

FADE IN:

EXT UNIVERSITY BUILDING - MORNING

7:30AM. The university premises is established, the school is quiet and scanty with people returning from their various night reading sessions. Shops around are beginning to open for the day.

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - MORNING

The administrative block is established it is locked. LAKUNLE. 29 years of age studious, dressed smartly in a suit and tie, arrives before everyone at the university administrative block.

He is later joined by BOMA. A tall skinny boy 23 years of age. He wears his skinny jeans sagged low. They both exchange manly pleasantries.

LAKUNLE

My oga! How are you now? How is boni island? This guy! You have not changed at all oh

He laughs heartily as he examines Boma. At this point more people begin to show up.

BOMA

Toh! I'm still where you left me oh. You people are the ones eating the money now.

LAKUNLE

You have started with this your weak praises. Where is the money? There is nothing here oh. I've been in school after grad. I take tutorials and once in a while I tax the students for small stipend. Its embarrassing but what can we do?

Boma laughs out heartily. For the first time in this conversation Lakunle face turns serious. He folds his hand akimbo as if to say he is lamenting about something more tragic. As more people start to gather up.

BOMA

No bi today jor. Besides we are using what you have to get what we want. Me I want to get of the streets as soon as possible oh.

(MORE)

BOMA (CONT'D)

If I had a brain to teach eh, ...
Bone jor!

STACEY, 24, beautiful and flashy, joins the guys she is Boma's friend. He introduces her to Lakunle. They are all for their letters. Later, other young men and women join them.

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - DAY

10:03AM The sun is out in its full measure there are a lot more people gathered in front of the administrative block. a lot of chatting and catching up going on as they await their call up letters.

BOMA

Wait oh! This people are not yet open till now? And today is the deadline oh.

Checks his watch to confirm the time. Stacey just hisses

STACEY

Isn't it government work? No one cares they can come and leave as they want.

Just then the secretary walks in. MRS. HARUNA 35 years of age. She is fat and scruffy looking with a mean frown. She carries two bags. She makes her way to the main door by shoving and pushing every one in her way with no apologies.

MRS. HARUNA

So now that you have decided to block the door I should jump over your head to enter my office?

The FEMALE sitting by the door slowly stand up and just then we realize that she is pregnant. She slowly and steadily makes her way to the other end.

PREGNANT WOMAN

Sorry ma.

MRS. HARUNA

Sorry for yourself. (Hiss). In fact all of you should move away from here I said move!

Every one moves further into the sun including the pregnant woman. Everyone is grumbling about her actions as she sluggishly unlocks the door.

MALE GRADUATE

Other schools collected their letters two days ago. It is on the day of camp closing we are collecting our own...

Mrs. Haruna turns immediately and walks up to the male that just spoke. Facing him sternly. Every one gives way of fear of what is coming next.

MRS. HARUNA

...I'm I your mate? May God punish your mother that trained you to insult your elders.

Everyone is shocked by her choice of words but no one utters a word. They just stand there, silently watching as the story unfolds. The male graduate#2 trying his possible best to curtail his anger.

MRS. HARUNA (CONT'D)

OK. I think you are here to collect your call up letter right? OK. Its OK. I'm I not the one sharing the letter? No problem.

Goes back to the door briskly opens it enters and slams it shut. Everyone is shocked and startled at her reaction.

EXT UNIVERSITY BUILDING - DAY

11:30AM The sun is scourging with out mercy. The front of the administrative block is now filed up with tired and restless people. Just then, a soft drink hawker passes bye and everyone rushes to get one.

A flashy toyota camry drives into and packs right in front of the administrative block. The HEAD OF REGISTER DR ABOLE. a tall but lanky old man he looks well above 70 years.

His clothes and hair style are all old fashioned steps out. Just as Lakunle sights him, he gets rid of his drink and hurriedly walks up to him boldly.

LAKUNLE

God after.. I mean morning sir.

Lakunle relives him of his hand luggage as he lazily strolls towards the Administration Block.

LAKUNLE

Yes sir WE need your help sir. We are all here for the call up letters and time is going and considering the fact that most of us will be posted quite of town sir I was wondering if --

Collects his briefcase from him and heads into the building he still speaks with his back to Lakunle

DR ABOLE

Patience young man it will get to your turn. And everyone will get theirs that I assure you my boy.

Lakunle reluctantly walks back to where his other fellow graduates stand.

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - DAY

1:30PM The atmosphere at the administrative block is more tensed now. Some people picking up little fights here and there Stacey sitting down with Boma. They are both exhausted.

BOMA

Its like its a government policy to waste peoples time.

Stacey just laughs about it and then adjusts her head to get the better side of his shoulder. There is a moment of silence between them.

BOMA (CONT'D)

I passed the NNDC exam so I'm in line for a job as soon as I get my NYSC certificate.

Stacy jumps up in excitement leaving every one wondering what the news will be. She immediately lets out her serine like scream. Then lunches herself towards him for a big hug.

STACEY

Oh my God I am so happy for you! Your mom will be so happy and your dad bless his soul. I sure he is smiling wherever he is...

Mrs Haruna steps out of the office with the letters in one hand chair in another.

Everyone rushes to the front all tired exhausted and slightly vexed she orders one of the boys to get a table from inside and he does so.

MRS. HARUNA

Oya all of you form a straight line...

(to the boy)

No not directly in front of the door. Are you daft! Shift to this side.

Everyone starts to fight and struggle for space. What would have normally been a peaceful exercise turns into a tug of war. The pregnant woman stands there helplessly. Lakunle watches from the Corner and then forces his way to the front.

Everyone is silent now he has gotten everyone's attention. Well, at least everyone. He steadies his breath and starts to talk.

LAKUNLE

We can do better than this! Fighting and struggling wont solve anything, Please, for the sake of those that can not struggle let us try and be orderly I assure you it will save time.

The crowd begins to obey in union most of them reluctantly, the pregnant woman finds space behind the line then she mouths a word of thanks to Lakunle. The line is moving accordingly.

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - LATER

2:15PM The line is moving slowly but steadily. At the front of the line Mrs Haruna is nonchalant about the distribution exercise. She is busy making a call and eating there is a little complaint about her attitude in the crowd.

At the back miles away from where the desk is mounted, JOSEPH. 19 years of age he has no facial hair his dressing

Still shows that his still living in his childhood. He brings out his mobile phone and starts to record the activities.

JOSEPH

So today I'm trying to Collect call up, May I not go to my place of redeployment looking like toast bread.

A very subtle amen comes from the people around him. He then realizes he is been watched by other people around him. He then expands his coverage. He zooms to there front where Mrs Haruna is seated.

Mrs Haruna is chatting loud on the phone as the crowd just stands there. Bitter complaints been laid but to no avail. Suddenly, there is noise from the front Joseph rushes with his phone to cover it.

MALE GRADUATE #2

Haba madam please now.

MRS. HARUNA

Hehe so now you can beg? Weren't you the one trying to beat me up this morning? No talk now, talk God gave you mouth!

(to the crowd)

See if this boy does not go to the back of the line, I will not share one single form so if you know what is good for you start begging him

She continues with her call while flipping through a magazine. There is a brief moment of contemplation then, The person directly behind him finally speaks

MALE GRADUATE #3

Guy no vex please leave the line please. Let the line move no time.

Then he shoves him out of the line and it continues moving. He cant believe his eyes and he reluctantly makes his way to the back of the line. Joseph follows steadily behind, his phone in hand.

When she is done with the food she picks up the flask this time with all the letters in hand and heads back to the office. With her bag in hand and locks the office.

MRS. HARUNA

I want to go and pick my children from school. I will soon be back.

The crowd begins to grumble once more, but to no avail she walks away.

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

4:50 The sun is still down and there is no significant decrease in the population at the admin block.

Just then the admin door starts to shift. There is someone there they all stare at the door silently to see who comes out.

It is Dr. Abole the head register. There is a sigh of relief from everyone. Lakunle once again walks up to him and tenders his complain for the second time.

LAKUNLE

Sir good evening sir. I met you earlier sir concerning the issue of our call up sir...

Dr. Abole is startled. He checks his time pice and is even more shocked.

DR ABOLE

Yo mean you are yet to receive your call up letters? Where is Mrs. Haruna please.

There is no response from the crowd. Immediately he picks up his phone and dials a number, he awaits impatiently for a reply from the other end.

DR ABOLE (CONT'D)

Hello yes where are you?... Will you get back to the office this instant!

He cuts the phone in anger. He looks at all the tired faces. Then he drops his hand luggage on the pavement and heads back to the office.

DR ABOLE (CONT'D)

I need two volunteers please!

Immediately Lakunle and Stacey move to his side. As the both go into they office and return with they letters he immediately gives instructions to both volunteers and they start the distributions.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - MOMENTS LATER

5:30 The crowd has drastically reduced the line is moving swiftly people collecting their letters. Some lamenting about the distance, others thanking God. Mrs. Haruna shows up and joins in the sharing silently.

EXT. BUS STATION - EVENING

6:15PM The bus park is scanty with hawkers closing for the day and conductors screaming for passengers. Boma and Stacey accompanied by other people rush in, they approach the first conductor they sight.

STACEY

Oga well-done oh Please can we get
a bus to Gombe from here?

The conductor examines them and their luggage before he finally speaks.

CONDUCTOR

(In a thick Igbo accent)
HIAN! That place you call ehn, e
very far oh. Unless you enter
inside town of which before you get
to town bus go don load finish.

They both look at each other lost of wards. Boma thinks fast then further asks

BOMA

We are all heading to Gombe. Cant
we chatter bus we go blow reach
Gombe straight?

CONDUCTOR

OK but e go cost una oh. Like 1,500
each

They all agree and board the bus. The bus is now filled up and just as they are about to leave, the pregnant woman rushes in with a small traveling bag in handbag in hand.

PREGNANT WOMAN

Please please is there space ...
Please I came from enugu I need to
leave today please..

The bus is filled to capacity and there is literally no breathing space. Lakunle gets down for her. The pregnant woman quickly boards

PREGNANT WOMAN (CONT'D)

Thank you! For the second time. God
sent you to me today.

She gets seats and then, the bus leaves.

INSERT TIME: 7:15PM

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STREET - DAY

8:00AM THE NEXT DAY. Its a busy everyone trying to reach their destination. a vendor displays the morning paper it reads; 18 GRADUATES DIE IN GHASTLY AUTO CRASH!

NEWSCASTER (V.O)

Well we are sad to confirm the report coming in. 18 graduates die heading to Gombe state for the batch A NYSC orientation camp have all died in a ghastly motor accident.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAY

This is a rundown, low cost residential area. People are gathered around an aged woman she is crying her heart out rolling from side to side people are trying to stop her but to no avail she holds a picture of Boma in her hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Joseph is in his place of redeployment and just then, he is lazily surfing through his phone just then there is a news flash on a social network he shakes his head.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

The former editor with a daily radio station broke the news today on the wall of her social network site.

CUT TO:

EXT. - OPEN FEILD - DAY

The feild is very busy a group of young adults gather round. One of them with an Ipad they all gather round trying to read the news from the ipad.

An old man sits there listening to the radio. In disgust and grief.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
 OK so today in light of the very sad news, we have a guest in our studios... Mr. Lakunle so Lakunle has a pice of story to share.

The old man listens attentively as Lakunle clears his throat and begins to speak.

LAKUNLE (V.O)
 Thank you very much for this opportunity given. I finished in the same school with these graduates as tragic as it is I was with them through out yesterday.

He clears his throat once more this time, the young adults by the corner pick interest in the radio programme and the old man increases the volume

LAKUNLE (V.O.)
 I know the cars were in bad conditions and the roads were terrible, but all these could have been avoided we collected our call up letters early.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIL SERVICE BUILDING - DAY

Jacob watches the video one more time. He is contemplating takes a deep breath looks at the flash in his hand, and walks in.

LAKUNLE (V.O.)
 We were at the school premises earlier and our call up letters were deliberately withheld from us!

INT. CIVIL SERVICE BUILDING - DAY

The video is being played to the view of a board room all seated. Jacob stands silently behind them as they watch in shock. One of the women seated slowly and silently starts to cry.

LAKUNLE (V.O.)

If the dead could talk, one of the boys in the accident was victimized because he complained about the lateness of the letters.

CUT TO:

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK - DAY

Mrs. Haruna is being reprimanded for her actions by her superiors. She is being issued a sack letter. She tries her best to seek pardon to no avail.

LAKUNLE (V.O.)

We lost doctors lawyers fathers mothers, future leaders in the bus. Lives we could have saved! If only our call up letters were given to us in due time. If only some people took their work seriously.

INSERT: NEWSPAPER HEADLINE - CIVIL SERVICE SACKS WORKERS OVER DERELICTION OF DUTY!

"IN LIGHT OF THE INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED, THE HEAD OF CIVIL SERVICE ORDERS THE ANALYSIS OF PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR..."

FADE TO BLACK.

On Saturday the 9th of march 2012, eighteen fresh graduates all died in a ghastly accident that happened on their way to Taraba State for their NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS orientation camp. The students got their call up late on the 8th of march 2012 and in the bid to meet up with the dead line for the registration, they chartered a small bus to convey them to their orientation camp in Taraba state. Unfortunately, they never made it. May their souls rest in peace and may the lord comfort their grieving families.

FADE OUT.

THE END