

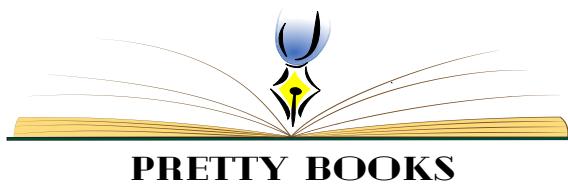
TRIALS OF US



FISOLA TAIWO

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DEDICATION

This play is dedicated to the most talented play-wrights I know.

To Ugochukwu Ejieh and Oludotun Olayinka.
Thank you great ones for consistently inspiring
a young man.

FOREWORD

Trials of Us is a thought-provoking exploration of power, identity, and human struggles within an African context. Set in a symbolic throne room, the play examines the complexities of leadership, rebellion, wisdom, and spirituality through a cast of dynamic characters representing various facets of society.

This compelling narrative oscillates between humor, satire, and philosophical inquiry, challenging us to reflect on our roles in our communities and the far-reaching implications of our actions. At its core, **Trials of Us** is a conversation about responsibility, justice, and the pursuit of a more conscious future.

The characters, from political figures to spiritual guides, embody the tensions arising from competing desires and ideals. Through witty dialogue and poignant introspection, a world where tradition and modernity collide, and personal struggles mirror larger societal issues is vividly portrayed.

Trials of Us invites you to engage with its powerful narrative, provoking thought and inspiring action. It stands as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the complexities of the African experience.

Taiwo Oluwafisolami.

CHARACTER DESIGN



CHAIRMAN

A man dressed in Owanbe, sporting a white beard and a pot belly. He carries a small expensive looking bag that supposedly holds money. He also has a raspy (nagging) manner of speaking.

REBEL

A skinheaded young man with full beards, dressed in a well tailored brown shorts with white socks and a pair of shiny dress shoes, he is shirtless which reveals a full body of tattoos. He has an obvious tattoo of the outline of Africa on the side of the face that fits into his jawline and also visible for the audience.

PROFESSOR

is dressed in complete suit with suspenders and a full coat. He is clean shaven but elderly looking. Furthermore, he has a full head of graying hair. He walks with a cane and wears a pair of round-rimmed glasses.

MUSE

A beautiful young Lady in her element. Light skinned, She has a small tattoo of the stars and the moon on her shoulder. She wears a sleeveless attire and Bantu knots laced with coral beads She holds a cigarette and wears a big gold ring on her thumb. She has an alte

vibe about her.

MR OFFICER

A well dressed in a full military uniform. However, there are knives sticking from his back, and he has bullet holes in an otherwise sparkling outfit. He also wears a Muslim Turban

WISE ONE

A man dressed like an indigenous priest (bare chested with chalks painted across his body) but he is carrying a cross which he puts at the edge of the stage before moves to talk with Alakoso. He also has a Muslim headgear.

SULLY

An unidentifiable being who is masked and whose voice switches between the extremely masculine and the extremely feminine. Sully wears a robe of many colors. And this is mismatched by Alakoso in the pair of socks he is wearing

CRIPPLED WOMAN

A woman who is wearing a reflective material. She comes in on a wheelchair. Her hair is made into the Ojongo (an Igbo traditional hairstyle). She has different hand bands that depict Africa as a nation (e.g elephants, Africa-the relief, a spear. Etc)

ALAKOSO

A powerful looking man in his mid 40s, he is wearing a very long gown that stretches almost across the throne room. He has the same tattoos (on his body, not face) as The young rebel and this is revealed when he takes off his garb to eat. He wears a similar ring to the Muse but his is Silver. Has a cane like the Professor's, the bag beside his throne is the same as the one carried by Chairman. He has the same hairstyle as Sully. His boots are that of the officer. All these are revealed gradually as they are mostly covered (except the bag) which is visible from the scratch.

SETTING

The throne room is the central stage element. A grand throne is positioned, with a long gown stretching across the room from the throne, creating a regal and imposing atmosphere. This room serves as the meeting place for various characters who come to converse with **ALAKOSO**

ATMOSPHERE The room is solemn and austere, suited for judgment and confrontation. The characters are judged for their actions, which makes the environment tense and reflective.

PROPS -A **THRONE**, emphasizing power and authority.
-A **LONG GOWN** worn by Alakoso, symbolizing grandeur and control.
- A **BAG** similar to the one carried by the Chairman, located next to Alakoso's throne, reinforcing themes of wealth and secrecy.
-A **CANE** like the Professor's, signaling wisdom or authority.

LIGHTING Dramatic lighting, with spotlights on characters during moments of judgment to enhance the intense, confrontational mood. Alakoso's main light is Red while the guests are in different "shades" of white.

ACT I

SCENE 1

CURTAINS OPEN

Alakoso is seated on the throne with his long gown that stretches almost across the throne room

CHAIRMAN I will not be interrogated. Oun ti mo se ase gbe. Oun ti mo je aje gbe. Because you're sitting on one nonsense chair. You think you can ask me questions.

Alakoso shakes his head

CHAIRMAN uh uh uh. You think I don't know what this is? Aren't you the collective conscience of the African youth?

ALAKOSO Oh. So you do know me. What then gives you the audacity to speak to me in such recalcitrant manner?

CHAIRMAN Wooos, ask your question and if you don't have any question lemme go. I'm not afraid of your accusations. You think I have done any different from the politicians around the world? You...you
Stutters

ALAKOSO Quiet! Only an African politician would explain himself into a hole. No questions have been

asked of you, yet you have not kept your mouth shut.

You ask if I accuse you, why should I when you already condemn yourself? You gathered an entire state to celebrate the launch of a borehole in 2024. In your 8 years as senator you offered scholarships to just 2 children.

CHAIRMAN Didn't I try? At least I did something.

Continued chiding

ALAKOSO They were your brother's children. Or should I say your children? We both know why you introduced Bimpe to your brother.

CHAIRMAN *tries to cover Alakoso's mouth*

Ahhhhh stoppeeeeet. Ogirileti now. Why don't you just scream and tell everyone everything.

ALAKOSO I just might. Especially if you keep interrupting me.

CHAIRMAN Wait now. My friend. Let's restrategise. What will it take to sweep all this under the rug?

ALAKOSO Nothing your excellency.

CHAIRMAN (begins to dance) I always knew you were my type of guy, tell me, what will all these cost?

ALAKOSO You have been found guilty of more crimes than I care to count. But worst of all, you still try to bribe in the immaterial world. Your punishment is this: The people you lead will see you for who you are. They will look beyond your lavish parties and even beyond your attempts at bribery. They will stone you when you campaign and will vote the best candidate every time.

CHAIRMAN please, help me! Have mercy!

he is bundled out by two guards

EXIT

SCENE 2

Same setting, Alakoso still on the throne, The Rebel comes in,recklessly.
Hands up to begin a chattered but warm greeting.

REBEL Alakoso!!! I been dey wonder when you go show.
See as you fresh sef. You dey chop better oh. I go
like be like when I don dey old oh.

ALAKOSO Good evening young man. In high spirits as usual.

REBEL As usual? Be like say you dey monitor me. Tell me now. How does this work? Werin be your work gan gan. Which level you you dey for all the divine rankings.

ALAKOSO I'll tell you this. I am not God as you have so frequently told your peers. I am simply the collective conscience of the African people.

REBEL Make I ask you one question sharp sharp. As you no be God so I suppose fit question you na.

ALAKOSO Go ahead young rebel.

REBEL Bad guy!!! You know my name oh. Anyways I don forget the original question sef. But come oh. Shey I don die like this na why I dey follow you talk?

ALAKOSO *Chuckles*
You aren't dead. You are in the immaterial world.

- REBEL** So what exactly am I doing here now? The last time anyone took me to a place I didn't know was SARS in Nigeria. Abeg tell me wetin I come do for here make I push.
- ALAKOSO** The aggression you carry is a little misplaced in its expressions my friend. I have seen you fight your father when all he has done is lay down his life for you.
- REBEL** My father? What do you know about my father? Abeg bros. If you no get better for me make I know. Talmabout misplaced aggression.
- ALAKOSO** I have heard you disparage your mother.
- REBEL** Be like say you wan dey whine me. Shey me and you dey share house. I have never ever spoken ill off and to my mother. Wetin be this?
- ALAKOSO** But your thoughts? You forget I hear your thoughts. Every time she advises you against a certain hairstyle you smile at her but in your heart you know what you say.
- REBEL** Oya oya you don catch me. Because I no know why you dey monitor my heart like say you be doctor so. I beg you. Leave me and my sweet mama alone. I dey try express myself. Just tryna be me brov
- ALAKOSO** And you should be. However you must learn to listen, for when your father was your age, He wanted to be himself and when your mother was your age she only ever wanted to express herself. Ask your father if he did achieve his goals. If he did you must know how and if he didn't you must know why. Commit to courses bigger than yourself. Fight for the collective future you want.
- REBEL** I no dey fight for any collective future. I fit fight

for my future oh. But you see ehn. That collective future no possible. Make I fight for collective future make them kill me? You no remember Endsars? See ehn collective fighters don dey die since Dele Giwa, Since Fela. You remember Saro Wiwa? Abeg na .

ALAKOSO

Young rebel. If you had been a little more observant, a little more wary in your approach, you'd have figured that you've been on trial since you got here.

REBEL

I reason am but I no send. I'm very sure you don't want to try me. Try me for wetin? Try me how? Werin I do.

ALAKOSO

Dear Rebel, you have been found guilty of recklessness, of bitterness and more worryingly of selfishness. My verdict is this; whatever you do to spite other people will fail. Whatever you do to shame others will fail. The things you do in consideration of those who are weak and oppressed will succeed. Your eyes will be open to see that you are the only one who can stop your pain. Go!

REBEL

If I die for this way na you oh!!!

Guards move to escort him

Tah!!! I tell you say I no wan comot? Abeg no drag me oh .

Swaggers off.

EXIT

SCENE 3

Professor works in, composed.

PROFESSOR *while adjusting his suspenders*

Alakoso... I've never looked forward to meeting someone as much as I have you. How do you do ?

proceeds to shake hands with Alakoso

ALAKOSO I'm fine professor, how are you? I have looked forward to this conversation too.

PROFESSOR Oh! And why is that?

ALAKOSO It's not everyday I get to interview someone with 7 PHDs in 3 different fields

PROFESSOR well...as the collective conscience of the African populace- living and dead-I would have expected you to appreciate the interconnectivity of things. That notwithstanding, I shall not shy from my civil duty as an educationist and I will go ahead to explain what I stand for. (Adjusts his bow tie) You see, the very nature of life is such that nothing truly stands alone. There is and always will be a codependent relationship between all the components of life as we know it. You see, what I exhale is very crucial for plants to survive and what they exhale is singularly the most important thing for me. However, should

we both cease to exist, the usefulness of both oxygen and carbon dioxide would be reduced to utter nothingness and so we are just as vital as o air as it is to us.

Clears throat and makes to continue but is interrupted by Alakoso

ALAKOSO Very well said professor, but, could I possibly interest you as to why you are here?

PROFESSOR Apologies dear friend. Forgive the ramblings of an old geezer like myself . Do enlighten me though. Why am I here?

ALAKOSO You are here because you like all men must be judged.

PROFESSOR Judged? A man can only be judged by his equals, never his betters or those beneath him. For you to judge me dear friend, you must be able to identify with my struggles experientially. My culture, history and background need be much more tangible to you than mere theories. My life's story must mean more to you than an anecdote to be used while making a point? You cannot judge me. You are immaterial, your world is a pale representation of reality. You cannot judge me when you have never tasted of humanity. You see Alakoso, only one can judge my soul. And that is the one who died as me.

ALAKOSO I do not judge your soul professor, I judge your actions, particularly as it concerns Africa. And yes, I can and I will judge you, because what you do affects much more than you know. For every time you teach, you disperse seed that germinates in minds you cannot cultivate. Your words fall to the earth and mammoth ideologies spring forth. Ideologies that split the continent into very hateful parts that would do anything to prove their point!

PROFESSOR

interrupts rather sharply

Wait! I do admonish that you exercise caution in your verbalization of your discontent. Hiding behind grand philosophical jargon, you try to blame me for the state of things in Africa? I am neither the headstrong Rebel nor the greedy Politician.

ALAKOSO

Yet they were both your students. You taught the Politician the fifty laws of power and somehow forgot to share with him your moral compass. You educated him on what to gain from via Warfare and asked him to love a peace whose benefits you only asked him to study as an assignment for his final year thesis. You also are responsible for the joke of the class. You always singled the young Rebel out for ridicule and never ever, offered guidance. Every question he asked of you was seen as a personal affront and never as an indication of a willingness to learn. Yet you say you're not to blame. Do tell me then, who is?

PROFESSOR

Blame me. Go ahead and blame me. Was I the one that embezzled public funds? Did I gather my friends to commit internet fraud in the name of reparations? Are you even listening to yourself. Come to think of it, I say you are to blame. Why do you wait until things are out of hand to show yourself? Somehow you ensure that you're always morally correct and superior to us mere mortals. Why did you not speak to the heart of the man that killed Sankara? Did you nudge those who voted shot at the children in Congo for diamonds in the right direction? No. Hell no you didn't. You simply turned a blind eye to everything. You must be joking. Go ahead and judge. Do speak for thy servant listeneth.

ALAKOSO

Alakoso - Prof, you may feel justified in your anger but you do realize that I have access to

your conscience and somewhere in there you tell yourself that without conflict there will be no progress and so, as much as you may wish to lay blame on everyone but yourself, you are just as guilty as everyone else.

PROFESSOR *stammering*

Well well well...it's n..

ALAKOSO Well, this is my judgement. For the crimes of instigation and refusal to listen to anyone but yourself, I condemn you to watching the advent of a different kind of enlightenment, an educational experience that will reduce your ideations to the background while making giant steps into the future. Cryptocurrency will mock your economic theories. And Africans will rise who love Africa for Africa but also appreciate and respect other cultures around the globe. This and many more will you witness

PROFESSOR Impossible! This is utterly ridiculous, unacceptable, I challenge you, I refuse to be held in such contempt by one such as you. What rubbish!!!

Guards escort him

EXIT

SCENE 4

The wise one walks in gently.

- ALAKOSO** Welcome old man.
- WISE ONE** Old man yourself. I am infused with divine energy. I grow younger everyday.
- ALAKOSO** If you say old man, but I do think the white tufts of hair on your head disagree with you.
They move to hug you each other
- WISE ONE** It is good to see you old friend. How have you been?
- ALAKOSO** You know how it is. Same old same old. Damn!!! It feels good to be able to relax for the first time in a while.
- WISE ONE** That bad?
- ALAKOSO** You do not know the half of it. I've been on edge since this set of interviews started. Never seen a more combative bunch in eons.
- WISE ONE** Well, this is what we are. You know, I believe we need to find the true and honest definition of ourselves as a people but more importantly as individuals so the almighty may be allowed to help on shortcomings

- ALAKOSO** Now, somehow I do feel like I am on trial.
- WISE ONE** Well, as you well know, a spiritual man cannot be judged for he judgeth all things. I sensed that you were in despair. And so I came to pay you a visit.
- ALAKOSO** Thank you old friend. I appreciate it. You will be judged though. All men shall. But before then. What is your advice? We both know you are not one to waste your time in petty visiting.
- WISE ONE** You must come to terms with the fact that you are as guilty as the people you judge. Your sole aim is to gloat on their mistakes. To feed off their fears of failure, and trust me you do not make it easy for them.
- ALAKOSO** Is this why you run from me? I will make it easy for you. I am seeking to understand how easy it is to diagnose others when the doctor himself has but a short while to live.
- WISE ONE** Your time is not short. Your role is almost eternal. But you may diminish if you do not reorient yourself.
- ALAKOSO** I cannot reorient myself anymore than you can. What would you have me do? Speak falsely to them? If I do so, I poison myself. I become less than fit. I would be worse than the most abominable of criminals in Africa. I would no longer be me.
- WISE ONE** To reorient yourself is not to become another. Neither is it to tell lies to your people. It is simply to accept that you are in the initiator of all you blame others for. It is to seek the help of the Almighty m. Let His words wash over you like they washed over me. Let them make you new again. But this time, let them guide your lips. Do not seek to condemn. Seek to uplift. Seek to

bind rather than divide. Seek to heal rather than wound.

ALAKOSO

No, you will not misguide me. I have a sacred duty. The people must be judged. If I fail they will never know right from wrong.

Sighs

WISE ONE

Your sacred duty is to guide. When you condemn, there is a rebuttal in the holy writings. It says, even if our conscience condemns us, we will go to the Father who is greater than our hearts. This my advice old friend .

he gets up and slowly walks away

Be quick to listen and slow to judge, your words resonate with meaning but leave no permanent marks on our hearts because your motive is wrong. You are a system of aid not destruction. Goodbye old friend.

Till we meet again

walks out

ALAKOSO

Wait!!! Your judgement. You have not received your judgement.

EXIT

SCENE 5

Sully walks into the throne room, majestically.

Alakoso moves to sit down as he returns from going after Wise one. He is visibly upset by the events that just occurred. He is halted by the greetings of the next person that walks in.

SULLY Hi, Sully here

ALAKOSO *Alakoso stops moving with his hands on the arm of the chair, he is yet to sit and still backs Sully.*

What are you? And what do you want?

SULLY Wait wait wait, please oh, I don't like the tone of voice why do you sound intolerant already, what have I done? You have not even turned around to see me and you're already complaining.

ALAKOSO *sits into the chair*

I do apologize for...

he stops short midway through his sentence as he gets a first good view of the person speaking...a few seconds later, he regains his composure

I apologize for snapping...

(begins to stutter)

I....I....I

SULLY I understand, you have not seen one as peculiarly ravishing as me. Let me tell you something though, I was listening when your friend was here, and I must say that I agree with him. You are not fit to judge anyone. In fact, look at me *does a little spin*

do I look like I need your endorsement for anything, in any way?
I am my own person oh. And I refuse to be judged by others
ALAKOSO Hmmn...it is well. Can I ask a few questions at least?
SULLY You can. Whether or not I answer is another thing. At least if I don't find your questions offensive.
ALAKOSO My aim is to converse with you, and then weigh you. But it seems I am already designated the role of an opponent.
SULLY Mr panel of judges, I am not of those people that don't know their left from right. I am fully aware, I am conscious of myself. I am woke.
ALAKOSO Are you man or woman?
SULLY how dare you? I find that question insulting. I am whatever I choose to be whenever I choose to be it.
ALAKOSO Are you man or woman? It is a simple question.
SULLY Gender is a choice not an identification of genitalia. You are not only insensitive. You are homophobic, you are a bigot. I am sure you're racist. You are a mad man. Idiot!!!
ALAKOSO Get out! Get out I refuse to judge such an obtuse defensive ignoramus such as yourself. Guards!!! Get this nuisance out of here!!!
SULLY You will not force me out oh. You will not force me out at all. Who do you think you are
progressively raises their voice
Guards carry them out.

CURTAINS CLOSE

ACT 2



SCENE 1



CURTAINS OPEN

The scene opens to Alakoso ordering his guards to get him some food. A few minutes later, they return with some food.

Alakoso takes off the first layer of his Agbada as he begins to eat Amala and Ewedu with his fingers.

GUARDS FROMshun sir!!!

OUTSIDE

We hear their boots hit the floor

ALAKOSO ooooooh!!! There is truly no rest for the wicked.
I wonder who is next.

OFFICER Good day my lord.

ALAKOSO Good day Mr officer. I will go straight to the point.

OFFICER Thank you my lord. I appreciate this.

ALAKOSO For the crime of playing the roles of judge jury and executioner, I condemn you to be betrayed by the politicians you so shamelessly side with. For siding with the oppressors of the people you are to protect I condemn you to disloyalty across the rank and file. For consistently using the selfsame laws you ought to uphold to terrorize

the citizens you are meant to serve while conniving with those you ought to prosecute your a sentenced to a lifetime of disconnection with the very people that ensure your work is needed.

OFFICER

Understood my lord. But my lord if I may appeal to your sense of mercy. I am not a criminal. My job is to ensure the safety of the state. I am trained to give up one for the good of many. I am barely equipped to fight the actual terrorists who happen to be sponsored by the very ruling class who are supposed to fund me. I do not have access to health care. My training dehumanizes me and makes me a victim of the very aggressiveness I am to help keep in check. And please do not get it twisted your lordship I do not seek leniency. I seek fairness. You must understand that the average citizen pronounces a curse on me at least once a day. The average African would refuse to be friends with me except they see a need for my services in bullying their fellow civilians. I am not the bad guy here. I am vastly understaffed, under-educated and grossly underpaid!!! Of course I dip my hands here and there. Who in my boots wouldn't? In your sentencing me, did you consider my family? You are the judge here. And I will abide by the law, but let it be known that the law was never fair to the law enforcers.

Salutes, and then turns to leave

Alakoso is bewildered. After a minute of introspection, he picks his food and continues eating.

EXIT

SCENE 2

CURTAINS OPEN

Alakoso finishes his food. And then begins to motivate himself.

ALAKOSO

I can do this - I will finish this. I refuse to give up. I refuse to give up!!!!

Ahhh. This people will not kill me. Where exactly are they coming from. Nobody respects me again. I talk, they talk back. I am tired, dammit. I am an indefatigable. I will judge them. That is my essence. That is my job. To speak the truth to power. Regardless of whoever shows up!!! Come on!!! I will not give up. The wise one was wrong. He doesn't quite get it. These Africans need a very strong conscience. They need someone to stand up to them. Else they will never end their gimmicks. What is it this spiritual people? Since he left I have had one issue or the other. Just really troublesome characters. At least the politician is a clear cut situation. I can pass my judgment easily on such. But what am I to do with Sulaiman? Calls himself sully too. Oh my days. Africa!!! Maybe I need to be stronger than ever before. I must stand my ground. Let them know what's wrong. No time for useless discussions.

let me show them who I really am. Bring it on.

He screams very loudly

NEXT!!

The Muse walks daintily, ad graciously. Alakoso is stunned

- ALAKOSO** Wow. To what do I owe this pleasure.
- THE MUSE** The pleasure is mine sir. I am here to hear. But also to be heard. For what pleasure is there in a word not returned?
- ALAKOSO** Hmmn. To please or be pleased? to serve or be served? To inspire or be inspired?
- THE MUSE** To resign and retire or to aspire for higher? To the youth be truth and to the old be bold. To inquire of the messiah or desire a rewire of the mold?
- ALAKOSO** Words from your lips like honey from a comb but your thoughts are as complex as a thousand catacombs. I understand much more than you have said, for the words you have uttered are not all that I heard.
- THE MUSE** I have said what was on my mind to think I did otherwise is to be utterly unkind.
- ALAKOSO** Do not play games with me, young child. There is no world where you speak and I cannot interpret your guile.
- THE MUSE** Alright then. Let me speak plainly. Do you need help or not?
- ALAKOSO** I admit I really do need help. But I must say that I have seen your thoughts. You get men hooked on you. And for the rest of their lives they will search for a stimulus you will hold just out of their reach. You are a tease. All bark and no bite. You once promised a priest the land he set his feet upon and all you gave as a seed was the sandals on his feet. You are a dream. A dream that deprives men of their sleep. You are like drugs and sex and music and dance and a futile pursuit of what is next. You lure men with grand tales of lands of golds and then when they get

on the journey you say the gold is in the process.
You are a lie. And I refuse to entertain the likes
of you. Leave my presence!!!

THE MUSE

in a singsong manner

somebody is hurt. Somebody is near tears.
Somebody is crying while trying to hide behind a
loud cry!!!

Leave my presence you say. You, whose existence
is predicated upon the absence of the individual
conscience?

Please. Nonetheless, I will be merciful as usual.
This is how you will be saved! Close your doors,
block out the noise from the outside. In solitude
is great clarity. And if you refuse? So be it. I did
my best by you.

Goodbye Alakoso. And yes I am aware you cannot
judge me. For I am as immaterial as thee.

She daintily walks away again.

EXIT

SCENE 3

A sober looking Alakoso is seen mindlessly “judging” those who come to him.

ALAKOSO *A woman walks in with a baby .*
you are doing your best. Please try to apply more discipline in how you train this child, for children are the future. Next

ALAKOSO *A farmer walks in with his hoe, straw hat and his cutlass.*
Welldone Mr farmer. Embrace innovation and you will make good profit. Don’t buy into the seedless nonsense that the foreigners will have you buy. Trust me. Each seed has a purpose and each plant has a role to play. Well done. Go and prosper.
Next!!!

A medical worker walks in wearing a lab coat
Great job ma, please keep it up!!! Next!!!
As she turns to leave, Alakoso stops her

Wait ma. Please make time for your family.
Next!!!

A new footballer comes in
Mr baller just diet and stop lying about your age.
Next!!!

GUARDS That’s the last person sir!
ALAKOSO Finally!!!Next!!!

He slumps into his seat
He lays down on the bare floor and immediately, begins to snore.

SCENE 4

A woman with special needs wheels herself in to meet a sleeping Alakoso on the floor.

THE UNSEEN knock knock knock.

Alakoso keeps turning fitfully in his sleep

THE UNSEEN Good afternoon sir

she moves in gently to tap him where he is laying down.

ALAKOSO Oooh....Who are you again? I told these guards not to disturb me! There is truly no rest for the wicked oh. What is all this now?

THE UNSEEN I'm sorry sir. I didn't mean to disturb you. It's just that I had no help climbing the stairs so by the time I got here, the doors were already closed and it seemed as if the sessions were over. I only said to make absolutely sure that there was still room is all. I'm sorry sir.

ALAKOSO *sits up and move to the throne*

Okay...it's okay. But why can't I see you clearly?

THE UNSEEN you forget that you're the collective conscience of the people. Of course you cannot see me clearly. How can I be visible to those who only see opportunities to advance themselves. Of what advantage am I to you?

ALAKOSO Ahn-ahn. This can't be. Even you want to condemn me? You that from what I can see are not even a complete human being?

THE UNSEEN Exactly!!! you know all my life. I have waited for the day when I would finally be free from the material world. When I will be able to communicate with those who are not attached to the physical. I was very excited to meet you . I looked forward to it. But you, you are even worse than everyone I met on my way here.

ALAKOSO Worse how? You come in throwing words like stones. And this, after waking me up from my beauty sleep? No oh. I only replied you with matching velocity.

THE UNSEEN On the way here, I kept asking myself, why do they call you the collective conscience of all Africans? I think I know the answer. You are simply the sum of all that is wrong and terrible in all of them? You're who you condemn and a little more.

ALAKOSO I am all that is good about you people. And even if I were to be all that is bad, you do realize that you're part of that evil in me?

THE UNSEEN See, I came here for your judgement. But know this, you wouldn't be the first to judge me. Neither will you be the last to. All my life, my disability has relegated me to the background. Men bullied me in school, in the mosque and in the church. Every one I loved turned their backs on me. My only means of survival as a child was begging for my daily bread and even then, most of what I got were barely good enough for an animal. I am here for your judgement. Judge away. Judge me!!! Do you know how I lost my right leg? I was wrongly injected by an angry nurse and I was only a baby. Do you know how I

lost my right eye? Terrorists attacked my father's farm and when everyone fled to freedom, The chief terrorist plucked out my eye with a blade. He said he needed a souvenir for his raid. Do you know how I broke the fingers of my right hand? Some boys in my secondary school decided I was what was needed to make the second half of the small post they needed for their stupid football game. One shot and I tumbled over. When the entire world took everything right about me, what you see is all I have left. So go ahead and judge me. Alakoso, the judge. These wicked beings must have come before you. Tell me, how did you judge the terrorist? Tell me what you said to the bullies?

visibly moved to tears

ALAKOSO

I do not judge you beautiful one. I cannot judge you. I am sorry for all we have done against you. I am truly sorry. I apologize. I am sorry. Please forgive me. Please. Oh Africa. I see you clearly now. Please forgive me. I promise never to be hasty in the future. I will be deliberate about every decision I take. I will carefully consider the consequences of my actions. Please forgive me. Forgive me mother!!!

THE UNSEEN

I do forgive you my son. I forgive you. You must remember, the chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

turns to face the crowd

Learn to build each other up. Never look down on anyone. We have a long way to go if we are to reclaim all we have lost.

Alakoso!!!

ALAKOSO Yes mother?

THE UNSEEN Come help me up. This rebuild must begin with you and I.

He helps her up and they walk off stage to a wonderful round of applause.

THE END

APPRECIATION



Special thanks to my brothers Pelumi Taiwo,
Busayo Taiwo and Segun Ojo

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were recently born to us.

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have been done without you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Taiwo Oluwafisolami is a dynamic playwright and event designer whose work seamlessly blends diverse artistic influences. Known for crafting compelling narratives, his plays explore themes of identity, peace, freedom and culture, while he has worked with some of the biggest entertainment labels in Africa as a writer. He also volunteered at HomeAdvantage Africa where he served as the head of events and strategies as well as the Head of African Poetry. Taiwo Oluwafisolami has been recognised for his works-which tend to emphasize african history, culture and creativity by Project Dawn where he was nominated for two awards on 2020.

He wrote and coproduced the independence themed stage play 1860 in 2019, which emphasised the place of culture in promoting the peace of Nigeria. His expertise in storytelling and his event designs create immersive experiences while driving compelling content that has engaged audiences. He was the director of operations for SPILL (Speaking Intelligently, Ladies Lead) 2024, which is a pan-African speaking platform dedicated to enabling women of African descent to share their authentic stories, focusing on ideas that contribute to personal and societal development.

His previously published books are Echoes of Hope, What is Bible Study and Stories of Old. His current projects are designed to help raise awareness about social injustice such as domestic violence and substance abuse.

He is also the convener of “The Move”; a strategic and high-impact Christian movement that is shaping the lives of the young and old, in the South Western regions of Nigeria.

