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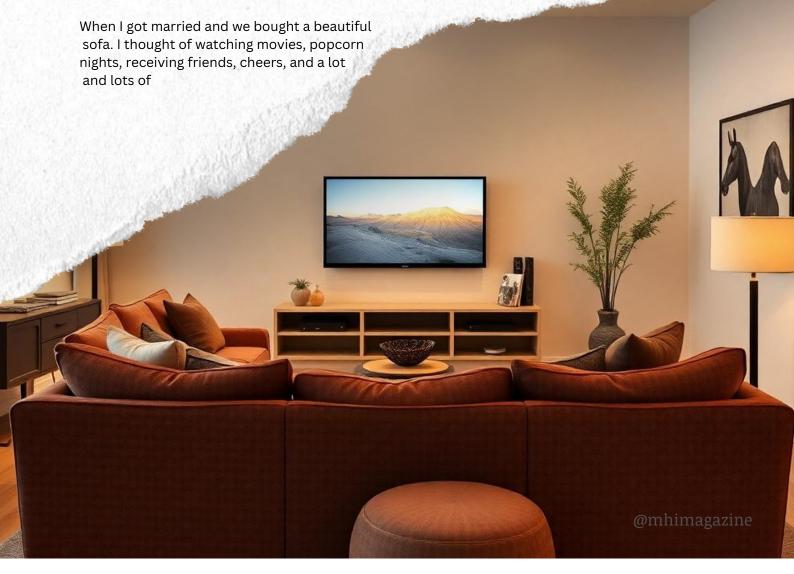
BY AROWOJOLU MARY _____

The Secret Life of Your Sofa

Have you ever considered any furniture in your home as a character? For example, when I think about my childhood, I get a nostalgic vibe. There was a mahogany bed hung majestically from ornately etched brass chains. My family always had great pride in that piece of furniture. For me, furniture was always something enigmatic or intriguing. I always thought: How many laughs or what kind of discussions it might have seen.

wonderful, passionate moments around it. At first, everything was transparent, in front of my eyes. 'The secret of the sofa is a myth,' I declared.

That day I went to work early; however, in hurry I forgot my laptop. When I returned home after around thirty minutes my maid was sitting on the sofa and watching my TV. Seeing me, she switched off TV and got up.



'Ma'am, is everything okay? I was not expecting you this soon. I was just...' she paused.

She hurriedly took off my plum shoes, my gown and my jewellery.

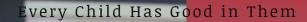
'Here you go,' she said without looking at me, handing over my items.

'How long have you been doing this? Are you doing this with the clothes for the laundry or from the cupboard?'

'I think I should not hide things from you anymore. Last night I had a dream of your sofa telling you, my secrets. I shouldn't have tried my luck today, should I've?'

Story & written by Boby Tariq She walked towards the door, paused and looked at me. 'By the way, my boyfriend likes your sofa design. Every time he sees it, he goes on and on about it. Not only this one, but my first boyfriend, the Indian one, also said your sofa is just as comfortable as a bed. Also, the third one said yesterday that you have a great sense of taste for clothes. We just adore your place, particularly the sofa. Good choice, ma'am,' she said while stepping out of the house.

That marriage didn't last for more than 6 months.



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LUSIVE INTERVIEW

Mih Joshua who hail from Cameroon

Growing up was never easy for me, when I was a child, I indulged myself in a several erupted and questionable behavior, Mih Joshua expressed. There was nothing to write about Joshua character which led so many people from his family to write him off, and concluded in their mind that he could never make it in life or even become a normal kid with normal behaviors.

Yes, life happened, Joshua said in his interview that, while growing up he found it difficult to associate with kids of his age. Face to face eye contact was a big problem for him, despite not being able to associate with other kids because of his violent lifestyle, of course no parents would allow their kids to mingled with a kid like Joshua. At the age of 5, Joshua said no one could look at him in the eyes, and no one could also ask him any question even for a direction, any confrontation always resulted in a big fight and violent.

A TOUCHING STORY OPEN EDITION 2024

Every Child Has Good in Them

Editor's note

He said; I started doing all sort of things that are not right for kids to do, even when I was 3 years old. In his tender age, Joshua disclosed; I started smoking and drinking, and no could talk to me let alone to give me advice and I would listen.

Once I made up my mind no amount of advice could change my decision. At some point when he was growing up, he said; he felt left alone and abandoned. This was the point that Joshua sees the need to change and leave behind all of the questionable behaviors of his.

Well, despite Joshua background, in his teenage, he aspires to become a great person in the society, a person people could look up to, as a role model. This aspiration became a self-motivation for Joshua, hence, Joshua decided to turn a new live and also, to rub it to his family face, people who had written him off in life, that he can still be a good person.

Joshua was born into an abject poverty, where eating a meal per day was a big problem as he describes, my mother tried all her greatest best to put me school, I barely have one to three books to go with, with no uniform.

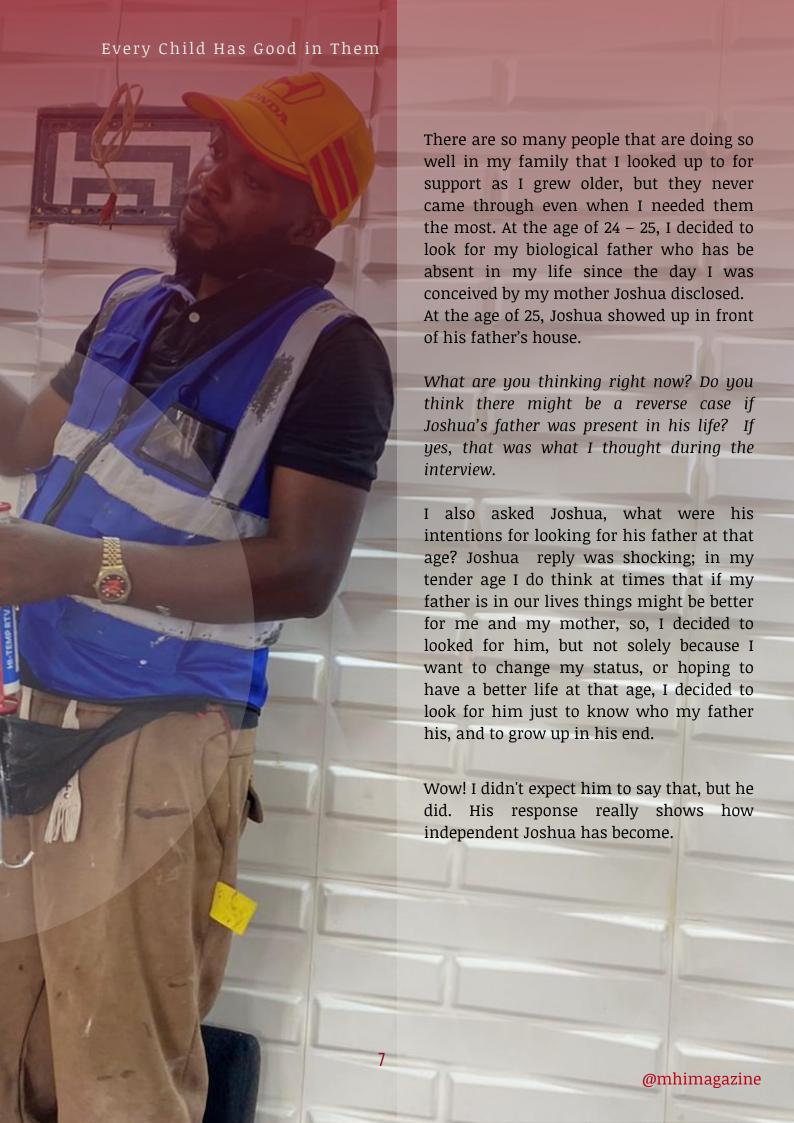
Building one's life, all I ever wanted is to live like normal average middle-class kids. Going to school, come back home, eat and play around before going to bed. But, in my own case all was just a dream! even if I decided not to go to school; our situation will still remain the same.

REFLECTING ON THE PAST, I BELIEVE THAT GOING TO SCHOOL WAS TRULY A RAY OF HOPE FOR JOSHUA'S MOTHER.

Well, he has to survive; all of these experiences forced Joshua to build a strong emotional intelligence.

waking up with no hope where the day food would come from was still a big problem and I had to wake up to the strong side. Going to the guys I should have nothing to do with, because of hunger he was left with no choice.

Looking back to those days, has constantly made me shared tears uncontrollably. You know, having my both parents out there, and my life was like that! Struggling and striving all by myself to make good out of my life; is the saddest thing a child could ever experience.



A TOUCHING STORY OPEN EDITION 2024

Word from Joshua

"I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A VISION TO SEE MY FUTURE WITHOUT NEGATIVITY."

Twist of fate; as of the time Joshua showed up in his father's door, surprisingly his father is married with six other children, living slightly above the kind of life Joshua had lived in the past. He said; until I met him then I confirmed that nothing would have change if he was present in my life. You can imagine, had it been my expectation was to have a change of status or a better life, I would have fallen into a deep depression after meeting him and seeing the kind of life he and his new family were living.

Since the day Joshua showed up in his fathers' door, he has assumed more responsibilities, taking care of his six other siblings and his father.

The glimpse of success; Joshua love teaching profession, in his struggles of life he became one (a teacher) and also, he was able to established his own crafting and interior design business.

In a short period, he was able to trained more than fifteen apprentices in crafting and interior design work. Joshua strived to make an earn from his teaching carrier plus, from his business in combine, he also got married in his late 20's with three kids.

2024, the spirit of self-In in determination, wanting to be more successful and taking care of his own immediate family, and his siblings, so that they wouldn't have to go through what he went through in the past, said; I put everything into consideration and I decided to leave my business behind, I handed it over to my partner because its wasn't profitable enough to cater to my responsibilities. That is why I moved to the United Arab Emirates in search of better life and a brighter future for my family.

Do you think Joshua made the right decision by leaving his business behind and moving to another country? Only time will tell! Joshua blamed his background for the challenges he faced during his childhood, even though he was able to find his way back with minimal consequences. Our prayers are with him.

By Mary

MESSAGE TO READERS AND FRIENDS



When you are depressed, learn how to manage it don't be carried away by the problem, and always stay focus.



I say thank you to the few friends who stood by me in my darkest time
They are Godsent, they didn't give me money but they did push me to be a better person.

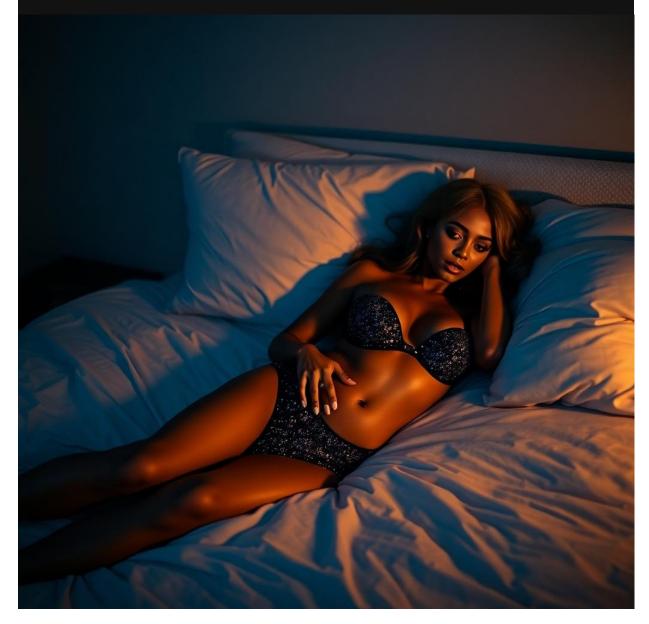


POEM

rything has a live. My bed always communicating with my body.

WRITTEN BY MARY

GETTING READY FIRST/VIGHT







We live in a world where many people don't have any reason why they are living. Some people are living to fulfill the desire of other people. But does that mean they don't have any reason to live for? That cannot be true because in life individual are born for a particular purpose. There is no single person that was born by chance.

We are born for a particular task and that task we are born for is what would make us great in life.

Life becomes meaningful when you find purpose but without purpose life would feel useless and meaningless. Therefore, for one to enjoy life you need to understand the reason for your existence on earth, that purpose would be your driving force, towards which ever goal you determined to archive in life.

According to English dictionary "purpose is the quality of being determined to do or achieve something" Therein, life purpose can be understood as an assignment or task that one has discerned and willing to achieve in life without fulfilling it, it can now be accounted into individual account as a failed mission.

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Samatha Merz 2024

"MY LIFE HAS REACHED NEW HEIGHTS, AND I COULDN'T BE MORE GRATEFUL FOR THE JOURNEY THAT HAS SHAPED ME. I'M SAMANTHA, A 31-YEAR-OLD CANADIAN WOMAN, AND I SHARE MY STORY OF RESILIENCE AND

DETERMINATION."

Growing up as a person of determination with learning difficulties was a little bit tough for me, for it takes time for me to understand things and to get on the same page with people. There were barriers and many misunderstandings I face while growing up. As a person of determination, some challenges I experienced was, I find it difficult to pay attention, I struggled with mathematics, and I also struggled with coordination.

Samantha had it figured out at her early age about her learning difficulties and with the help she got from her family they helped her really quickly made some adjustment in her education goal and pathways and helped her discovered a simplified method that could help her learn math equation better with the use of cue card. Some of the goals Samantha were so determined to achieve were sport in terms of physical education to make her fit and to increase her perseverance as she grows.

Second was focus, she said she had to put more effort to stay connected and pay attention. She further said, "I had to make some changes to do well" Samantha was so determined to make progress even though it wasn't easy but based on all her responses I could say her personal effort to growth pays off, she also said her parents have been very supportive of her, while growing up.

Editor's Note

Do you think she and her parent could achieve or come up with all of these effective strategies for Samantha growth without a professional help? Well, I couldn't answer that!



Samantha talks about how her occupational therapist was helpful, her therapist recommended a life skill for Samantha, these are the changes she meant when she said "I had to make some changes to do well" rather facing educational pathway only. Life skills programs are designed to teach a broad, set of social and behavioral skills also referred to as "soft" or "noncognitive" skills that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands of everyday life.

Samantha Merz 2024

Samantha Background; Samantha is a white Canadian woman and she described her background like this; "I was very fortunate. I grew up in a middle-class family", while she was growing up, money was never a thing of concern to create a barrier in accessing necessary program; that will help her improved in her day to day task as she said. She has Traveled to several countries like Portugal, France and England. In her travels, she has met with people of determination, and assumed that, while growing up they might have as well faced a similar challenge she faced and she would also like to think that, they got all the necessary supports they needed.

Samantha shared her personal experience and her contribution to the people of determination (POD) community while she was in high school.

Growing up, I volunteered with people of determination, they were classified as special needs. So, I would help them pick out books at the library and kind of help them socialize with each other and, make sure they didn't get lost. And, I think that, it was really helpful for both of us to stick together and learn more about each other.

Here is the full story about Samantha educational journey from early years to college.



So, growing up, I went to a public school first, and it was a bit different because I didn't have any of the accommodations in place, as a 'POD student'. And I only had one friend in a wheelchair. So, then I went to a private school, which had, a small class, but it did make the accommodations I was looking for, as a "POD student". And it was very helpful. I made more friends, but I also experienced some bullying for being a person of determination and other people were maybe ill and kind of what's considered normal growing up. As time went on, I switched schools when I was in grade 7 and then went to a public high school, and that was much bigger; there were, about 20 people in my class, and there were more courses, and I had to go through a lot of tutoring to keep up with the course load. I joined the basketball team, and my dad was the coach.

I would make use of the study hall and cue cards to really gain more experience with testing and memorizing things. Doing so was really helpful until about grade 12, and then I went off to college, which was a community college and I took all the general courses. Then Samantha transferred two years later to Kwantlen Polytechnic University, in British Columbia, Canada. Where she studied public relations diploma program for 2 years. She got to know her cohort really well and worked with different companies and she has assumed different roles like, event planner, marketing, writing and graphic designs.

There is a lot of help in place for Samantha and with the life skill she acquired, she was able to face most obstacles she encountered in both her high school days and college. Samantha: I like studying alone and especially at home in order for me to take some break from sticking to my father. She also realizes that she needs a different set of friends aside from the basketball girls team friend she had.

Making friends and retaining friends as an adult is a bit challenging for me now, I'm both in "different" centers now, thankfully which help me meet a lot of new people, quite often and socialize with them a lot. The challenging part is asking someone their number and meeting them elsewhere outside of the same setting.



person of determination

Looking at the inclusion laws and programs Canada as a country have in place for POD based on Samantha experience and participation.

I don't know much about other countries and their laws regarding people of determination. But in Canada, the government is providing disability payments and will cover things like transportation, for example, I go to a center that offers \$2 lunches, so I think more should be covered for them. BC Housing is also available in my province; it's subsidized housing, but there's a big waitlist, making it challenging to access. I think is good in these times, because it's financially challenging for many folks. So, is a good start for sure, and I believe more could be done to be more inclusive.

To cap it all, Samantha is now a writer and a poet, alongside with her marketing carrier. She is an author of two self-published books Kazoo and Meadow Light both are on Amazon, and she has written many poems both published and unpublished. Read one of her favorites.

Interviewed & Written by Mary

EMBRACE

DIFFERENCES



Champagne diamond pendants
Amaxophobia
First driving lesson at the age of twenty-seven
You're gambling with your life by not creeping in
It's your responsibility

Scolded over a parcel
Emerald girl style to your golden boy
It's her time
Lady Pity
Her twisted mind
She's so odd
Mixed up and conflicted

She's a straw
Sucking the life out of a couple of those who used to be around
Making some low whistle notes
Won't defend you
Won't vouch for you
Different perceptions at play
Hibiscus heaven
You told me not to walk so far away from you



YOUR PHYSICAL LEGACIES AFTER DEATH! By Femi FAKOMOGBON Esq. CEO Ftchetto Foundation

How would you want your legacies after death to be distributed among your spouse, children, grandchildren, siblings, relatives, friends, dependents, and charities? Nowadays, the WILLS Act of 1837 and WILLS laws of various states have made it easy without any hitch on tradition and customs. Making a WILL is one of the fundamental aspects of one's life, whether rich or poor, for the purpose of sustaining survivors and avoiding the ruin of life after life.

To make a WILL is to protect the estate from outright destruction; to make a WILL is to lay soft stepping stones for the success of one's survivors. There is a saying that he who is aided is quickened to be more successful than he who lacks aid will continue to strive.

What is a WILL? A WILL is a testamentary document that is made voluntarily with a sound disposing mind to distribute the estate (property) of the maker. It is testamentary because it takes effect after the death of the maker. It is an ambulatory instrument that is subject to amendment while the maker is still alive, so one can make a WILL and later discover that his or her conscience has not been satisfied. Then one can easily amend it to meet one's mind. Obviously, it is pertinent that after the death of a maker, it cannot be amended.

Making a WILL is numerous too advantageous to the extent that one will not be foolishly hit by the biblical allusion that says a foolish man gathers wealth but knows not who will enjoy it.

A testator, the maker of a WILL, shall have the satisfaction of a sense of fulfillment for having ordered his affairs before his death. The testator shall be able to benefit those he wishes to benefit. Where the maker has infants, it is an opportunity for him to appoint a guardian for those infants for their maintenance and the distribution of legacies among the infants, among other advantages.

It's important to know that failure to make a WILL while alive is fatal and vulnerable. The estate is prone to destruction, where beneficiaries may unfortunately not include your dependents, or the estate may be destructively taken over by the unknown, contrary to one's wishes. The only remedy for not making a WILL is costly, and this shall be through a solicitor by approaching the court (probate) for the administration of the estate on behalf of the intended beneficiaries, which shall require stress, cost, and a large percentage of the estate to be lost.



A WILL is testamentary and ambulatory. It is testamentary because it takes effect after the death of the testator. It is an ambulatory instrument because it can be amended while the maker is still alive through an instrument called a codicil. A WILL is revocable; its revocability can be voluntary or involuntary. It is voluntary when it's intentional, and involuntary when it's statutory, for instance, in the case of a void marriage.



There are many types of WILLS, but the most important ones are:

- (i) Holographic WILL: This is entirely handwritten and executed by the testator.
- (ii) Nuncupative (Oral) WILL: This is in accordance with customary law. Generally, an oral WILL is not valid, but certain conditions can make it valid. These conditions are where the maker is mentally sound, the maker knows his property, the maker can identify his beneficiaries and can give instructions in the presence of witnesses.
- (iii) Formal WILL: This is a WILL generally in vogue and is made according to the relevant act/law.
- (iv) Privileged WILL: This is a special WILL for the military and usually in respect of personal property and money.

Capacity to make a WILL: All persons are capable of making a WILL except infants and persons with unsound minds. It is noteworthy that persons with unsound minds can make a WILL, provided they are in their lucid interval at the point of execution of the WILL.

A WILL can be invalid or vitiated by the following: Mistake, fraud, misrepresentation, suspicious circumstances, insane delusions, and undue influence.

Generally, it is important to know that after making a WILL, it can be kept in the following places: Probate section (State High Court), bank, testator by himself, and solicitor.

In conclusion, making a valid WILL is leaving a legacy; this makes it legally binding and shall ensure all your instructions are followed, as it has the force of law.





ECHOES OF A FORGOTTEN ERA

WHEN DREAMS WERE WITHIN REACH

The home I miss, is the home full of love, compassion, and of strange things.

The home, where Saturdays always come in styles,

Sunday with a banger. What about Monday?

Monday is always a day of reviling one true beauty and competence.

I miss the touch of neighborhood, fusion with grape Vines, sharing moments together, be it happy or sad times.

A place where people care about each other, look after their neighbors, where mothers will come together and raise a child.

I miss the home where you will never mourn alone in your nooks.

A place where you don't have to cook on a Christmas day or during Eid celebration,

as long as your door is open to receive gifts and food from nearby neighbors, across and both far away,

the foot Deliveroo with a trail, covered with a glitter shawl on top, protecting the delicacy from getting cold. your house will receive different delicious dishes with attractive aroma as guest.

the home I miss is the home where people can't be homeless, instead, they will rather go back to the village, even beggars have a home. where celebration is a big deal, 1st to 4th generations and sometimes 5th generations will be in attendance with a food stull, plenty of food. where I don't need invitation to be a party guest.

the home I so much miss is the home where traveling by car, can be the most adventures you could ever experience, because of the road side food and small chops experience from stick meat, bush meet, plantain chips with different shapes and taste, to seasoned puck meat garnished with a lot of pepper. But it's so sad that my home is no longer the place we all know it used to be.





Wait! what happened to my home? what is happening to our home? who want to destroy our home, first they took it away, they hide our history, and replace it with their own narratives but they forgot that no matter what, and how long, history will catch up with them.

look at what they turn our home's to! they turn it to a mess, den of thieves and kidnaps, where people fight for their God rather God fighting for men, where people kill to protect their gods, protect their oppressors who is oppressing them.

they turn our home to a place where we can hardly eat one meal a day. they turn it to a place that's not even safe for the smallest animal, to the extent that the community have to come together, form a group, vigilantes in other to protect their love ones.

One will sleep another is watching

A country! where all the forces who supposedly to protect the people turned against the people, feed on them; the people become preys to the hyenas, the Phoenix that supposedly to represent and protect the people has turned to hyenas.

what a home, see! look everywhere! hunger is ravaging our land, the land that was once a house with plenty of food, and surplus.

how do we get here? rise up men! rise up women! if it's not too late, let's save our land from the falling Angels whose intention is to consume us all, until there's nothing remaining of us.

Rise up one, rise up all.

By Mary

A ray of hope Open Edition 2024

Poem

LILLETE

A journey into grace

Don't get mad, when things get broken, Pick it up, or abandon it, it is time to re-choose. you're at the point of making a great decision, see it as an opportunity of a life time, that might never come, again.

Sometimes it might be a time to rebuild, or even, time to replace it, with things from across the ocean.
Second chances are a rare gem, there is a beauty in the broken.

Sometimes it might be a time to rebuild, or even, time to replace it, with things from across the ocean.
Second chances are a rare gem, there is a beauty in the broken.



Discover Open Edition 2024

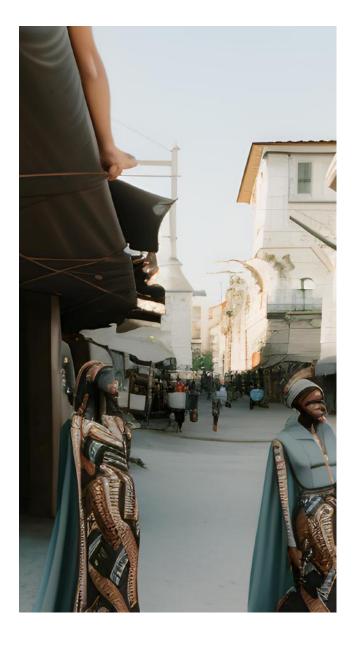
Poem

TRUE SOUL

In shadows deep, truth, lies concealed,
A hidden heart, emotions sealed.
Beyond the mask, the soul's bright
gleam,
Silence kept, the purest dream.
In gentle whispers, hearts reveal,
A tender love, emotions heal.
Beyond the eyes, a soul so true,
In quiet moments, I find you.



Feeling the Heat



I know many people may question my knowledge about the history of regional rulings or my political understanding in general. or even how the past leaders have come together, at that time seeking solution to the tribal and ethnicity dilemma that our dear country Nigeria was facing. Well, you may be right but I wasn't born yesterday. like the English would say; experience is the best teacher and best way of learning.

Let's talk about sentimental politics in Nigeria and the regional rulings.

The Dangers of Sentimental Politics in Nigeria

Longing for a Nation United in Hope

Sentimental politics in Nigeria refers to the emotional and often religion, tribal or ethnic considerations that influence political decisions and public sentiment. These emotions can be rooted in historical grievances, cultural ties, and social identities that shape the way individuals and groups perceive political issues. When this form of politics interlocks with regional rulings, several dangers can arise:

Corruption and Nepotism:

Politicians has exploit, and they will be continued to exploit the people; if the people failed to embrace national unity and national identity over tribes. Politicians are using sentimental politics to secure loyalty from their constituents, leading to corruption and nepotism. Regional leaders have prioritized the interests of their ethnic or regional groups over meritocracy and the common good.

Undermining National Unity:

When political decisions are heavily influenced by ethnic sentiments, it can undermine national unity. Nigerian citizens often prioritize their regional or tribal identities over their national identity, resulting in divisions that are really difficult to bridge.



Poor Governance:

Sentimental politics often leads to the election of leaders based on emotional appeal rather than competence or policy knowledge. This has resulted in ineffective governance in Nigeria. As most of the past and present leaders actually lack the necessary skills to address complex national issues, just like the case of the Boko Haram terrorist group in the inception of their operation.

In the shadow of the leaders promises

The past leaders, and most of them as still the present leaders, they failed to address the challenge despite the threat it posed to the National Security. Both regions in Nigeria have been affected through one way or the other, mainly the food chain has been disrupted. And thousands of people have died, and many has been kidnaped. We are all feeling the heat; because the government refused to fight and conquer the terrorist so, many different branches of terrorism has been established and operating in Nigeria allegedly as the media would say. Some identified as the unknown gunmen, the herdsmen and other some unknown regional kidnapers operating without a verified name.

Policy Paralysis:

Regional interests may clash, leading to paralysis where necessary policy decisions are not made. As we have seen and still ongoing, Nigeria political leaders are more focused on appeasing their constituents, regions or groups they belong to or identified with; over making pragmatic solutions or policies, the practices of Nigeria political leaders Godfatherism appeasing also. as hindered lots of progress development in every region in Nigeria. Example, the ongoing issue of the of power supply and electricity generation. In spite of having abundant resources; including natural gas and renewable energy potential.



In this 21st century, the country is still struggling with the implementation of effective energy policies that would ensure consistent and reliable electricity for us the citizens. "Day in and day out, our national electricity grid collapses"

Manipulation by Political Elites:

Political elites have exploit sentimental politics for their personal gain, manipulating public emotions maintain power. This manipulation has to cycles of oppression disenfranchisement marginalized of communities.

Remembering What Was, Mourning What Is

Voter Apathy and Disillusionment:

When citizens see that electoral outcomes are influenced more by ethnic than by sentiments policies and thev may become performance, disillusioned and disengaged from the political process, leading to low voter turnout and lack of interest.

Polarization of the Political Landscape:

Sentimental politics can lead to an increasingly polarized political landscape, where dialogue and consensus-building become difficult. This polarization may result in the rise of extremist groups and ideologies, as moderate voices get drowned out.

Increased Violence:

The intersection of sentimental politics and regional rulings can incite violence, especially around election periods. Ethnic-related violence can disrupt communities, displace populations, and create a cycle of revenge and retaliation.



Conclusion:

Addressing the dangers of sentimental politics in Nigeria requires promoting inclusive governance, fostering interethnic dialogue, and building institutions that prioritize merit and accountability. Engaging civil society, encouraging grassroots participation, and emphasizing national identity can help counterbalance the divisive effects of sentimental politics and create a more stable political environment, which we are now facing in Nigeria.

By Mary

HOME

The idea space for a lone wolf







