

**THE VOTER**  
**BY CHINUA ACHEBE**  
**SIMPLE SUMMARY OUTLINE**  
**BY FELIX DAVIS EINYU**  
[felixeinyu53@gmail.com](mailto:felixeinyu53@gmail.com)  
**0773036087/0705461954**

**PLOT**

1. Rufus Okeke also known as Roof is a very popular man in his village. His popularity is due to the fact that he is a hardworking and energetic young man who has not abandoned his village like his counterparts.
2. He comes back to the village after spending some two years in Port Harcourt as a bicycle repairer.
3. Much as Umoufia doesn't require much guidance, the village needed young men like Roof to guide them in difficult times especially when it comes to electoral issues. Roof's exposure helps him to become popular in his community.
4. The area is under the representation of the loved Politician in the name of Marcus Ibe of The People's Alliance Party (PAP)
5. Marcus Ibe, the Member of Parliament had become very rich in a very short time after joining politics. He is admired by his village folks. He has just taken five years in parliament but very rich.
6. The former mission school teacher, Marcus Ibe who was struggling, is now the minister of Culture in the outgoing government; a government which was sure of winning the next election as well. Just like the government he belongs to, the Honourable Marcus Ibe is sure of being reelected in his constituency.
7. The ballot paper whose powers the villagers had underestimated was indeed a life changer. After joining politics, Marcus has become rich owning luxury cars and a very beautiful mansion in his village.

8. To fool people Marcus Ibe throws a party for his villagers. He even calls the house the "Umoufian Mansion" to hoodwink the villagers into thinking that the mansion was as well theirs. The party he throws makes everyone to praise him. One old man called Ogbuefi Ezenwa says he is a good man.
9. Some voters especially the elders who have seen how lucrative politics is would not want to be taken for granted again. They now want money in exchange for votes.
10. Marcus Ibe is ready to buy votes. He is prepared in advance.
11. Just about that time another political party comes in the picture. Much as Marcus had underestimated the power of the opposition, POP (Progressive Organisation Party); the new political party gives him a run for his money.
12. Roof is a chief campaigning agent for Marcus Ibe. He has become an expert in campaigns over time. He has participated in campaigns at all levels.
13. The campaigns are heated and the two parties are all racing to win the favour of the elders. PAP through Roof collects elders in the house of Ogbuefi Ezenwa and gives a few shillings to the elders as a way of bribing them to vote Marcus Ibe. Roof is playing an important role to see that Marcus Ibe returns to parliament.
14. All these are being done in order to defeat Maduka of Progressive Organisation Party (POP).
15. Just like PAP, POP also dishes money to the voters. In fact, POP offers some pounds to the elders.
16. Surprisingly, in the last days of the campaigns, Marcus's campaign manager, Roof receives a strange visit led by the Campaign Manager of POP. He has come to offer Roof money to switch allegiance to Maduka and ditch Marcus. Rufus (Roof) is given five pounds to vote for Maduka.
17. Roof accepts the bribe but before he is given the money, he must swear an oath before Iyi (a pot of witchcraft that Maduka's campaign agent came along with). Much as there are consequences, Rufus accepts to swear because of the much money the deal comes with.
18. On the campaign day, Marcus Ibe sits aside shaking hands with whoever cares. Mingling with voters for the sake of votes. Roof on the other hand is trying hard to convince people to vote for Marcus. He is hiding the fact that he took a bribe behind Marcus his boss.
19. When the time of voting reaches, Marcus suggests that, Roof should be the first to cast his ballot.
20. At the time of casting his ballot, Roof suffers a divided allegiance. He is in dilemma on who to vote for. He finds it difficult to betray Marcus Ibe even in secret but also fears the Iyi that he swore to. He spends a lot of time in the

voting booth contemplating. He finally decides to tear the ballot into two putting halves of each in each box of Marcus and Maduka.

## **NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES**

1. Symbolism
  - Car
  - Iyi
2. Dialogue
  - Chief and Roof
  - Maduka's campaign agent and Roof
  - Marcus and Roof
3. Satire
  - Euphemism
  - Irony (elders who are supposed to offer guidance take bribes, Roof the lead campaigner is bribed by the opponent's team etc)
  - Sarcasm
  - Humour
4. Description
  - Voters' behaviour during campaigns.
  - Roof at the voting booth etc
5. Language
  - Proverbs
  - Idioms
  - Pidgin English etc

## **THEMES**

### **1. Betrayal**

- Voters are always betrayed by those they vote.
- New political parties that are suppose to offer better alternatives are just the same as the parties they want to remove.
- Politics is not offering services to the people but enriching politicians.
- Voter bribery favours those with money.

### **2. Culture/African Tradition and beliefs**

- The elders must be consulted.

- The iyi is feared.
- Mbanta is respected by everyone.

### **3. Corruption**

- Leaders are corrupt.
- The electoral process is marred by corruption.
- Voters are corrupt.
- Politicians are corrupt.
- Generally, the whole society is corrupt.

### **4. Democracy**

- Voting is part of democracy.

### **5. Leadership**

### **6. Elections and Political Campaigns**

### **7. Selfishness**

- Politicians like Marcus Ibe only cares about their wellbeing and they do this at the expense of the poor voters.
- Marcus constructs a big house in the village and installs electricity and water yet the village has no electricity. Villagers also have shortage of water.

### **8. Irresponsibility**

- Leaders fail their voters who put their trust in them.
- Marcus promises people many things like construction of roads but fulfils none.

## **CHARACTERS**

### **Rufus Okeke (Roof)**

- Protagonist
- Popular young energetic man
- Poor – bicycle repairer
- Trustworthy
- Corrupt
- Hypocrite
- Greedy
- Opportunistic

### **Marcus Ibe**

- Corrupt
- Irresponsible
- Selfish/self-centered
- Hypocrite
- Manipulative
- Exploitative
- Assertive/aggressive

### **Maduka's Campaign Manager**

- Superstitious
- Corrupt
- Irresponsible
- Selfish
- Manipulative
- Aggressive

### **Ogbuefi Ezenwa/ Elders**

- Corrupt
- Bad example
- Traditional
- Irresponsible
- Ignorant
- Selfish
- Greedy
- Critical and full of wisdom

### **Voters/Villagers**

- Money minded
- Materialistic
- Hypocritical
- Selfish
- Gullible
- Illiterate
- Ignorant

### **Endeavor to illustrate.**

**How is the electoral process described in the text related to the contemporary society?**

- Witchcraft is involved.
- It is marred with violence and belittling of opponents.
- There are political parties.
- Full of bribery to get more followers.
- Voting is secret.
- Music is involved.
- Politicians make a lot of promises during campaigns. Some of these promises are never fulfilled.
- Rules are never followed.
- Parties in power stand high chances of winning.