

THE BLOTTED

PAWPAW

(A Story without Verb)

By

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At about 8:20 of a chilly windy morning, a voice from inner room of a bushy colonial bungalow in a close-to-the-city isolated Lujnab village: “Parick! Patrick!”

“Yes, dad! Right on my way to the office sir, though with unironed suit.”

“Bull shit! Lazy boy with countless times of deafening ears! A mistakenly born child! Still at home till now? Until the appearance of the frowning face of the sun?”

“Not really lazy, my dear. Just too bumpy for the work. Facially and cognitively like his dad. Ignorant of this, you? Like you – five times meals daily, deep snoring sleep even in the place of work sometimes, dark palms of cigar smoke, always with Arabian and *Fula* tea gathering – ‘ataya’, lousy and restless mouth particularly on football argument...”

“Quiet, Serah! Not in the lineage of Pa Lawrence – any of these massacred downgrading features! You, faultless anyway - a mother of lazy womb and pampered child; even at the age of seventeen.”

“Still underage – officially or unofficially, my dear.” “even you of all people – a forgetful mindless preposterous man.”

“Shshshshsh! Like mother like son. No wonder – always late even to the church every Sunday. What a patient God!”

“Away, Patrick – before the influx of his per thirty minutes unconscious daily wacky medulla oblongata parade. My one and only child, no stress no sweat, please! With smiles the return of your lovely hooking face, okay?”

From far distance at the compound gate: “Yes, mama! No sloth!”

(At the foyer of the Office)

“Late again, as usual, Patrick?”

“Good morning Mr. Chin Chao. Not my fault sir. One, uncondusive weather for my washed clothes. Two, no electricity throughout. And... a-b-r-u-p-t vanishing of charcoal-iron. So unfortunate! African government – generally egotistic. Please, last chance sir.”

“Never tired of complaints. Complaints today; complaints everyday. Only you in the company? Unlettered firing: the best solution for you! This – the end of your so-called ‘last chance’. Deal! LAST CHANCE! Deal?”

“Yes sir!”

“Now, straight to your office! Clients – tired of waiting for their files!”

“Mr. Patrick. Too late again?”

“Shshshsh! Good morning, first. Sorry for the delay, Mr. Ben.”

“Anyway, my file – ready?”

“Your file? Sir, still under consideration.”

“Oh! Today again? No way!”

“Patience, please sir. Just within an hour sir. Hundred percent assurance this time sir. Last chance...last excuse sir.”

“Alright.”

An underground melodious relaxation song from Mr. Ben’s mouth, with countless times of its repetition thus:

*Enough and enough
for the lazy mosquito;
Enough endurance
with the village bedbug.
Today and today:
The arrival of its end.
For my sucked blood –
poisonous in fact today.*

About an hour and thirty minutes later, Patrick’s neck on the table with the jamming of his saliva – like an over-flown bank.

“You again with your timeless sleep?,” furious voice from Mr. Ben, “Mr Chin Chao! Your untrained absent-minded lazy Liaison Officer here with his usual daily routine again? No, no no! Out of my imagination! This man? Unfit for this kind of your establishment, Mr. Chin Chao!”

“Sorry sir. Immediate firing, my thought, - the next solution. In fact, this? Unhearable to any reasonable ears! Today! Not even only today. Now!”

“Yes, unlettered retrenchment. In fact, with no gratuity. What a waste product! Fire! The only, and best way-out for this deadly problem in your sweated-for company. Particularly in this kind of environment where, at all, no cash-flow.”

“Patrick! Patrick! P-a-t-r-i-c-k!”

From his deep snoring sleep with yawning mouth:

“Sir, a – l – m – o – s – t ...”

“Quiet! Red Card! Your letter on the table already. Not almost.”

“Ah, Sir. Please!”

“On the DEAL, my stand. No please again!”

“Please!”

“Away from my office now! You, imbecile!”

(His Return)

Under the baobab tree in front of Mr Pa Lawrence’s bungalow, there Pa Lawrence and his friend with drift of enjoyment of draught, palmwine and ‘ataya’.

And in the compound, there, with her usual afternoon cleaning exercise, Serah. From her mouth, a myriad flow of a melodious song:

Lala lala, lala lala lala...

Lala lala, lala lala lala...

Happy happy, for Patrick Lawrence sweetie...

Happy happy, for only cherished Patrick...

Suddenly, a crying voice far from the compound:

“Ah! Mama! Trouble! Calamity! Mishap! Blow! Disaster! Catastrophe! Tragedy and disgrace of highest order. All on me from my boss today. Mama! Mama! Ah!”

“A voice from afar. Like my only child’s?”

“Mama!”

“Yes, What? From where? How? And from who?”

“Fire! From my place of work! Just because of a thirty minutes delay in the processing of a client’s file! Unlettered strike from my boss, the restless workaholic Chinese dwarf!”

“Come on! Inside first. Million companies better by far than his, in fact, in the city.”

“Oh, connection mama. My love for you, ever! Now, my food?”

“As usual, of course. On your father’s table.”

“Thanks and thanks and thanks so much, mum!”

(On phone)

“Hello my childhood friend! How Abuja and your cosmetics business there? What about your husband and troublesome daughter, Loveth? For the sake of the credit units on my phone, straight to the point. My child, Patrick. Now a grown up strong boy with an averagely good GCE Certificate. Every subject – Pass, at least. My wish for him: an exposure to real city life and business particularly through you. Ready for assistance?”

“Wow! No problem. When?”

“Maybe next week. Precisely on Saturday.”

“No *wahala!* No regret, Serah.”

“Great. Thanks so much, Nana. Till then! Bye!”

On the planned Saturday windy morning at the garage – without the knowledge of Mr Pa Lawrence:

“Lovely mum, bye!”

“The Lord’s blessings – after you, dear! My regards to Nana and her daughter, Loveth.”

Loveth?

“Yes. Loveth, a lovely, though troublesome, attractive human like you.”

– “Ahaha, maybe – my wife-to-be!”

“Oh my God! My greatest desire, Patrick. First assignment, ok?”

“ Yes, mama. Deal!”

“Sure. Deal! Good luck! Bye!”

(Next Episode on its way – in the next edition)