

HYPHEN

by

Rick Ofar

+234(0)817-929-0343
rickofar@gmail.com

FADE IN:

SHOTS: SCENES OF CORPSES LYING IN THE STREET

PIUS (V.O.)

What's the value of life in this country?

SCENE 1: A MAN BURNT ALIVE

A CROWD gather around a lifeless body burnt alive. Smoke still rising from the rings of burnt tires.

PIUS (V.O.)

This incidence happened right in the presence of a police officer. According to an eyewitness, he said the victim of this gruesome JUNGLE JUSTICE was trying to steal from a mobile money operator. The operator resisted, he brought out gun and shot her at close range. The angry mob apprehended him. Instead of handing him over to a police officer that was close by, they decided to do the easiest justice that one could afford in this country.

A police van drives to the scene. The siren blares briefly. One of the POLICE OFFICERS brings out his head. He signals the other one driving. They continue, driving away from the scene.

PIUS (V.O.)

The operator later died from the bullet injury. To the mob, the end justifies the means.

SCENE 2: A CORPSE LYING ON THE STREET

A lifeless body lie on the street. Many people walk pass without looking at it.

PIUS (V.O.)

There are million ways to die in this country... No, this is not a figure of speech and I am not trying to exaggerate. If you don't get killed by happy trigger police man for refusing to give bribe.

SCENE 3: SHOTS ON DIFFERENT BAD ROADS AND BURNT CARS DUE TO ROAD ACCIDENT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.)

How about death by accident from bad roads. Roads that were awarded as contracts to individuals or firms. Contractor receives money to get the road fixed and because there are so many offices to sort out, he ends up abandoning the contract and carting away with whatever money that's left. The road becomes deathtrap for motorists and passengers.

SCENE 4: SUICIDE

A police van parks in front of a city hall in the midst of a mammoth crowd.

PIUS (V.O.)

There are several people who couldn't bear the hardship plaguing this country. Some took their lives drinking insecticides, stabbed themselves and jumped into rivers just to end it all.

The police officers bring out a lifeless body on a stretcher drenched in blood with several open cuts.

SCENE 5: INSIDE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Members of House Representatives in debating session.

PIUS (V.O.)

There was a time they debated the rising number of suicides at the National Assembly. The government ended up banning some products they thought people, especially young people get easily and use in committing suicide. To me, it was just like treating symptoms and leaving out the real sickness. So we end up acting like all is well.

FADE TO:

EXT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - DAY

A car drives along a busy expressway. It approaches a police checkpoint and gets pulled over by a eight man squad, all heavily armed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their patrol van is parked by the roadside. (The patrol van doesn't have any unit written on it and the police men are all dressed in mufti).

A middle age CORPORAL, m, approaches the car that is now parked by the roadside with his AK-47 Rifle in hand.

CORPORAL
(knocks on the glass)
Wind down.

PAUSE

PIUS (V.O.)
Wait a minute. I need to let you know that this story isn't about me. My name is Pius Ogeki.

RESUME

PIUS, 34, winds the glass down and reduces the volume of the car stereo.

PIUS
(smiles)
Good afternoon officer.

CORPORAL
Wetin good about the afternoon?
Driver's license and vehicle papers. Then turn off the car make you come down.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Pius turns off the car, looks in the glove compartment to bring out his vehicle papers and steps out.

EXT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

He closes the door and hands the vehicle papers to the corporal.

CORPORAL
Where your driver's license?

Pius reaches back to glove compartment through the open window and picks the driver's license.

PIUS
(handing it to him)
This is it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The corporal takes it and walks away from him acting like he's inspecting the vehicle and documents.

CORPORAL

Scorpion!

A middle age SERGEANT, m, walks towards them.

CORPORAL

(to the sergeant)

Oga, this guy papers nor correct. And the vehicle be like that one wey dem report stolen few hours ago.

PIUS (V.O.)

Yes, just like that. This is the reality I live in. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty by a competent court. That's how it's supposed to be. But here, it's the other way around. Everyone is a criminal until proven innocent.

SERGEANT

(takes the documents)

Hmm...

Flips the documents.

SERGEANT

(walking towards Pius)

Wetin be your name?

PIUS

It's clearly stated on my vehicle papers...

The corporal slaps him. Pius screams in pain. He holds his cheek.

SERGEANT

Your papa, you feel say I blind? I nor kor get reason why I dey ask you? Abi you wan say make dem leave one bullet for your leg first?

CORPORAL

Wetin your stupid name, you dey wan form say na you sabi English pass. Stupid man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SERGEANT

If dem leave one bullet for your leg now, you go say police wicked. Bloody criminal. Stupid scammer.

PIUS

(stammers)

Pius Ogeki...

SERGEANT

This is stolen car.

Tries to walk towards the sergeant but the corporal stops him. Two other officers walk towards them.

(The other officers are busy with other vehicles driving pass)

PIUS

(still stammering)

How do you mean, "Stolen". This is the third year I am driving this car. And not the first time I am plying this road or meeting police officers on the road.

SERGEANT

When we finish with you, body go tell you.

(starts walking away toward the other two officers)

Dey speak big grammar. All these scammers. Armed Robber.

He meets the other two officers (they are of the same ranks) and starts chatting inaudibly. Pius walks to the corporal.

PIUS

(still scratching his cheek)

Oga, this na my car. I nor steal am. I don dey drive am for the past three years.

CORPORAL

Na you sabi that one. Wetin I know be say, today, my oga dey on happy mood, he for don put handcuff for your hand or maybe shoot your leg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PIUS

All the vehicle papers correct, dem dey up to date. My driver's license dey valid.

CORPORAL

Which other proof you get to show say even this Pius na your name?

PIUS

Oya make I bring my complimentary card?

CORPORAL

That one na wetin everybody fit go design print for any business center.

SERGEANT #2 walks towards them. He holds Pius by the hand moves him to the opposite direction.

SERGEANT #2

What's your name?

PIUS

Pius... Pius Ogeki

SERGEANT #2

What's the proof that your name is Pius and that beyond the vehicle papers you gave to us that truly that's your name and that the vehicle belong to you?

PIUS

Sir, I was about bring my complimentary card and even my ID card to show you...

The first Sergeant walks toward them.

SERGEANT

Nor be long talk. Shadow make we take this guy go station.

SERGEANT #2

Calm down na... your blood too dey hot. This guy na correct man.

SERGEANT

(angrily)

Abeg, I nor dey like involve you for matters like this. You too dey

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SERGEANT (cont'd)
roll peace.
(calls the corporal)
Viper!
(walks toward him)

CORPORAL
Oga

SERGEANT
Where the car key?

CORPORAL
E dey with me.

SERGEANT
Reverse the car make we go station.

The other police officers are still on the road, about their routine "stop and search".

He starts walking toward the other officers on the road.

SERGEANT #2
(to Pius)
Make I see your ID Card and
complimentary card.

PIUS
E dey inside my car.

SERGEANT #2
Bring it let me see.

Pius starts walking towards his car. The Corporal follows him.

CORPORAL
(walking beside him)
Talk wetin you fit bring make we
let you go, because if we enter
station now, your matter na state
headquarters you go take solve am
oh.

Pius ignores him and walks to the car. He looks back and sees the Corporal talking to the first Sergeant.

SERGEANT
(whispering)
How far, na like how much we fit
collect the guy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CORPORAL

The way the guy arrange, something like 300k fit fall out oh.

Pius walks passed them towards Sergeant #2

PIUS

Here's my complimentary card.
(hands it to him)
My ID Card too.

SERGEANT #2

(surprise)

Hmm...

He looks at the car.

SERGEANT #2

(softly)

Why didn't you put the sticker on your car?

PIUS

(scoffs)

Whether I put up the sticker there or not shouldn't influence how you folks treat people that ply the road every day. It's an unfair judgment.

SERGEANT #2

Sorry about this. And sorry that my colleague slapped you.

PIUS

It's typical and I was expecting nothing less.

SERGEANT #2

Who's with your vehicle papers and key?

PIUS

The one they call Shadow.

Sergeant #2 walks toward the Corporal and the first Sergeant.

SERGEANT #2

When I dey tell una say una blood too dey hot, una go dey talk say I too do. Where the guy papers and car key?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

SERGEANT

Wetin happen?

SERGEANT #2

The guy na lawyer. The man wey he dey chamber, na big shot. Just quietly go apologize give am and give back he papers and key.

The Corporal walks back to Pius.

CORPORAL

The Law... you for let us know who you be na...

(he hands Pius the key and documents)

Abeg we just dey do our job.

Pius ignores him and walks to his car. The first Sergeant looks away as Pius walks pass him.

Sergeant #2 walks to Pius as he enters his car.

SERGEANT #2

Can I have your complimentary card?

Pius hands him one.

CORPORAL

The law, anything for your boys?

Without a word, Pius drives off.

PIUS (V.O.)

This is one but many situations young people face on a daily basis in this part of the world. We get profiled as criminals. If you look too nice, it means you must be involved in something illegal.

FADE TO BLACK.

PIUS (V.O.)

You might even get killed long before you get the chance to prove your innocence.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARS (TRANSITION) - DAY

SHOT: POLICE CHASE

A police van drives speedily through the busy highway chasing a salon car which is equally swerving through the busy traffic. Other road users try to give them way. The siren blares loudly from the police van.

(The driver of the salon car is not seen neither is the passengers)

(ACTION NOT WRITTEN YET)

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(POLICE CHASE CONTINUES, ACTION NOT WRITTEN YET)

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

CONTINUED: (2)

The driver of the Salon car loses control and runs into a parked truck along the road. People scream. The Police van drives to the scene. People quickly gather around the car trying to pull the occupants out. They break the back glass.

The scream continues in the B.G.

The DRIVER and the PASSENGER at the front are dead, soak in blood.

The people pull one of the PASSENGERS from the back seat. Her face is covered in blood. Gasping for air.

MAN IN CROWD

(screams)

Somebody help.

The people start booing the police. The police drives off the scene as the crowd begins to increase and the booing louder.

PIUS (V.O.)

You might even get killed long before you get the chance to prove your innocence.

The Passenger gives up, dying in the hands of one of the people in the crowd. People start crying, some scream...

PIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I count myself luck every time I get past situations whenever I get to relate with them. Try so hard to de-escalate situations like this. Like eight to nine out of ten young people are not always lucky. Get extorted, get shot at or get killed.

FADE TO:

INT. TECH FIRM - MORNING

SOLOMON ABIVE, 25, enters the lobby and walks towards the RECEPTIONIST, 30s; He wears this boyish smile with his backpack hanging over one shoulder.

SOLOMON
(still smiling)
Good morning, ma.

RECEPTIONIST
Good morning. How may I help you?

Solomon looks towards the waiting area. There are other applicants dressed corporately. He looks at his casual wear like he is out of place.

SOLOMON
(clears his throat)
I am here to make a presentation to the director of...

RECEPTIONIST
(interrupts)
...Um, I see. Pick a number and join the others.
(pointing to the tags on her counter)

He picks a tag and joins the others sitting in the-

LOBBY - TECH FIRM - CONTINUOUS

The door leading to the conference room opens. The SECRETARY, f, signals and the first applicant stands up and follows her. Solomon starts jittering.

TIME LAPSE

Over six applicants have gone in and out of the conference room. Solomon's gaze were on the wall clock behind the Receptionist.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - TECH FIRM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens again and the Secretary signals Solomon. He picks his backpack and follows immediately.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - TECH FIRM - CONTINUOUS

A six Member of the board of DIRECTORS (MRS. TITILAYO, late 40s; DAYO, IFEANYI, DESMOND, EDAFE, 20s and FIONA are all in

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

their 20s) and they have their name tags in front of them around the large table.

SOLOMON

Good morning.

MRS. TITILAYO

Please sit down.

SECRETARY

I believe you can fix the projector.

SOLOMON

(softly)

Of course.

He quickly stands up and gets on it. He fixes his laptop to the projector. The Secretary turns the light dim. Solomon clicks the button to show the first slide.

CLOSE SHOT: "SAVE BOX MOBILE APP"

SOLOMON

My name is Solomon Abive, and I will give a million and one reasons why Save Box is the best mobile application for saving money.

He clicks on the next slide.

SOLOMON

Its user friendly interface gives user step by step guidelines to set up new accounts without having to call customer service every time. Designed with clearly labeled icons that explains everything the user wants to do.

He enlarges a part of the slide.

SOLOMON

And if the user gets stuck, it is easy to chat with a representative simply by clicking on the chat button. It saves call credit and issues are resolved in real time. The good news about this is that, the application operate with or without internet connection. All the user needs is a smart phone with cellular network and he or she is good to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DESMOND
(interrupts)
How is that possible?

SOLOMON
Yes, I know that question will come up. The application is designed in such a way that, in as much as you can make and receive calls, send and receive text messages, you can definitely access it. Yes, I know we live in an era where internet connectivity is as fast as the speed of light. But in reality isn't true. We don't have 3G, 4G or 5G coverages in most parts that need this application that is why I have to put this into consideration while building it.

They murmur among themselves.

SOLOMON
Saving money shouldn't be so difficult and shouldn't come with extra cost of losing your money too. I believe many of us have had cases with similar application getting cut off due to poor internet reception. Imagine getting debited while you are in the middle of a transaction that ended up showing failed. You can imagine the stress of going to the bank and filling up a reversal form and waiting so long to have this rectified.

MRS. TITILAYO
Interesting.

SOLOMON
If in the event, it shows failed transaction, a message...

He clicks on the slide.

SOLOMON
A message will pop up to ask the user if he or she wants to lodge a complaint. The application will automatically bring up a screen shot as proof of failed transaction
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SOLOMON (cont'd)
and... viola... you have lodge a
complaint without leaving where you
are or visiting the bank.

They applaud him.

SOLOMON
That's not all...

ALL
(in unison)
Wow

SOLOMON
Since we are assuring our customers
that issues are resolved in real
time, customer representatives are
alerted immediately. Already,
contact with intermediaries have
been established, instead of
waiting seven to thirty working
days, issues are resolved in few
hours if not immediately.

They clap again. He clicks on the next slide.

SOLOMON
Saving also comes with rewards.
That you will see on the next slide
which is also been made easy on the
application. And this rewards are
mouth watering that it encourages
users to save money on our
platform. Another...

MRS. TITILAYO
(claps to interrupt)
That's enough...

The Secretary turns on the light.

MRS. TITILAYO
If we let you continue we might end
up spending the whole of the day
here.

Solomon chuckles.

MRS. TITILAYO
Does anyone know what I am thinking
right now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

FIONA
Of the seven...

IFEANYI
(interrupts)
Please don't say it.

FIONA
Why not.

DAYO
You are scared someone's head might
get too big.

They all laugh.

MRS. TITILAYO
Can you please wait at the lobby?

Solomon smiles, as he quickly packs his laptop and exits the
conference room.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He flushes the toilet, washes his hands and dries it. He
walks back to the-

LOBBY - TECH FIRM - CONTINUOUS

He walks to take a seat when the conference door opens
again.

SECRETARY
Mr. Abive...

He quickly grabs his backpack and follows her into the-

CONFERENCE ROOM - TECH FIRM - CONTINUOUS

MRS. TITILAYO
Please have a seat.

SOLOMON
(softly)
Thank you.

Solomon looks at everyone with a puzzling gaze.

MRS. TITILAYO
Mr. Dayo?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAYO
(clears his throat)
No long talk. We like your idea...

IFEANYI
Like? Haba, Oga Dayo

DAYO
Sorry, we love it and we are
picking yours above every other
that were pitched today.

Solomon can't stop smiling and everyone can notice his excitement.

MRS. TITILAYO
Fiona here is our head of legals,
she will draft a contract as soon
as we are done with this meeting.
You can as well come with your
lawyer let's say in a week time.
And um... having an application
such as this, we will need someone
to handle the technical support
department... And...

SOLOMON
Yes I accept.

They all laugh.

MRS. TITILAYO
As you can see, this is a firm for
young people and innovative ideas
like yours are greatly appreciated.
Let me not get ahead of myself by
revealing things you stand to
benefit, which will be clearly
stated in your contract.

She stands up. They all stand up. She walks up to Solomon.

MRS. TITILAYO
Congratulations.

She shakes hand with him.

SOLOMON
Thank you very much.

The others congratulate him.

FADE TO:

EXT. TAXI - THE SAME DAY (TRANSIT)

The taxi speeds through the busy dual carriage.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

SOLOMON
(into phone)
Mama, I made it. They love my
proposal and they accepted it.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)
Praise God. Don't worry, just come
home let's celebrate this.

His phone beeps. He looks at it and sees an incoming call.

SOLOMON
(into phone)
I'm coming home. Don't worry,
things are turning better for our
good. Be prepared, we are moving
into a better apartment.

The beeping of the phone continues.

SOLOMON
(into phone)
Mama, let me call you back. Joshua
is calling me.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)
Okay. Please, just come home
straight and don't go out drinking.
Bye.
(call ends)

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
Guy how far na?

SOLOMON
(into phone)
I greet you. I just dey o. How your
side?

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
I just dey jare. Head burn anyhow.
Abeg, how that your wakaa be? Tell
me the goodnews.

SOLOMON
(into phone)
My brothers still dey your side?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOSHUA

Yes. Wetin happen?

SOLOMON

Abeg tell them make them bracket me for housee. E get wetin I wan align with them.

JOSHUA (FILTERED)

Abeg if better dey, let me know make I enter too oh.

SOLOMON

(into phone)

Nor worry, I go update you.

JOSHUA (FILTERED)

No matter. I hail. I go let Samuel and Sydney know what's up.

SOLOMON

(into phone)

Thank you.

(call ends)

FADE TO:

INT. BAR - HOTEL - NIGHT

Solomon, SAMUEL (23) SYDNEY (20) and JOSHUA (25) sit around a table with several bottles in front of them except Solomon.

JOSHUA

(to Solomon, taps him)

My guy, why you nor dey drink na?

SOLOMON

You nor go understand. Wetin dey do me pass drink.

SAMUEL

As Solo dey so, he don high already pass us wey dey drink since. E get one kind happiness wey just dey full belly.

JOSHUA

Nor be lie sha. But at least make I buy you something too na. Na you dey spend ever since get this your new work since last month.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

Leave bros jare. E stil dey am like say na dream.

SOLOMON

Samuel, make una come dey enter road, before mumsy go run down my battery with calls.

SYDNEY

I feel say we go dey your hotel room with you na.

Samuel taps Sydney.

SAMUEL

Abeg leave bros alone. Be like say he get racket wey wan track am this night.

They laugh.

JOSHUA

This una brother turn pastor all of a sudden since he get that job.

Solomon stands.

SOLOMON

Na story una dey find. Oya stand up make una dey enter road.

Samuel and Sydney stand up. They follow him towards the entrance of the bar. Joshua's eyes are fixed on them.

SOLOMON

(hands his ATM Card to Sydney)

Please give this ATM card to mummy, I have told her what to do. The engineer promised to bring the quotations for the remaining things needed for the roof, plastering and interior finishing of the house.

Samuel notices Joshua staring at them.

SAMUEL

Why is Joshua looking at us like that?

SOLOMON

He has been asking me to find him some funds...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SYDNEY

I knew it. The way he has been hanging around you of late. I am not comfortable with him.

Solomon casts a quick glance at him but Joshua looks away immediately.

SYDNEY

Hope you didn't mention how much you are making from the sales of your software.

SOLOMON

I am not stupid bro. That guy eye nor done.

SAMUEL

I am not even comfortable with him being here with him tonight.

SOLOMON

No, he will be leaving soon.
(beat)

Um... Please, can I confide in the both of you? Please don't tell mumsy about it.

BOTH

What's that?

SOLOMON

Mum's car is coming tomorrow...

BOTH

Wow

SOLOMON

Abeg make una bring una voice down.

SAMUEL

Bros you don over try.

SOLOMON

This is just the beginning. She has done so much for us too. At least she should start reaping what she's worked for. No more taking bike or keke to work or market.

BOTH

That's true.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He hugs the both of them. They both exit the bar. He walks back to Joshua.

JOSHUA

How far for that matter wey I ask you na?

He sits down.

SOLOMON

I tell you say make you pin down small. Things never enter my hand, besides, I dey try put one or two together. Once e pure, I promise to update you.

JOSHUA

Thank you.

Joshua sips from his drink.

JOSHUA

My guy drink something na. You just dey look me dey drik since. If you nor wan take alcohol, at least take soft drink na.

SOLOMON

I nor sure say dem get wetin I like oh.

JOSHUA

E pass yoghurt wey you dey like drink?

SOLOMON

Oya make dem give me yoghurt.

Joshua walks to the BARTENDER. He comes back with the pack of yoghurt. He gives it him.

SOLOMON

Thank you.

Joshua sits and watches as Solomon opens the yoghurt to drink.

JOSHUA

E be like say I go dey waka too. I go like quick wake up tomorrow morning. E get one hustle wey I wan try package.

He stands up and shakes hand with Solomon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SOLOMON

You too much.

JOSHUA

Na you too much. We go see tomorrow.

SOLOMON

Sure. Good night.

Without responding, Joshua quickly exits the bar. Solomon continues drinking. He looks at the label on the yoghurt pack. He picks his phone and dials a number. The phone rings.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

Solomon, when are you coming home?

SOLOMON

(into phone)

Mama, calm down na. I just want to rest here tonight. I will be home tomorrow after work. Hope Samuel and Sydney are home now.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

I called them, they said they are not so far from home.

SOLOMON

(into phone)

Okay. I gave my ATM card to Sydney to give to you. There's enough money to cover the remaining things for the house. Please, I'd like you to go through the quotations the engineer will bring tomorrow.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

No problem. Solomon, I am not comfortable that you are sleeping out tonight.

SOLOMON

(into phone)

I am sorry. This will be the last and only night I will sleep out. I just want a quiet place to cool off.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

Or are you with you girlfriend?

He laughs

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SOLOMON

(into phone)

No... Girlfriend? No. If there was one, you'd have met her by now.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

Okay oh... Oya get some rest.

SOLOMON

(into phone)

To de... (Good night)

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

To de.

(call ends)

He dials another number. Samuel is at the other end of the line.

SAMUEL (FILTERED)

Hello bros...

SOLOMON

(into Phone)

Where are you guys now?

SAMUEL (FILTERED)

We are almost home.

SOLOMON

(into Phone)

Just got off the phone with mum...

SAMUEL (FILTERED)

(interrupts)

Between you and mum, I don't really know who's more worried about us. She's been calling the two of us since we left the hotel.

SOLOMON

(into Phone)

Don't mind us, just make sure you guys get home safely.

He dials another number while he drinks again from the yoghurt pack. The phone rings.

JOSHUA (FILTERED)

Brother, how far?

SOLOMON

(into phone)

I dey oh. You don reach house?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
I still dey road. What's up?

SOLOMON
(into phone)
The yoghurt dey taste somehow. E be like wetin don expire.

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
You nor check the label?

SOLOMON
(into phone)
I check am oh. E never expire but e just dey taste different.

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
Maybe sleep don dey your eyes.

They laugh.

SOLOMON
(into phone)
May. Make I try sleep

JOSHUA (FILTERED)
Okay. Good night.

FADE TO:

EXT. ABIVE'S RESIDENCE - THE NEXT DAY

A new car is parked outside the residence. Samuel and Sydney lead their Mother, MRS. ABIVE (40s), out.

MRS. ABIVE
(surprise)
Whose car is this?

SAMUEL
(hands her the key)
It's yours.

MRS. ABIVE
It's a lie. Where is your brother?

SYDNEY
It's yours and it's the truth.

She jumps up screaming excitedly and goes on her knees singing. Tears flow free down her cheeks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. ABIVE
Thank you, Lord, for giving me
reasons to rejoice.

Samuel supports her to her feet.

SAMUEL
Mama, come and sit inside and have
a feel of it. It's yours.

SYDNEY
Yes... Solomon's gift to you.

SAMUEL
This is just the beginning of new
and better things.

She enters and presses the horn of the car while still
singing. She comes out.

MRS. ABIVE
Where's Solomon? I thought he'd be
home by now.

Samuel and Sydney keep silent.

MRS. ABIVE
Is there something the both of you
are not telling me.

SAMUEL
He's probably busy today. Though we
have called his number several
times but no response...

Silence ensues.

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM (ABIVE'S RESIDENCE) - MOMENTS LATER

They sit silently in the living room. Samuel tries Solomon's
number.

PHONE (FILTERED)
The number you've dialed is
currently switched.

MRS. ABIVE
Have you been to the hotel where
you both left him last night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

(softly)

Yes we have. We went there when we received the call from the agent that delivered the car. But they told us at the reception that Solomon had checked out.

Mrs. Abive continues sobbing quietly.

SAMUEL

You're overreacting mum.

SYDNEY

Don't say that.

MRS. ABIVE

Why? We've called his office line, they said he didn't show up at work. Joshua's number isn't connecting. And he was the last person that was with him when you both left him last night.

SAMUEL

Mama, I know we all have our reservations about Joshua but he would never do anything to hurt Solomon. They've been childhood friends.

She continues crying. Shaking her legs.

FADE TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - TWO DAYS LATER

Police vehicles drive in and out of the busy yard.

MRS. ABIVE (O.S.)

It's almost three days and there's no day myself and my children don't go to the hotel to ask if he showed up.

CUT TO:

INT. D.P.O'S OFFICE

MRS. ABIVE

One of the staff even claimed my son didn't lodge there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The DPO (50s), Abive, Samuel and Sydney are sitting in the office with him.

DPO

How about the friend that was last seen with him at the hotel, the one you sons left him with.

MRS. ABIVE

He has refused taking our calls. We have been to his house. His parents said they last saw him last week.

The DPO's phone rings.

DPO

(picks his phone)

Excuse me.

(into phone)

I've been trying to reach Inspector Okpako. Tell him to come at once.

Tell him it's urgent.

(call ends)

He drops the phone.

DPO

Madam, I will instruct one of the squads to accompany you to the hotel to have them check their guests' register.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

The police van pulls over in front of the hotel. INSPECTOR OKPAKO, 40, came down with his seven man squad all armed with AK-47 rifle. Mrs. Abive and her children follow immediately.

They all walk into-

INT. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

The female RECEPTIONIST, 20s, tries to run away at the sight of the policemen.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(orders)

My friend, will you hold it right there!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RECEPTIONIST

(shaky)

Sorry sir...

His squad members blocks all the doors leading to reception from outside and inside.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

What were you trying to do?

RECEPTIONIST

Nothing sir.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

Where is your manager?

She quickly picks the intercom and dials the number. The phone rings.

RECEPTIONIST

(into the phone)

Oga, there are policemen here are at the reception...

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(interrups)

Tell him to come down at once.

RECEPTIONIST

(drops the receiver)

He's on his way, sir.

The policemen pace around in the reception. The MANAGER, 40s, quickly run down from one of the stairs leading up.

MANAGER

(surprise)

Good afternoon...

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

We will like to see your guests' register for the last three days.

MANAGER

With all due respect, we can't just hand them over to you.

He tries to walk closer to them, and then behind the reception counter.

MANAGER

First, it's against our hotel policy and even if we have to give

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANAGER (cont'd)
it, we still need you to provide a
search warrant.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
My friend, which would you prefer,
giving it without any fuse or the
use of force and you know I
wouldn't hesitate to do so.

MANAGER
(he smiles)
This is not some cheap hotels you
just barge into and take guests or
ransack rooms to make arrests. Our
reputation precedes, and we hope to
uphold that. Unless, you want us to
file a formal complaints against
your division...

He observes the officer's name tag.

MANAGER
Inspector Okpako you can go ahead
with the use of force.

They all look at the manager speechlessly. The Receptionist
is awestruck.

MANAGER
Until there's a warrant and why you
need to see our guests' list for
the last three days, we are giving
you nothing.

Mrs. Abive starts sobbing.

MRS. ABIVE
Where is my son. He called me that
he slept in this place...

Samuel holds her. Inspector Okpako signals his men.

SAMUEL
We know they're hiding something.

MRS. ABIVE
Where is Solomon?

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
Hold your mother let's go back to
the station.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They exit the reception. The Receptionist exhales deeply.
The manager's phone rings.

MANAGER
(into phone)
Hello sir...

CALLER (FILTERED)
Are the policemen still there with
you?

MANAGER
(into)
No sir. They just left.

CALLER (FILTERED)
I am heading to the police station
right now.

MANAGER
(into)
Okay sir.
(call ends)

FADE TO:

INT. D.P.O'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A MAN, 60s, dressed in traditional chief's attire exits the office walking pass Mrs. Abive and her children as they enter the DPO's office. The DPO is standing. A brown envelop is on his desk.

DPO
Good evening madam

He sits down and pulls the envelop stylishly in the drawer as if they didn't notice it.

DPO
(sits down)
Please sit down.

They all sit.

DPO
Madam, I don't know how to put this
across to you.

MRS. ABIVE
(crack in her voice)
Have you found my son?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DPO

Madam, we will like to know what your son do for a living.

MRS. ABIVE

(surprise)

How do you mean? Is he here?

DPO

(chuckles)

You see, these days at the rate these young men grow and try to live independently, it's hard for a parents to actually monitor them to know what their children are up to.

MRS. ABIVE

I know my son. Since the passing of my husband seven years ago...

(sniffs)

I made sure...

DPO

(interrupts)

Madam, even at that. I really would like to know what he do for a living.

MRS. ABIVE

He is...

SAMUEL

A software engineer. He works with TECH Firm, the online banking pro...

DPO

(interrupts)

I know what they are and what they do.

He leans forward placing his elbows on the desk.

DPO

Has he exhibited any change in behavior recently or seen in any manner that's unusual?

MRS. ABIVE

How do you mean? He doesn't even drink. He goes to work by seven AM and comes exactly six forty five. This has been a routine for him. If

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. ABIVE (cont'd)
 he's not working, he's playing
 computer game with his siblings...
 Have you found my son or is there
 something you are not telling me?

He stands up. They all look at the DPO in shock.

DPO
 You have to come with me.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

The MORGUE ATTENDANT pulls a stretcher toward them. (The DPO in the company of Mrs. Abive and her children and few police officers). Mrs. Abive is already sobbing.

The Morgue Attendant removes the covering to reveal the lifeless body of Solomon.

DPO
 Is this your son?

Mrs. Abive burst in tears.

DPO
 (to Samuel and Sydney)
 Is this your brother?

Sydney cries out.

SAMUEL
 (fighting back a few
 tears)
 Yes

Mrs. Abive cries uncontrollably.

DPO
 (to the Morgue Attendant)
 Take him back. Thank you.

MORGUE ATTENDANT
 You're welcome sir.

The DPO holds Mrs. Abive towards a corner.

DPO
 His body was found at the back of
 the Mixed Secondary School.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. ABIVE
(still crying)
What happened?

DPO
I can't tell but much will come to
light as we will continue our
investigations.

PIUS (V.O.)
Like I said in the beginning, this
story isn't about me. It's about
Solomon Abive

DPO
(taps her gently)
I am sorry for your loss

She cries out louder. The DPO signals his men and they exit the morgue. Samuel and Sydney try to comfort their mother as they watch the Morgue Attendant take Samuel's Corpse back in. Samuel leads Mrs. Abive to an empty seat and makes her sit down.

PIUS (V.O.)
A twenty five year old Computer
Software Engineer whose life was
reduced to nothing but a dash
between two dates.

(beat)
The police said they were going to
reveal what led to his death in the
course of investigation. How true
is that? Was it just a ploy to keep
the bereaved family from showing up
at the station everyday or just to
cover up a bigger conspiracy?

FADE TO:

INT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - ONE WEEK LATER

Pius enters his office and finds Mrs. Abive and her children waiting. He pauses as he looks at them wondering who they are.

PIUS
Good morning...

MRS. ABIVE
Good morning

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS

How may I help you and who allowed you in my office?

SAMUEL

Your secretary said we could wait here...

PIUS

I am sorry, I forgot, Samuel right?

SAMUEL

Yes sir.

He quickly sits opposite them.

PIUS

I am so sorry for your loss. How is the funeral preparation coming?

Mrs. Abive wipes her tears.

SAMUEL

Can't do that right now, as the police has refused to give us the go ahead. They are still holding on to the corpse.

PIUS

If I understood you clearly when we spoke on phone, if everything you told me about what transpired that night is correct, since the incidence, has...

He tries to find a note pad he jotted their conversation in.

PIUS

Has Joshua been taken in for questioning since he was the last person seen with Solomon?

SAMUEL

Until this day, we have not seen him. We've been to his family house several times. They even quarreled with us and told us never to show up at their doorstep anymore. The police never went back to the hotel to check if Solomon actually lodged there that night.

PIUS

Hmm... na wa oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAMUEL

Right now, we don't know what else do. We just want to know what happened. The police isn't helping us, and the hotel is denying seeing Solomon that night. His laptop and phone are missing. We will like to sue the hotel...

PIUS

My boss from Abuja whom I represent here will send in a police officer from the force Headquarters, probably by tomorrow.

(beat)

We will get a warrant and first establish that Solomon and Joshua were seen together... unless there's someone who is trying so hard never to see justice done in this regard.

He stands up.

PIUS

Once again, accept my condolence.

They all stand up.

MRS. ABIVE

(softly)

Thank you very much.

They exit the office.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS: PIUS OGEKI'S INVESTIGATION

INT. SECURITY OFFICE (HOTEL) - THE NEXT DAY

Pius and INSPECTOR HARUNA, 30s, sit in the security office of the hotel inspecting security camera feeds, inaudibly.

PIUS (V.O.)

I wish all officers of the Police Force will be as diligent as Inspector Haruna. He is the perfect example of what a modern police officer should be like. He is a computer wizard, I'd say.

Pius takes up the guests' register.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We realized, some of the video feeds were deleted. Unfortunately for them, they forgot they had backup in the cloud. Thanks to technology, even these folks at the hotel never knew this.

Inspector Haruna successfully gain access to the file on the particular date and time. They playback the tap.

PIUS (V.O.)

We were also able to retrieve the guests' list and saw Solomon Abive actually spent the night at the hotel. We were confident that at least we have something to work with. They had actually removed the information from the hard copy register which was obvious. But they couldn't removed that from their computer because it's something they couldn't delete through the backdoors.

CUT TO:

EXT. SERVICE PROVIDER

Haruna and Pius walk out of the service provider center.

PIUS (V.O.)

Inspector Haruna really have some folks in high places and it was a piece of cake getting clearances all the way. We were able to retrieve Solomon's call log.

CUT TO:

INT. D.P.O'S OFFICE - DAY

Haruna and Pius sit in front of the DPO as he inspects all the pictures and files.

DPO

(looking at the files)

How were you able to get all of these in such a short time.

CLOSE SHOT: PICTURES SHOW STAFF OF THE HOTEL CARRYING WHAT LOOKS LIKE CORPSE FROM THE HOTEL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DPO
Jesus Christ...

HARUNA
Sir, video footage shows that
Solomon and Joshua were last seen
together...

Pius drops another picture in front of the DPO.

HARUNA
After Samuel and Sydney, brothers
of the deceased had left around
eight twenty five PM. Five minutes
later...

Pius hands him another picture.

HARUNA
Joshua is seen handing Solomon a
drink.

DPO
Hope you are not insinuating...

HARUNA/PIUS
(as if rehearsed)
Possibly he was poisoned.

DPO
You both know very well that can't
be unless an autopsy...

PIUS
Yes, an autopsy.

HARUNA
An autopsy have to tell what the
real cause is. But we are
requesting that a warrant is issued
to have this Joshua arrested as the
prime suspect.

DPO
Why so?

HARUNA
Because, few minutes later, the
deceased made several calls which
we have retrieved from the service
provider. First was to his mother
stating his location, the next was
to his siblings probably after
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARUNA (cont'd)

Joshua had left and the last was to Joshua saying he's not feeling well, thinking the drink may have expired because it tasted differently.

The DPO relaxes on his seat.

HARUNA

Pius, please the other pictures.

Pius hands the other pictures to the DPO.

HARUNA

The pictures show the reaction of the first staff, the cleaner who notices the lifeless body of the deceased in the room. Three hours later, the body was brought out. Probably dumped at the back of the Mixed Secondary School to make people believe he died there.

The DPO leans forward.

DPO

This is very weighty. Even if we get a warrant, the owner of the hotel knows people in high places and you'd get calls from people who are above our pay grade.

HARUNA

Let's just do our job. Get the staff in for questioning. Those who were on duty that night and that morning.

(beat)

Meanwhile, let's put out a manhunt for the prime suspect here, whom seem to have disappeared since the night of the incidence. Sir, for him to be away for over a week tells so much.

The DPO relaxes back in his seat.

DPO

Very well. Get the warrant. Arrest the staff on duty, the manager because he won't deny he's not aware of this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARUNA

Sure sir.

Pius and Haruna stands up.

PIUS

Thank you very much sir.

DPO

Don't thank me yet, let's solve
this as soon as possible.

They exit the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Several police vans pack in front of the hotel. Police lead
several staff out of the hotel, including the manager in
cuffs.

PIUS (V.O.)

Haruna was able to secure their
arrest for not reporting the death
and for trying to cover it up.
Another arrest warrant was put out
to get Joshua who has been on the
loose.

Haruna walks out of the hotel and enters Pius' car.

PIUS (V.O.)

Finally, Solomon's personal items
still at the hotel were found and
taken to the police station. Wonder
what connection his laptop and
phone has to do with his murder. I
thought, they'd just hand them over
to his next of kin.

They drive off.

PIUS (V.O.)

They were all transported to the
State's police headquarters.

FADE TO:

INT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - DAY

Haruna enters Pius' Office. Pius stands up immediately and shakes hand with him.

PIUS
Good morning.

HARUNA
Good morning.

PIUS
Something came up. I got a call from the commission of police. That we both need to report at the state's police headquarters.

HARUNA
Like when?

PIUS
Right now. It's two hours drive. We will make it before twelve PM.

They both exit the office.

FADE TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM (ABIVE'S RESIDENCE) - DAY

Mrs. Abive sits in the living room looking at Solomon's pictures. Sydney enters. There are SYMPATHIZERS with her.

SYDNEY
Mama...

She sniffs and wipes her tears.

MRS. ABIVE
(softly)
Where is your brother?

SYDNEY
Sitting at the back veranda.

Sydney sits opposite her.

SYDNEY
The lawyer called that they've arrested staff of the hotel where he lodged. That when he returns from the state's police headquarters, he'd want Samuel to accompany him to the station to retrieve Solomon's items.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mrs. Abive sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY (POLICE HQ) - THE SAME DAY

Pius and Haruna sit in the lobby. The door leading to the Commissioner's office opens. The COMMISSIONER, leads Joshua out of the office.

Pius and Haruna stand up looking surprise as they watch Joshua and the Commissioner exchange pleasantries inaudibly. They look at each other.

PIUS

(whispers)

Are you thinking what I'm thinking
right now?

HARUNA

(whispers)

This doesn't look good.

The Commissioner signals them to come in. Joshua walks pass them. Pius looks at him speechlessly. Haruna taps him as he walks toward the-

INT. COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Haruna salutes the commissioner.

COMMISSIONER

At ease.

PIUS

Good afternoon sir.

He signals them to sit.

COMMISSIONER

Inspector Haruna, I'd personally
thank you for what you've done so
far. This morning, I had a call
from the AIG of Police...

He hands him a letter in an envelop.

COMMISSIONER

Take, your assignment here is done.

HARUNA

Sir, I don't understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMISSIONER

You're requested to report back in your base in the next forty eight hours and no complains.

Pius looks at Haruna.

HARUNA

(mutters)

Yes sir.

PIUS

Excuse me sir, if I may...

COMMISSIONER

Yes, I understand your passion to see that justice is served, but in this case there is no basis for...

PIUS

(interrupts)

No basis for a case of suspected murder?

The commissioner looks at him.

PIUS

There is a warrant to arrest Joshua, surprisingly who just stepped out of your office. That even until today hasn't been brought in for questioning. The staff of the hotel who refused to report the incidence, have been arrested and we still haven't had access...

COMMISSIONER

The only thing you need to know right now, is that, there is no case against either Mr. Joshua or the staff of the hotel. Reason because, Solomon's death is as a result of overdose and involvement in some "Get quick money" scheme that may have turned badly for him.

PIUS

That can't be the conclusion when there is an ongoing investigation and no autopsy has been carried out to ascertain the cause of his death.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COMMISSIONER

There will be no need for that because it is what I just explained. And that's how it should be.

He stands up. Haruna stands up.

COMMISSIONER

I am giving you the privilege to let you know this information and don't take this privilege for granted. If you don't mind, I am a very busy man.

Pius stands up. He leads them to the door.

CUT TO:

INT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT) - MOMENTS LATER

Haruna is quiet while Pius cast a glance at him several times.

PIUS

(angrily)

What is it that you are not telling me?

He focuses on the road again.

PIUS

Don't tell me there's no foul play somewhere...

HARUNA

(bursts)

I swear I know nothing. I am as shocked as you are. I don't know.

Pius bangs the steering wheel.

HARUNA

(frustrated)

You can say the police force is corrupt as hell. They put us junior officers to get things done, and we get frustrated by some folks in top hierarchy.

Haruna exhales. Pius casts another look at him and faces the road again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS

I am sorry. I can feel the pain.
The kind of society we find
ourselves. Like if you are not rich
and powerful, you can't get
justice.

(beat)

Thinking it's a system is designed
to frustrate you. A society where
the police protects and serves with
integrity in the midst of rich and
powerful.

(looks at him again)

And fights crimes in the midst of
the poor folks. No offense.

HARUNA

(sighs)

None taken. That's the truth. When
a rich man commits crime, he gets a
pat on the back. Cases are
adjourned and keeps adjourning
until all parties get tired and the
public loses interest.

(sighs)

In most cases, he becomes the
victim. But a poor man gets shot
even if he's just a suspect. The
sad a reality we live with in this
country.

They sit together quietly as Pius continues on the highway.
Haruna brings out his phone.

PIUS

Who do you want to call?

Haruna dials a number.

HARUNA

An old colleague.

The phone rings.

HARUNA

Thank God it's ringing.
(into phone)

Hello, Chukwuma, it's Haruna,
from...

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

Haruna, what's up? Of course I
still have your number.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARUNA

(into)

Please, I'm in one tight corner.

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

Shoot... what's up?

HARUNA

(into phone)

Are you still attached to the AIG's office?

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

Yes, e get where you wan say make dem transfer me to? Remember he purposely demanded I get sent here.

HARUNA

(into phone)

That's true. I am having a little problem with my assignment here. I am not done yet and I am being called back and the order is coming from your Oga's office. Please, help me find out why?

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

Sure. I'd see what I can do.

HARUNA

(into phone)

Thank you. Sorry, this isn't supposed to be the way to check on you.

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

I know our kind of work. The call means so much. So it doesn't matter if we've not spoken for a long time. At least getting a call from you, shows we still have the connects.

HARUNA

(into phone)

Thank you.

CHUKWUMA (FILTERED)

I'd get back to you.
(call ends)

PIUS

Any luck?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARUNA

Let's hope.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT)

The car speeds off along the highway.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - EVENING

Pius stands beside his car. Samuel is sitting under a tree. Haruna is taking a call not too far from Pius. Haruna ends the call and walks back to Pius' car.

PIUS

What's up?

Haruna sighs.

HARUNA

I'll tell you this as a friend and not as a police officer. Please, don't let the Abives know.

They look at Samuel.

PIUS

(softly with feeling of
guilt)

What's wrong?

HARUNA

My friend at the AIG's office told me the owner of the hotel know some people in high places and he's doing everything to kill this case and putting the death on some other lesser crime related.

PIUS

No wonder the Commissioner...

HARUNA

The Commissioner wants the case dead as much as the owner of the hotel. He offered one point five million naira for each of the staff that were arrest. That's the bail bond they paid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS

(mutters)

Jesus Christ...

HARUNA

Jesus Christ has nothing to do with this. It's pure evil.

PIUS

But at least we ought to know the reason for his death. Even if it's some cult related or other crime related, murder is murder. It doesn't change anything. That's not right.

HARUNA

Nobody has gotten any good thing out of trying to prove what's right in a country such as ours. When you are trying to right any wrong in this country, you also consider your own safety.

PIUS

I can't abandon this family like this.

HARUNA

I understand. You can't do more than you've done already for them.

Pius sighs.

HARUNA

Hey... you know the moment we left the commissioner's office, I can't possibly get involved in this case anymore. I need to leave as early as possible to get to Abuja on time.

PIUS

I know.

(sighs again)

I know.

Haruna shakes his hand.

HARUNA

Don't stress too much over this. If it was a saner society, we won't be having this conversation, rather we
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARUNA (cont'd)
will be discussing how to get
people answer for this boy's death.

PIUS
Thank you very much.

HARUNA
Stay safe.

PIUS
Yeah.

Haruna walks away, disappearing into one of the buildings in the police yard. Pius walks to Samuel. Samuel stands up as he approaches.

PIUS
Come, let me help you retrieve your
brother's items brought in from the
hotel by the police.

SAMUEL
Is there any word yet about
Joshua's where about?

PIUS
No word yet. But soon.

They walk towards one of the buildings.

CUT TO:

INT. D.P.O'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The DPO ended the call as soon as the door opens. Samuel and Pius enters.

DPO
(in shock)
What else can I do for you Mr.
Ogeki. I thought the case have been
transferred to the state's
headquarters.

PIUS
Yes, but we have to retrieve the
deceased personal effects.

He answers while still standing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DPO

Yes, that I cannot grant you because orders coming in right now is that he should be investigated for serial drug peddling, fraud and financial crimes...

PIUS

...I can't believe you are saying this...

SAMUEL

...what's that supposed to mean?

DPO

Believe whatever you want, but you won't stop the police from doing their job...

PIUS

(getting agitated)

Do you job by finding the killer or at least finding the cause of his death.

DPO

(bangs on his desk)

Young man, I respect and give you the privilege because of the fact that you are a lawyer. You don't walk in here to tell me how to do my job.

A brief ensues.

DPO

(softly)

Glad his next of kin is here, we will need him to help unlock his phone and laptop to help with the investigation...

SAMUEL

(interrupts)

I will do no such thing.

DPO

Don't tempt me boy.

PIUS

Sir, you will do no such thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DPO
(he calls out loudly)
Sergeant!

PIUS
(raising his voice to
match his)
This is unfair, abuse of power and
subversion of justice.

DPO
(calls again loudly)
Sergeant!

PIUS
I will petition you...

DPO
(laughs hysterically)
Good luck with that.
(calls again)
Sergeant!

A SERGEANT shows up at the door almost immediately at the last call.

Sir SERGEANT

The DPO stands up.

DPO
Take this young man into custody.

SERGEANT
Yes sir
(saluting in response)

PIUS
(angrily)
You can't be serious

DPO
Take this man into custody at once.

SERGEANT
(orders Samuel while
pushing him)
Move it

SAMUEL
(frightened)
Mr. Ogeki, are they really
arresting me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PIUS
(to the sergeant)
You'd do no such thing...

The DPO pulls out a pistol.

DPO
(points it at Pius)
And I will shoot you and nothing
will happen. Consequences for
obstructing justice.

Pius raises his hands. The Sergeant forcefully turns Samuel
around places handcuffs on him. Samuel starts crying.

SAMUEL
I did nothing wrong. My brother did
nothing wrong. We are innocent of
what we are being accused of.

The Sergeant takes Samuel away.

DPO
(still pointing the gun
at Pius)
If you don't mind, leave my office,
because I will not be nice next
time.

Pius leaves the office.

PIUS (V.O.)
What's life worth? No one wants to
find out while a twenty five year
old ended up dead in his hotel
room. Or how the hotelier conspired
to have his body disposed at the
back of a secondary school or how
the police is trying to shield the
prime suspect and pinning another
crime on the victim.

FADE TO:

INT. PIUS' CAR (STATIONED) - THE SAME NIGHT

Pius sits inside his car sweaty.

PIUS (V.O.)
Wondering how the life of a twenty
five year is cut off so short... a
life encapsulated in between two
dates. He can't say his part of the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.) (cont'd)
story that's because the dead tells
no tale. I have reached out to his
former boss whom he has barely
worked with for a month. They said,
they'd make a comment when the
investigation is completed.

His phone rings. He ignores the call.

PIUS (V.O.)
I don't know much about Solomon. I
wish I did. But how would an
institution as the police force be
conniving to twist the narrative.
How is a suspected murder case turn
into drug, fraud and financial
crimes.

The phone rings again. He picks the phone and answer.

PIUS
(into phone)
Hello sir... Good evening sir.

CALLER (FILTERED)
(male voice)
How are you Pius?

PIUS
(into phone)
Not so good sir.

CALLER (FILTERED)
What's the status?

PIUS
(into phone)
The DPO said they are not taking
any case against the hotelier or
Joshua, the friend of the deceased.
They denied carrying out any
autopsy on the corpse...

CALLER (FILTERED)
That's unacceptable...

PIUS
(into phone)
Sir, they detained his younger
brother on ground of obstructing
investigation...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALLER (FILTERED)

What?

PIUS

(into phone)

That allegations of fraud,
financial crimes and drug
trafficking were reported...

CALLER (FILTERED)

(interrupts)

And why are they roping the younger
brother into this?

PIUS

(into phone)

Because he refused to give them
access into the deceased phone and
laptop.

CALLER (FILTERED)

I got a call from Haruna, he
explained things to me and I see
that there's more to this than
they're making us believe.

(beat)

I will get back to you in the
morning. I need to make some calls.

PIUS

(into phone)

Okay sir.

(call ends)

He sighs.

PIUS (V.O.)

Still trying to recount the million
ways to die in this country...
kidnap, armed robbery, poor health
system, weak institutions powered
by reinforced failure...

Phone rings. He looks at it. The caller's name not clearly
seen.

PIUS

(into phone)

Hello Mrs. Abive, good evening.

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)

Good evening. Is Samuel still with
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PIUS
(into phone)
Um... Can you give me a moment?

MRS. ABIVE (FILTERED)
Is everything alright?

PIUS
(into phone)
Everything will be. Will see you
soon.
(ends the call)

He starts the car-

EXT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT)

He drives out of the police yard.

FADE TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM (ABIVE'S RESIDENCE) - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Abive is crying. Sydney is standing at the doorway leading to the other parts of the house. There are a few SYMPATHIZERS with them.

PIUS (V.O.)
I can't say I feel her pains.
Honestly, no parent should go
through what she's going through
right now. Things I heard about
Solomon are things that should make
any country be at a stand still
until they find out what led to his
death.

Pius looks down.

PIUS (V.O.)
How our society that ought to
celebrate a talent end up killing
her own. In the short time he got
the breakthrough with his first job
as a computer software engineer, he
has made impacts not only in his
family, but the street where he
resided. There's no day I come to
this house I don't get to meet
people who speak highly of him.

One of the Sympathizers stands up and walks toward Sydney. Speaks with him inaudibly, briefly before making out for the exit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.)

Who would think of killing him, connive with the hotelier and dump his body? I can't say he was murdered for sure. But call records with Joshua indicates that he started feeling unwell the moment he drank the yoghurt Joshua gave him. Possible poisoning? Only an autopsy can prove that. The police are not even putting that on the table.

MRS. ABIVE

(mutters, crying)

Samuel too. What do they want from me? They killed my son. The only one who has put smile on my face...
(sniffs)

Another SYMPATHIZER enters. She pauses halfway with her arms folded, looking at Sydney before finding a place to sit.

PIUS (V.O.)

What do I know? People die everyday in this country for reasons we don't know. For the ones that caused by human error, that we know of, no one takes responsibility for them. No cares to ask why.

(beat)

No one cares to find out how to avoid such death. We just continue and act like it's normal. In as much as it doesn't affect us or people close to us, it's none of our business. This is wrong...

MRS. ABIVE

They killed Solomon. Now still deny Samuel freedom for trying to find who killed his brother...

(cries out loud)

They should just kill me instead. What's left in this life to live for?

SYMPATHIZER

(softly)

Madam, when there's life, there's hope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIUS (V.O.)
Yes, but what is the hope for a
grieving mother?

FADE TO:

INT. D.P.O'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

The DPO is reading newspaper. A knock falls on the door.

DPO
The door is open.

The door creaks open. Pius enters holding a folder. The DPO drops the newspaper.

PIUS
Good morning sir.

DPO
What's good about the morning? What
trouble are you set out to cause me
today again?

PIUS
I'm doing my job, just as you
claimed to be doing yours.

DPO
This man...
(chuckles)
What do you want?

PIUS
At least offer me a seat.

DPO
Help yourself.

Pius sits opposite him dropping the folder on the desk. Pius brings out a letter from the folder and hands it to him.

DPO
What is this?

PIUS
That's from the State's High Court,
read it.

The DPO opens the letter and reads silently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.)

My boss secured a court order asking the DPO to carry out an autopsy report.

DPO

This man, I know you can act like this because you feel you have connects in high places.

(he stands up)

You'd have it. But on one condition, there need to be order from the commissioner himself.

PIUS

A copy of this order was sent to him also.

He leans forward, supporting himself on the desk and looks straight at Pius.

DPO

You think you're smart.

PIUS

You and I are serving the same purpose. To see that justice is served. Until you realized that we are not fighting but working to see that this happens, we will continue to go in circle instead of making progress on this.

DPO

The boy is a fraud and a drug addict...

PIUS

You cannot speak of him in that manner if you continue to deny the fact that an autopsy is the only way to determine the cause of his death.

The DPO's phone chimes indicating a new message. He settles back in his chair. He picks his phone and reads the message silently.

DPO

(sighs)

Very well. Like I said, you'd have your autopsy report but has to be carried out by a doctor and in a hospital of our choosing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIUS

How would that be independent and void of compromise?

DPO

You asked for an autopsy report, does it matter how you get it?

PIUS

It matters. This is Nigeria...

DPO

(interrupts)

You want this or not?

PIUS

Give me a time and date.

DPO

I will give you a call.

Pius stands up.

PIUS

Thank you very much.

He picks his folder from his desk and walks out of the office.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - TWO DAYS LATER

Pius sits in front of a canteen within the hospital yard with DR. JANE IDOLOR, a doctor.

PIUS (V.O.)

My boss was able to connect me with a Pathologist, a doctor at the State's teaching hospital. Doctor Jane Idolor.

DR. JANE IDOLOR

What's taking them so long?

PIUS

You know everyone in this country have issue with keeping to time.

A police van drives into the yard.

PIUS

I think they are here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They both stand up and start walking toward the police van. Inspector Okpako spots Pius and Dr. Jane walking towards them.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
(pointing at Pius)
Na the lawyer be that?

He signals he walks faster.

PIUS
(to Dr. Jane Idolor)
Imagine him now trying to make us
come in haste. Whereas we have been
waiting for them for over an hour.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
World people.

They both laugh. The officers alight from the vehicle with the Hotel's manager and another MAN dressed in mufti.

MANAGER
(to Pius)
Good afternoon

PIUS
Good afternoon.

MANAGER
We were informed about the need to
have an autopsy carried out. We
will like to clear our name as an
organization and I have been
instructed by my boss to have our
doctor do the autopsy test.

Dr. Jane Idolor bursts out in laughter.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
Seriously? And you think being
directly involved in the testing
would make your report credible?

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
Who are you?

DR. JANE IDOLOR
My name is Dr. Jane Idolor, a
pathologist with the State's
University Teaching Hospital.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANAGER

(pointing to the man
standing with them)

And this is Doctor Ifeanyi...

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(interrupts)

Una dey waste una time.

He laughs as he walks with his men towards the hospital building.

CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Inspector Okpako and the parties present sit in the pathologist's office. The door opens and the PATHOLOGIST enters holding a file.

PATHOLOGIST

Good afternoon, sorry for keeping
you all waiting.

He sits behind his desk and quickly opens the file and brings out what appears to be the autopsy report.

PATHOLOGIST

Since the death is over a week and
was brought in by the police, we
had to open the corpse to preserve
the organs because they are what we
needed in carrying out the report.

PIUS

So you opened up a corpse,
unknowingly to the next of kin of
the decease or his legal counsel...

Dr. Jane Idolor laughs out loud catching everyone's attention.

PIUS

You people just don't know the
implications...

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(interrupts)

There's nothing implicating. You
want an autopsy report? There it is
in front of you. What you should be
asking is, what does it says?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. JANE IDOLOR

What else is expected except what has been paid for to be put in there? Because this is so compromised and the validity of this report can be contested. You know the implications if it is discovered that this report is doctored...

The manager and Dr. Ifeanyi are just smiling and looking as Dr. Jane Idolor tries to make a case.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(to Dr. Jane Idolor)

Madam, we don't come here, you want to know the result, talk or not?

DR. JANE IDOLOR

This is so wrong, and you as a law enforcer know it is wrong.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

If only you'd allow the man to give his report.

The pathologist hands Pius a copy of the report. Pius quickly scans through it.

PIUS

You can't be serious.

DR. JANE IDOLOR

Let me see

PATHOLOGIST

It's what it is.

Pius hands Dr. Jane Idolor the report. Her eyes scan through it.

DR. JANE IDOLOR

You can't be serious. Drug overdose... Tramadol, CNS stimulant?

(scoffs)

Seriously? Cocaine?

Inspector Okpako stands up.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

I think our work here is done.

The Manager and Dr. Ifeanyi stand up too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANAGER

(to Pius)

You'd better drop all charge or you will force us to file a counter charge for trying to taint the good name of our organization.

Pius stands up, so did Dr. Jane Idolor. Without any word, the Manager, Inspector Okpako and Dr. Ifeanyi exit the office.

DR. JANE IDOLOR

(to the Pathologist)

Is this the reason they never wanted us to have an independent test carried out?

PATHOLOGIST

I've been in this profession for more than fifteen years, there's no room for error in what I do...

DR. JANE IDOLOR

(interrupts)

...But with a little pat on the back and a fat brown envelop, there could be some exception. You're a disgrace to the oath you swore as a medical practitioner.

PATHOLOGIST

(softly)

Thank you. You can now leave my office.

They exit the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Pius and Dr. Jane Idolor walk through the passage toward where Pius car is parked. Pius look across and sees the police van is still parked outside.

PIUS

Excuse me, this people are still here.

DR. JANE IDOLOR

What are you up to?

PIUS

Something is not right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He runs towards the police van. He finds it empty. He looks around and sees one of the Officers entering a canteen within the hospital yard.

He walks towards the-

INT. CANTEEN - CONTINUOUS

Pius brings out his phone as he sees the Manager handing a brown envelop to Inspector Okpako.

EXT. CANTEEN - CONTINUOUS

Pius takes a photo of them. The camera shutter and flash attract them to look towards him. He quickly docks and turns to run away.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO (O.S.)

(orders)

Catch that bagger!

He starts running towards his car.

EXT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

A POLICE OFFICER runs after him almost knocking one of the passersby.

OFFICER

(orders)

Stop there!

The Officer fires a warning shot. The gunshot echoes causing the people within the hospital premise to scramble for safety. Pius stops bending down with his hands up.

OFFICER

(pointing the gun at
Pius)

If you make one move, I will shoot
you.

PIUS

I did nothing wrong.

Other police men gather around him.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO

(orders)

Let me have that phone.

Dr. Jane Idolor walks to the scene.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS
I saw nothing...

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
Then why were you running?

DR. JANE IDOLOR
(surprised)
What's going on, Pius? Why are they
pointing a gun at you?

The Officer is still pointing gun at him. Crowd soon gather around them. The murmuring increase.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
Pius, you are under arrest.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
What in heaven's sake is going on?

Another Police Officer places handcuffs on him and takes his phone out of his pocket. He removes his car key and hands it to the Inspector. Pius is laughing.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
You think it's funny.

PIUS
Just answer the lady and tell her why you are arresting and see how absurd this is. There's absolutely no justification for this.

Dr. Jane Idolor is speechless looking at them.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
You are under arrest for causing disturbance of public peace...

PIUS
(scoffs)
How does that sound in your mouth? You were the one who fired a shot in public. Between you and I, who's causing disturbance?

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
(he tosses the key to one of the Officers)
Take drive the car. We are going to the station.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. JANE IDOLOR
(to Pius)
Talk to me, what's going on?

PIUS
Nothing new. Just another day with
the people meant to protect us. The
society we live in. Just go on,
before they rope you into this too.
Please call boss. Let him know I've
been arrested.

They move him toward the police van. Dr. Jane Idolor quickly
walks away. The Hotel Manager and Dr. Ifeanyi observe from
afar. The officer with the key drivers Pius' car closer to
the police van.

INSPECTOR OKPAKO
(talking to gathered
crowd)
We apologize for the gunshot. No
harm is intended. Just a suspect
trying run away after so much
evidence have been found on him.

He signals his men and they drive off the scene.

FADE TO BLACK.

PIUS (V.O.)
I knew something was wrong. The
moment the DPO insisted on where to
do the autopsy and the doctor to do
it.

FADE TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING (TWO WEEKS LATER)

The police yard is busy.

PIUS (V.O.)
Two weeks of my life behind bars.
Reason: DISTURBING PUBLIC PEACE AND
OBSTRUCTING JUSTICE. My five years
of being a lawyer, I've commuted
the release of more than thirty
three persons who were wrongly
accused and arrested. I never
imagined I'd be in the same
position as many of my clients.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

PIUS (V.O.)

I am only being released because they said someone called them to do so. However, I will be appearing in court in two days time. I haven't spoken to my wife and children in two weeks.

A CONSTABLE leads Pius out from the detention room to the lobby, bare-body with only his underpants and his beards are overgrown.

PIUS (V.O.)

No one is talking about Solomon's case. I believe I have been distracted enough to think of my pending case than his murder. His younger brother has been in detention for refusing to open his late brother's phone and laptop so the police wouldn't access them. This is two weeks. Can you imagine that?

They push a big book in front of him. The Constable points a place for him to sign. He signs it.

PIUS (V.O.)

In all of these, I am happy because my family has been on a trip to Seychelles. My wife's elder brother had invited them for a six month visit. I have no reason to inform them about this. It will shatter my wife.

The Constable gives him a polyethylene bag. He brings out his clothes.

PIUS (V.O.)

I don't even know who called for my release. Or maybe they're releasing me to save face.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Pius walks out of the station looking tattered. He tries to turn on his phone. The phone beeps indicating low battery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.)

This tells so much about our justice system. Justice delayed is justice denied. So they say. This is no longer about solving a murder case. They have their game plan working so well for them. They will do anything to get me distracted and let the case die a natural death. The public isn't even aware of these events.

He walks towards his car. It is parked at the back of the main building.

PIUS (V.O.)

The time they had dumped his body at the back of the school, many would have walked pass and say "Just another unfortunate individual". Or maybe say that, "He died of cult activities". Or "just another drug addict" like the police want us to believe.

He sees his car. It's dusty.

PIUS (V.O.)

I think I should have listened to Haruna. Now I have to battle with this case and try so hard to get Samuel out. Can't imagine what his mother would be going through right now.

INT. PIUS' CAR (STATIONED)

He enters. Slams the door almost immediately. He turns on the ignition but didn't respond. He pulls the burnet's lever. He steps down. Opens the burnet. His head disappears into the burnet. He closes it. And enters the car. He cranks the engine, it responds.

EXT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT)

He drives it out of the yard into the street.

PIUS (V.O.)

Three hundred fifty two unread Whatsapp messages, eighty six missed calls, thirty five unread text messages and one hundred and nineteen e-mails. Two weeks and
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.) (cont'd)
these many notifications could
drain any phone's battery.

CUT TO:

INT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - DAY

PIUS
(into phone)
I am sorry. My phone was broken and
I had a hard time trying to fix...

PIUS' WIFE (FILTERED)
(interrupts)
I know when you are lying. So
please tell me something else. What
happened to getting a smaller phone
for the time being just to
communicate with your family.

PIUS
(into phone)
I am sorry. The important thing...

PIUS' WIFE (FILTERED)
"I am sorry" is enough for me,
don't try to justify why you've
been silent for the last two weeks.
Besides, you have your computer.
You have an office router, you
could have connected to the
internet to communicate with us. I
was worried.

PIUS
You're right. You got me on this. I
am deeply sorry. How are you doing?

PIUS' WIFE (FILTERED)
I am fine, missing you so much.

PIUS
(into phone)
I miss you too. How are the
children?

PIUS' WIFE (FILTERED)
They're fine. They miss you so
much. They stepped out with my
brother to the beach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS
(into phone)
I miss them too.

SFX: The sound fades as he continues speaking with his wife on the phone.

FADE TO:

INT. CANTEEN (HOSPITAL) - DAY (THROW BACK)

Pius sits at a table in the canteen.

PIUS (V.O.)
I forgot to mention to you that because of my suspicion about the autopsy being doctored, Dr. Idolor had approached the pathologist few hours before the meeting with the police and the Hotel's Manager.

Dr. Jane Idolor enters hurriedly trying to look if anyone is following her. She sits opposite Pius. Still looking around.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
(almost whispering the words)
Your suspicion is correct. The doctor gave me...

She brings a paper out and gives it to Pius.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
The true report.

PIUS
So, was he poisoned?

DR. JANE IDOLOR
Yes. One of the deadliest. Botulinum Toxin. Something I am still confused about.

Pius goes through the report.

DR. JANE IDOLOR
How someone was able to lay hold of it and use it to poison Solomon Abive. Can't this be used as evidence?

PIUS
Yes, it can be used.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. JANE IDOLOR
Then why not?

Pius is speechless.

THROW BACK ENDS

CUT TO:

EXT. MAGISTRATE COURT - DAY

PEOPLE walk in and out of the building.

PIUS (V.O.)

With this weighty evidence, the police are doing everything to ensure the case dies a natural death. Among the text messages I received when I got out were series of threats. Then I imagine the type of messages they'll send the Pathologist to make sure he holds on to the one presented to the police.

Pius and his LAWYER walk out of the magistrate court. They speak to each other inaudibly as they walk towards the car park.

PIUS (V.O.)

Right now I am trying to save myself. Still trying to look over my shoulder for I don't know possible marks that have been placed on me to see me dead.

He shakes hands with his lawyer and enters his car.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - DAY

Pius parks in front of his office building.

PIUS (V.O.)

Now you know why I've always been suspicious and that nothing is adding up and the obvious reason they want me silent. First, they poisoned him. Then dumped his body elsewhere. Suspects were bailed with one point five million naira each. The prime suspect had a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.) (cont'd)
chitchat with the commissioner.
Until today he hasn't been
questioned. Murder case against him
has been shelved while the victim
is being investigated for financial
crimes.

He comes out of the car, holding his backpack.

PIUS (V.O.)
The first report shows that Solomon
Abive was poisoned. The pathologist
confided in Doctor Idolor that he
received a kickback to manipulate
the autopsy report but with a
threat that they will harm him. The
argument between them was just to
put up a show in the presence of
the inspector and the hotel
manager. He did mention to her that
Solomon died as a result drink
poisoning as also interpreted in
the report.

He enters the building.

CUT TO:

INT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - DAY

Pius enters the office and drops his bag on the empty seat
opposite his. He stands looking around his office for a
while.

PIUS (V.O.)
Two weeks gone since I was released
and it's been back and forth from
the court house. The Magistrate
keeps adjourning my case trying to
ask the prosecuting counsel on what
premise the case is being built on.
They've been without evidence. They
keep asking for more time to put
their case together.

He settles on his seat, almost falling hard on it like one
who is very tired. His phone rings. He answers it almost
immediately.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
Hello Pius

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS
(into phone)
Boss, how far na?

LAWYER (FILTERED)
I've been able to get a court order
for the immediate release of Samuel
Abive.

PIUS
Thank you very much.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
You're welcome. I will be heading
there soon.

PIUS
(into phone)
I will meet you there right now.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
I don't need you to show your face
at the police station. Just chill.
Let me handle this. I know I am not
leaving there without him.

PIUS
(into phone)
I just want to be there... It's the
least I can do for the family.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
You can hang around the area. I
will call you when I get him out.

PIUS
(into phone)
That'd do. Thank you very much. I
will see you soon.
(call ends)

Pius stands up and exits the office immediately shutting the
door behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT) - MOMENTS LATER

Pius drives toward the police station. He slows his car down
as he approaches the yard. He turns to a nearby canteen and
parks in front of it.

CUT TO:

INT. PIUS' CAR (STATIONED) - CONTINUOUS

He picks his phone and dials a number. The number rings.

PIUS
(into phone)
Boss, how far na? I dey around that
canteen before the yard.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
Just give me a moment. I had to
come with one of my uncle who's a
chief to stand as a guarantor for
him.

PIUS
(into phone)
Thank you very much. This means so
much to me right now.

LAWYER (FILTERED)
It's nothing. We will be heading
out soon. He's signing the release
papers.

PIUS
(into phone)
I'll wait.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIUS' CAR (STATIONED) - CONTINUOUS

Pius comes out of the car. He enters-

INT. CANTEEN - CONTINUOUS

He walks to one of the ATTENDANTS.

PIUS
Do you have cold water?

ATTENDANT
Yes, bottle or sachet?

PIUS
Bottle.

The Attendant reaches out to the refrigerator and hands Pius
a bottle water. Pius pays and heads out toward-

EXT. PIUS' CAR (STATIONED) - CONTINUOUS

He drinks from the bottle as he walks closer to his car.
Along the way, he looks toward the police station entrance
and sees his Lawyer and Samuel coming out. He waves at them

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

and starts walking towards.

He finishes the water and discards the container by his car.

His gaze are on Samuel. Samuel looks rough like one who has been subjected to series of torture. The dried blood on the side of his split lip is conspicuous. His clothes looks torn. Pius notices the change in his movement.

PIUS (V.O.)

Losing a son is terrible, losing another one would make Mrs. Abive devastated. She is already depressed. She could end up committing suicide.

His Lawyer shakes his hand.

LAWYER

How far?

PIUS

Thank you very much. I owe you big time.

LAWYER

It's nothing. They didn't release the laptop and phone.

SAMUEL

(softly)

Let them have it. It's useless to them. I didn't...

(coughs)

I didn't open any of them for them to access.

Pius looks at him speechlessly. He supports Samuel and lets him sit in the front passenger's seat.

PIUS

(to his Lawyer)

Where is your uncle? I'd like to thank him.

He walks back to his Lawyer who's now standing at the front of the car.

LAWYER

You will not see him to thank. He hates such. Just know that he knows that you appreciate what he did. Although, he's still inside. He ran

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAWYER (cont'd)
into an old friend whose son was
arrested last night.

PIUS
(sighs)
This country.

LAWYER
It is what it is. Please, let me go
back and join him. Just take him
home. You also need to get home and
get some rest. You look horrible.

PIUS
I know.

LAWYER
I am not sure that you know. Or do
you want me to report you?

PIUS
Please don't report me
They laugh.

PIUS
My wife is not aware.

LAWYER
How do you mean?

PIUS
This will break her heart. She has
warned me against taking cases like
these after she hooked me up with
managing her elder brother's estate
here.

LAWYER
I was only joking anyway.

PIUS
I know but honestly speak, I really
don't want her to know.

LAWYER
I understand.
(he sighs)
I will be seeing you around.

PIUS
(shaking hands with him)
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

His Lawyer walks away toward the police station. Pius enters his car and drives away.

FADE TO:

EXT. ABIVE'S RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Pius car stops in front of the Abive's residence. Mrs. Abive is sitting at the porch with Sydney. She stands up as the doors open. Samuel and Pius step out. She runs out and hugs Samuel. Tears stream down her cheeks.

PIUS (V.O.)

While she is trying to accept that she had lost her son, she had come to realized that she needs to be there for the ones that are still with her.

Pius stands by the car just admiring the two of the together as she holds Samuel tightly in her embrace. Tears drop from Sydney's eyes. He cleans them.

MRS. ABIVE (INAUDIBLY)

Thank you!

Pius smiles.

PIUS (V.O.)

Her courage to move on makes me feel like she's one of the strongest women I've ever met.

She holds Samuel's hand as she supports him inside the house. Pius and Sydney follow her.

FADE TO:

INT. PIUS OGEKI'S OFFICE (LAW FIRM) - DAY

Two MEN sit with Pius in the office.

MAN #1

At this point we cannot allow you to continue on the Solomon Abive's case.

One of them hands Pius a letter in a white envelop.

PIUS

Why is that?

Pius quickly reads through it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN #2

The boss' instruction. Would I say conflict of interest...

PIUS

That's absolutely a wrong choice of words because I see nothing that's conflicting in this.

Man #1 adjusts in his seat.

MAN #1

What he's trying to say is that, you have too much on your plate right now.

Pius tosses the letter to them on the table.

PIUS

I still don't understand the both of you. Can't believe you both came all the way from Abuja to take the case from me? Why did you give it to me in the first place.

MAN #1

With you handling the Solomon Abive's case and you going through your personal trial, it's difficult...

PIUS

(interrupts)

The question is, why was I placed on the case in the first place?

MAN #1

It was the boss' idea and this is still coming from him.

PIUS

Does he know that the plan is working out for both the police and whoever wants Solomon Abive's case dead?

Man #1 Stands up.

MAN #1

You need rest. It's not a do or die affair. It's not like you have a special tie to the family.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Man #2 stands up too. He leans forward putting his hands on the desk.

MAN #2

Dem nor dey carry the work for
head. Use your head.

Man #2 touches his head with his index finger as he walks away from Man #1 who just opens the door to exit the office. Man #2 shuts the door behind him.

FADE TO:

EXT. CEMENTRY - DAY

People gather around the grave site as they lower the casket into the ground. They cry. Samuel and Sydney are standing in front with Sydney holding Solomon's framed picture. Pius, Dr. Jane Idolor and people from Solomon's office are there.

PIUS (V.O.)

Luckily for us, we were able to get his corpse. We finally laid him to rest. And I keep asking myself... What is life? In this country, it has been reduced to nothing but a dash between two dates. The date of birth and the date of death.

The ATTENDANTS start refilling the hole to cover the grave.

FADE TO:

INT. TECH FIRM (RECEPTION) - DAY

Pius and Samuel sit at the reception. Samuel has airpods plugged to both ears. His dressing looks simple, smart and sharp.

PIUS (V.O.)

Time to move forward. Samuel helped me in laying hold of Solomon's contract with the Tech Firm where he sold his software. My mind was blown away by how much Solomon was supposed to make as royalty.

Samuel passes one of the airpods to Pius. Pius soon starts nodding to what he is playing from his phone.

PIUS (V.O.)

The firm did agree to take Samuel in to fill up Solomon's place with
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIUS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 them and also agreed to finance
 Samuel and Sydney's education.
 Samuel himself is on same path as
 his late brother.

The door leading to the conference room opens. The secretary
 signals them to come in. They both stand and follow her.

FADE TO:

EXT. MAGISTRATE COURT - DAY

Pius drives into the Magistrate Court's yard. His Lawyer is
 waiting outside. He comes out of the car and meets the
 Lawyer halfway.

PIUS
 What's up?

LAWYER
 I can't believe you actually forgot
 today is the three week's time your
 case was adjourned to.

PIUS
 Honestly, my head has been so foggy
 lately...

They start walking towards the courtroom.

LAWYER
 I told you to get some good rest.

PIUS
 What do you think I do at night?

LAWYER
 Tell me about it.

They enter-

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

The COURT CLERK welcomes them.

COURT CLERK
 Good morning.

BOTH
 Good morning

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURT CLERK

Her honor said she's not coming out of her chambers until she sees the prosecutor.

LAWYER

That's because they have no case.

COURT CLERK

Can't be so certain.

PIUS

What if they don't show up?

COURT CLERK

You know the answer to that, won't be the one to give you the response.

The door leading to the Magistrate's chamber opens. The MAGISTRATE, 50s, appears.

MAGISTRATE

Come to my office at once.

They all hurry and follow her into her-

INT. MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

She settles in her seat.

MAGISTRATE

Sit.

LAWYER

Thank you, your honor.

MAGISTRATE

I can't continue to waste my time on this case. I would have loved to say this in the presence of your prosecutors. Unfortunately, they are not here. They were given more than enough time to get their case together, evidence they claimed they were putting together hasn't been brought in.

(beat)

For the records, this is totally unacceptable and I can't keep having these kind of cases in my court.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAGISTRATE COURT - MOMENTS LATER

Pius and his Lawyer are outside, standing by Pius' car.

LAWYER

What's up now that you're free?

PIUS

Don't know, back to being a lawyer?
I don't have to worry about the
Abive's case too.

LAWYER

You did all you could. The people
who wants the case dead are so many
and don't be surprised, some from
your folks at Abuja office.

PIUS

They told me the owner of the hotel
is related to Joshua, he had some
people under his payroll in this
town, that extends as far as Abuja.
So I am not surprised.

LAWYER

We win some, we lose some. But life
goes on. The fact that you helped
them get in touch with the company
and was able to get them hold on to
Solomon's deal with them, is more
than a win to me.

PIUS

You're right.

LAWYER

I guess they paid you really good.

PIUS

Didn't accept.

LAWYER

Why not?

PIUS

It didn't feel right with me.

LAWYER

Wow. Your reward will come in ways
you can't even imagine.

PIUS

No doubt. Thank you very much for
everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shakes his hand.

LAWYER

What are friends for? But you owe me a drink.

They laugh as they both enters the car.

PIUS

I'd do more than just buying you a drink.

He starts the car and drives from the magistrate court's yard.

PIUS (V.O.)

This is one of the many cases... Three months later, men of the Police Force did something that triggered a nationwide protest that led to the #ENDSARS movement. A protest against police brutality, extrajudicial killings and many other menace that the Police Force has perpetrated against Nigerian Youths.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIUS' CAR (TRANSIT) - CONTINUOUS

Pius drives the car into the busy road carefully.

PIUS (V.O.)

One of the Conveyer once said, "The march against police brutality and the demand for complete overhaul of the police force in order to reform the police is not a sprint, but a maranthon." He is right, until this is done, the struggle for a better policing never ends.

FADE TO:

(VIDEO INSERT FROM THE #ENDSARS NATIONWIDE PROTEST NOT YET WRITTEN)

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

(VIDEOS INSERT FROM THE #ENDSARS NATIONWIDE PROTEST NOT YET WRITTEN)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

(VIDEO INSERT FROM THE #ENDSARS NATIONWIDE PROTEST NOT YET WRITTEN)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

(VIDEO INSERT FROM THE #ENDSARS NATIONWIDE PROTEST NOT YET WRITTEN)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Rick Ofar
Rick Ofar

(VIDEO INSERT FROM THE #ENDSARS NATIONWIDE PROTEST NOT YET WRITTEN)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

RICK OFAR
RICK OFAR

FADE OUT