man was growing again, when suddenly something happened.

One Tuesday morning, I decided to go get the family mails at the post office. About 10 letters were already there.

The recent one was from the devil herself, hadizat!. I couldn't wait till I got home to read it, I read it right there. "What do you want with my life again this girl' I said as I opened the letter. What I saw made me cry, I can't believe this, this is so saddening. Even the person at the door asked if all was well, I cried loudly after I read it.

The message was from porter ranch, los angeles, California USA.

It read thus:

" Dear Kelvin.

With sincere sorrow in my heart I write you this letter. Let me start by saying for all that has happened to you, because I caused them all.

On the day we had sex, I was the one who called the armed robbers to raid the villa, so as to force you to stay overnight. I intentionally delayed you with movies (ah! Korean film has killed me!), when I went to ease myself that day, that's when I called them, the leader of the cult was d one who impregnated me. I told him about the pregnancy, but bluntly refused, and came up with the plan, I accepted to avoid too much shame.

I made you have sex with me, so as to be said to be responsible. I was already two weeks pregnant before that day. Am sorry.

But I didn't know my dad would turn it that way and accuse you of rape. And he made me testify against you that it was rape, and sent me here thereafter.

I will also reveal the truth about the pregnancy (which I lost anyway, I collapsed again, when you went to prison) to him.

I know you might find it hard to forgive me, but please forgive me. I really hope things work out well for you. I saw your account on facebook and recent posts, then, I knew you were out. So, am sending this to ask for your forgiveness.

You were the best friend that I ever had (if not for my mistake, we'd still be friends right?). thanks for making me laugh when I was with you. Am sorry once again for the pains have caused you.

Yours sincerely

Hadizat"

I read the letter three times before coming to terms with it.

"so I wasn't the father?!"

"so she was cajoled to testify?!"

Anger and joy competed for space in my heart.

Angry because I was framed, joyful because its finally over.

I had caused it. I gave room for lust instead of love(as a friend).

I snapped the letter and sent it on whatsapp to daddy tobi. And ran home to show my dad.

My life just got better, even at its best!

I took the next JAMB exam, and got admission into OAU to study medicine.

Two phases of life I experienced, that got me thinking “heard from two persons, but having different effects on my life, the words I LOVE YOU”.

See friends, enough writing, I want to go and check the suit I ordered from Italy, for my wedding ceremony.

Oh! I haven't told you, after I completed medicine at OAU, my aunty in the US called me over.

There I met hadizat again (her again?! You'd say), I couldn't recognize her at first, she wasn't in hijab. In fact we met in an RCCG church. She had become a Christian(born again).

I forgave her all she had done to me, it was ignorance. "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive....."

We became friends again, and decided to get married(I guess the love is still there), and now, we are some weeks away from the D- day here in Nigeria. You are invited...

Thanks for reading my story

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