

# The Undying Dream of a Bookseller

Ikemefuna lowered his frail body onto a ragged mat as the morning sun peeked into his roadside kiosk. The shelves, once brimming with novels, memoirs, and textbooks, now gathered dust. His bookshop was all but empty.

For 15 years, Ikemefuna nurtured this oasis of ideas on a busy Lagos street corner. He curated the most extensive collection of African literature in the city, offering titles rarely found elsewhere. People from all walks of life would visit the shop daily to browse, discuss arts or simply share in Ikemefuna's wisdom.

But lately, customers were few. Print book sales had declined sharply as digital platforms like Jumia captured the market. Ikemefuna's enlightened discourse was increasingly seen as archaic.

His wife urged him to surrender the struggling business to his sons. "Your time has passed," she said. But closing the shop would extinguish Ikemefuna's life purpose. The bookshop was his legacy.

So, under the rising sun, Ikemefuna began writing. He filled notebooks with stories reflecting his hard-earned wisdom on life, love, and perseverance. Drawing on his own experiences, Ikemefuna crafted a philosophical fable set in ancient Igboland. It resonated with timeless truths.

After six months of meticulous writing, Ikemefuna self-published the book online. He promoted it on social media, reaching Nigeria's sprawling digital diaspora hungry for perspectives from home.

Within weeks, the book was a viral phenomenon. Ikemefuna's shop was flooded with orders for his debut novel from around the world. Revitalized, Ikemefuna began writing his next book under the flowering acacia behind the store.

Though the market had evolved, Ikemefuna's dream of sharing ideas lived on. By following his purpose, he breathed new life into his legacy. And the reopened bookshop, now busier than ever, was home once again to lively discourse late into the night.