

# Deceitful Webs

Rita O. Okeah

*Cover by Abbie's Art Design*



'Bose, did you hear what Dr. Gbenga just said ? Asked Tunde  
' yes'  
'I am AA and so are you'  
'I know'  
' so how can you explain that Tirení is 'SS? ' thundered  
Tunde  
'take it easy man' said the doctor

Bose shook her head. So this was it! Her secret was about to be spilled? Why had Tirení chosen to go into crisis when Tunde was around.

She had managed so far for two years to hide Tirení's illness from Tunde. She had always told him it was malaria bouts. At first, Bose had not known that Tirení was a sickler. It was six months after she brought her home that Tirení had her first crisis. Tunde had gone back to the 'rig' and Bose had rushed Tirení to the clinic.

She was discharged after three days at the hospital. It was not up to two months and she was admitted again.

After the third bout, the doctor recommended full medical tests.

Bose remembered that day. It was the day her world began to have a crack.

'hmmmm madam, it seems you or your husband have an 'SS' genotype

'not at all. Both of us are' AA' Bose had replied confused

'well, from our tests, Tirení' s genotype is 'SS'

'what'!

'yes, so she is prone to bouts like this. They are called crisis'

'Jesus! What have I gotten myself into' Bose wondered.

She had tried to hide it from Tunde but he had witnessed Tirení have the crisis twice and he didn't like it.

'next time it happens, I am taking her to my own doctor. It seems that your doctor is not handling it well' he had threatened.

Fate intended to put her to shame because the very next day that Tunde came back from the rig, Tirení got sick.

Bose had watched as Tunde bundled Tirení into the car and now, they were in Dr Gbenga's office.

'I am waiting for your answer' Tunde asked again  
'I don't know how to say this Tunde' faltered Bose

'I will give you some moments alone' Dr Gbenga said leaving the room

'I am all ears' said Tunde

'please forgive me for what I am about to tell you'

'what!

' it happened like this.....

'mama, it's not mine'

'so what's this kind of book doing in my house' asked ma Bose

'it's my friend that gave me the book to read' cried Bose

'your father will see this' said ma Bose

Bose's father was the assistant pastor of the local Baptist church. He was a strict disciplined man who handled his children with total hardness.

The title of the book that her mother had seen was

'everywoman' and her friend Fatima had brought it to school after the teaching of reproduction in their biology class.

Bose saw nothing bad in the book except for some of the pictures that showed nude women and men pictures but it was really educative.

Bose had read more than two hundred 'mills and boons' novels between her junior class in school to senior class. The stories of prince charming always coming for his princess filled her with so much fantasy and delight.

She laughed within herself at what her mother would have thought about her several 'mills and boons' and romance novels if she should have read them.

Most times, she had covered the cover page with newspapers covering to avoid plenty questions from her mother.

Bose felt out of place discussing the matter of the book with her mother. She had never been close to her mother and all the sex education she had gotten, was from her friends in school. She had marveled at the amount of knowledge her friends had especially during their biology class because she was as naive as it came.

'hmmm, my mother taught me. She is a nurse'

'my elder sister taught me.'

'my father told me everything I needed to know'

'what!'

' yes, I am very close to my father and he is a teacher '

Bose remembered her first menstruation.

' oh girl you are stained ' the bus conductor called her back

' what!'

Her friends who had alighted the bus before her came around her and confirmed it

'this is what our biology teacher taught us' one said

'you are now a woman' hailed another

But Bose cried silently. She was ashamed of becoming a woman so soon.

Her friends found a big safety pin and covered the stained part of her uniform.

As she got to her house she went straight to the bathroom and changed. She was determined not to tell her mother.

That week was the week of the 'menses' in her class as the girls, one after the other began to stain themselves.

'don't you people know this will happen?' asked one of them  
'how are we to know?'

'well my mother told me this long time ago too' the girl said  
'she even bought me pads way before I started my period'  
she continued

Bose had no such luck. Her only sister was away in the university and her three brothers were not even interested in her. Her mother cared only about church and her business...

Bose's father 'flogged' her that night after the mother had reported the matter to him. She was told to return the book immediately to her friend and cut off that sinful alliance.  
'evil communication corrupts good manners.' thundered her father.

'you want to defy yourself before marriage?'

'no sir'

'no food for you this night. Go to bed' added her mother.

That night, Bose decided to keep mute about her love, life and the burning questions in her heart.

Valentine's day was next week Wednesday and Bose hated the day with a passion. It was a day that made her wished she was born into a different family.

She was fifteen and had had started her menstrual periods a year ago but she had kept it from her mother and only told her elder sister who came home from holidays.

Bose felt alienated when her friends talk about their boyfriends. She continually delved into her world of fantasy through her books and secretly wished her prince charming will appear and sweep her off her feet.

Valentine's day always reminded Bose of her loveless life. Her classmates flaunted their cards and gifts from their admirers in class during break.

'see my card' Fatima showed Bose. It was one of the largest card that Bose had ever seen.

'who gave it to you? Bose asked.

Jide'

Jide was Fatima's boyfriend. He was a year one student at the university and it seemed they were really in love but Fatima had told him to wait till she was out of secondary school before sex and he had agreed.

'it's very beautiful' gushed Bose

Bose felt so lonely and unloved with all the love in the air.

'valentine's day is a day from hell released to earth to destroy young people's destiny' her father said

'very correct' ma Bose said

'Bose, do you know how much money the condom producers make every valentine's day?

' no sir'

'listen to your father' ma Bose said

Bose listened to her father's lecture that day allowing his words to pass through her ears to the floor.

Bose was not interested in boring lectures. She was interested in love and being swept off her feet by her prince.

The last valentine's day before Bose graduated from high school was one she would live to remember.

'I have a parcel for Bose Olu' the school courier man said.

'it's me' Bose called.

She watched her classmate's reaction as she opened her

parcel. It was a beautifully wrapped card and a bottle of perfume. It was the biggest card any of the girls had received.

'so who is the secret admirer' asked her friends  
'open it, let's see'

Bose opened the card and read out loud the beautiful words.  
'you are very special to me, more than the air I breathe and I am happy to have you..... Happy valentine '... Love Femi

'waoh' who is this Femi guy and how come I have heard nothing about him' quizzed Fatima

'don't worry, I will tell you all about him later' Bose said spraying some perfumes on her uniform. Some of the girls begged for some and she sprayed some on them.

Later that day, Bose laughed to herself at the little show she had put up. Her money had bought the card and perfume and she had addressed the parcel to herself. She never told Fatima that Femi was her imaginary boyfriend until after they had graduated and left school.....

For once, her parents allowed Bose to stay out late. It was her high school graduation party and she was allowed to stay up late.

Bose met Jide for the first time and he came with his friend Ola. They loved each other at first sight and Bose could already see him as her prince.

Ola was also a first year student at the University and good looking.

She had sneaking to Ola's house on her way to the market for the past two months. The very first time, Ola had invited her to see him because he said he was sick.

That day, He was alone in the house since he was the only child of his parents and they both worked.

Bose and Ola's relationship had picked up speed after the graduation party and even Fatima was not aware of it. Fatima had left for the North and Bose had been visiting Ola in secret.

She could not explain how it happened but her fantasy needed an outlet and it found a release in loving Ola. 'I don't need a pregnancy test' she said to herself as she walked into Ola's house that day two months later.

She met Ola with another girl in his room.

'what are you doing here' he demanded

'I came to see you for an important matter' she replied

'it has to wait. As you can see we are busy with school assignments'

'OK, can I come tomorrow?

' maybe '

Bose was hurt but didn't show it. What was more important than the fact that she carried his child?

She looked at the girl on Ola's bed who showed no sign of doing anything but gazing at Ola lovingly.

'I am pregnant' she said the next day she visited him.

'you are not serious' he shouted

'what!

' the next thing you would say is that I am responsible '

' what! But you are! Cried Bose

'see this girl oh. Don't make me laugh'

'Ola, you are responsible for my pregnancy. You are my only lover'

'don't think I am stupid'

'please believe me,'

'I don't have anything to believe. See, I still have three years before I graduate, and I am not ready to be a father yet'

Ola left the room as Bose sobbed quietly.



Bose had no one to tell. Her best friend Fatima was away and her elder sister was in school. She could not tell her mother because she was dead meat if she did. Bose cried every night on her bed and each time she called Ola, he refused to pick his call. Bose finally thought of Jide and she snuck out to meet him. 'you mean to tell me that you are already three months gone' asked jide  
'yes'  
'I can't believe this. Why didn't you tell me since'  
Bose had no answer. She was naive and stupid to have thought fantasy land was same as reality' she thought.

Her WAEC results were out already and she didn't make English language. Her parents had not been happy because it meant she needed to repeat the exam. Bose knew going to the university that session was out of the question. 'If only her parents knew there was a bigger problem than her exams' she thought.  
'I will talk to Ola. There's only one option and that's to look for money to terminate the pregnancy' concluded Jide after a long talk.

'I only have Ten thousand to spare' said Ola  
'but the doctor said it will cost twenty five thousand' cried Bose  
She never imagined that Ola was such a monster. No wonder her father had always admonished her about young men  
'most young men are wolves in sheep clothing, beware of them' her father had told her  
'yes sir'  
'they come to you for what they can get, when they do, they toss you away like rags'  
'OK papa'

'keep away from them. The right man will come that will value you. Don't make yourself cheap'

'how I wish I had listened to my father'

'why did you have sex with that idiot' it was Fatima. She had come back to collect her WAEC results and Jide had told her everything.

'I can't explain but it's the worst decision I have ever made' cried Bose

'hmmm, what is your next plan' she asked

'no plan. I am almost entering the fourth month and the money for the abortion is not complete'

'tell your sister nah'

'she may tell my parents and if they found out, they will kill me'

'they won't, before you know it, the pregnancy will start to show' said Fatima

'I know. Maybe I will tell my sister when she returns this weekend' said Bose....

'jeez Bose, how could you' shouted Shola  
'What is it? asked ma Bose from the kitchen  
' nothing ma' they both chorused. Bose had finally revealed her secret to her sister.

That weekend, Shola told their parents that she wanted Bose to spend some few days at the University hostel with her. She was able to convince her parents and they agreed.

The procedure was quick but painful. Bose was given some pain killers and she spent three days in the hostel recuperating. She came home vowing to stay clear of men and the life of fantasy.

Bose was determined to make something out of her life. Her parents enrolled her for evening lessons for her WAEC exams and she studied very hard.  
Bose made her papers and was admitted to study civil engineering at the University.

She was surrounded in school by men both in her department and her faculty but she barely had time for any of them.

She graduated with a second degree upper division and was sent to an oil servicing company for her youth service.

In her company, she was known for her hardwork and tenacity but nothing could be said for her social life.

She delved into her work and found satisfaction from being praised by her boss.

Bose avoided all her office parties like plague until the send forth party for all the corpors. That was where she met Him.

' hi beautiful, my name is Tunde, what's yours' he asked stretching out his hand

'Bose'

'will you like to dance?

' no!

'common, lighten up'

She ended up not talking to him that day and she thought little of it...

Bose met Tunde again after one year of searching for a job. He was one of the engineers on site at the company she had submitted her application to.

Bose and three others had been shortlisted and sent for some practical tests in Tunde's office.

'this is a small world, we meet again' said Tunde

'hmmmm, how come you are here too'?. Bose had a long talk with Tunde that day.

Bose didn't get the job but rather started being friends with Tunde.

Her sister Shola was getting married and she was the maid of honor. She knew she was next in line but She had made up her mind to have sex only when she got married after her past experience.

She attended church but was not involved personally.

She even sang in the choir but deep down, she knew she was not fully committed. A part of her soul was torn apart by her past and she was like a living dead.

After Shola's wedding, Tunde began to frequent her house and in no time had proposed marriage.

'he looks like a nice boy' ma Bose said when she told her of Tunde 's intentions.

The wedding was fixed and everything was done according to plan. Bose was happy that Tunde had accepted her desire to wait to have sex only after the wedding.

It was with renewed zest in life and hope that finally, she had met and married her prince charming that Bose entered

her matrimonial home.

Everything seemed like a fairy tale to Bose. Her inlaws were perfect. Mr and Mrs Yinka had lived all their lives abroad and the remaining two siblings of Tunde were outside the country.

Tunde was the last child and had come home for his youth service some years back before they met.

Everything seemed perfect until after two years of marriage and Bose had still not missed her period.....

Each time Bose saw her menstrual period, she cried. She could not explain how she could still be seeing her period after two years of marriage.

Her parents in law were not worried, neither was Tunde but Bose was unhappy for days after every monthly flow.

'I hate seeing this blood. What's wrong with me? She cried  
' sweetheart, don't get so emotional. At the right time you will get pregnant. We are still young ' said Tunde

' I am already 27 and all my mates that got married same time with me have at least one' she lamented.

'when you are anxious like this, you make it difficult' Tunde replied.

'it's easy for you to say. You are a man. You won't understand'

'I know what to do, I think you need something to keep you occupied' said Tunde

With Tunde's help, Bose got a job. She was able to forget about her situation for a while until one of her colleagues Pamela brought her 'baby shower' card.

Bose burst into tears at the sight of the card.

'what's the problem? Asked Pamela

' I am so sorry. I should be happy for you' cried Bose

'please tell me what is wrong' said Pamela.

'this is the third year since I got married, no child' cried Bose

'have you gone for check ups' enquired Roseline another of

her colleague.

'hmmm, routine checks, yes' Bose replied

'I know what you need. I will help you' Pamela said.

'I was married for four years before this my pregnancy'

Pamela said

'how did you do it?please help me' said Bose

'it's one prophetess that helped me' replied Pamela

'prophetess?

Bose wondered what she was getting herself into. She had heard numerous stories about these so called prophetess but she threw caution to the wind as she listened to Pamela.

That day, Pamela took her to a neighborhood that she never knew existed in that part of the world. The place was a dilapidated building in a rural area with many run down houses along the road. As they drove down slowly, some group of naked children swarm round the car begging for alms. Pamela threw down some money and Bose could see them fight over the money through the car window.

She felt uncomfortable and it showed on her face.

'don't worry. It's results you are after, isn't it? asked Pamela

Bose came down from the car when they got to their destination.

The prophetess was an old woman with some missing teeth. She had about three young girls whom Pamela said were her apprentice.

' welcome my children' she replied to their greeting.

'you have come to the right place' the prophetess said after listening to Bose.

'I will embark on seven days fasting for you. Your case is that of a spirit husband'

'what!

' incubus and succubus'

'what!

' you won't understand. But I will help you. After I finish the

work, you will carry your own baby'

'amen' echoed Pamela

'amen' added Bose. She was really confused but played along. 'spiritual husband? Incubus? She could neither make head or tail of what this pathetic looking woman was saying but she kept quiet. She came to her senses when Pamela touched her.

' this are the things you need to do and bring' continued the prophetess.

'number one, you will need to cook some food and call children to eat. You will tell them to pray for you after they finish eating' the prophetess said

'that will be difficult. Where will I get these children? Asked Bose

' your friend will help you'

'don't worry about that' said Pamela

'number two, you will embark on the same seven days fast that I am going to embark on. You can do half day'

'ok'

Number three, you will come here on the seventh day, so that the proper work will be done '

' which is?

'you will find out that day'

'finally, you will need to bring this items, one white chicken, three eggs, one apple, and three bottles of olive oil' the prophetess concluded.

Bose left that place with Pamela more confused than before. Was she doing the right thing? How would she explain her absence to Tunde on that special night? Will it work?

'don't worry Bose. You will smile. It worked for me' Pamela reassured her.

'OK. I pray it works'.....

The night of the 'work' by the prophetess was a day that would ever be memorable to Bose. It was a day she almost died.

Pamela had helped her to organize everything she needed. The children had eaten and prayed for her. She had bought the items and she had not only done the fasting for seven days but had done six to six instead of the half day the prophetess had told her.

Bose was already dehydrated and weak by the time she got to the place. Pamela was with her after they had lied to Tunde. Pamela had told Tunde that she needed Bose's help to organize the baby shower and Tunde had agreed.

Bose watched as the prophetess came into the room with her girls. They handed over some materials to Bose. She was told to undress and given a white sheet to tie across her breasts.

The prophetess killed the white chicken and circled Bose's head three times while making some prayers.

The next thing Bose saw was that, the prophetess took three long canes from her back and gave one each to the three young apprentices.

She was asked to kneel down and the first olive oil bottle was opened and poured over her head. She drank the whole content of the second bottle and felt like vomiting. She was weak already and almost falling down when the first stroke of the cane touched her naked skin.

'what is happening' Bose cried loudly as her skin felt the impact.

'we are driving out the spirit husband' replied the prophetess

Bose cried in pain. The pain was unbearable. The three apprentices kept hitting Bose. Bose tried shielding her face from the cracks of the cane. She shouted for mercy. She begged Pamela to help her but she stood unmoving. When



she thought it would not stop, they suddenly stopped and Bose fell on the ground unconscious.

'she has died' said one of the apprentice

'my God! What are we going to do' cried Pamela

'she is not dead, just fainted' said the prophetess touching Bose

Bose woke up in the hospital. She felt like she had been ran over by a lorry. She could hardly move any part of her body. Her lips were dry and parched and her head rang bells.

'thank God you are awake' said Tunde

'I need water' Bose said

She drank water and felt a little better.

'thank God you are alive, what really happened?'

'it was an accident like I said' interrupted Pamela

'yes, I had an accident' Bose said. She could see in Pamela's eyes fear and warning to keep quiet.

'how could I even tell Tunde anything? It was a scary experience and shameful to narrate' she thought.

'how did this accident happen? He asked

Bose feigned tiredness. She pretended that she was asleep as he held her hand for a while and left. She needed time to cook up a convincing story for Tunde and now was not a good time. After Tunde left, Pamela came back to the hospital room and looked at Bose.

'I know you are not sleeping' she said

Bose opened her eyes and looked at her in fierce anger.

'how could you do this to me? I was almost killed'

'I am very sorry Bose. Believe me, I went through the same process and I am pregnant today' she said

'you mean that you received that kind of beating I did? Bose asked incredulously

'If I tell you what women pass through just to get pregnant,

you will be surprised' Pamela continued.  
Bose listened to everything Pamela told her and decided to keep quiet. 'maybe it might work after all' she decided.  
Bose was discharged three days later from the hospital and she made up a story for Tunde who believed her wholeheartedly.

After two months, nothing had happened and she told Pamela.

'it will happen. Mine was three months after' she said.  
After three months, Bose was as disappointed as ever. There was still no sign of pregnancy. Bose cried and cried for everything she had gone through.  
She cried for the money she had wasted, She cried for the beatings she had received, she cried for her foolishness in believing the prophetess.

Bose held her stomach and cried bitterly that she was in her third year of marriage and her womb had refused to conceive....

Pamela had her baby, it was a girl and Bose felt so sad at the naming ceremony. She couldn't believe that things had worked out for Pamela and not for her. She was left alone with Pamela that day and they had a talk.

'I see that you are still unhappy with me' Pamela said

'yes I am, I can't lie' Bose replied

'I will make it up to you' Pamela said

'how? I think my last option is to go to the hospital for a thorough check up, let me know my fate ' Bose replied

'nothing is wrong with you Jor. You are very young, how old are you?

' I will be 28 in march'

'see this small girl oh. I am 35already.'

'I got married early, 24' said Bose

'hmmmm, I want to help you, can you keep a secret? Said

Pamela after sometime.

' of course ' replied Bose

' after visiting that prophetess, I didn't get pregnant '

' what! Shouted Bose

'don't shout na'

'Jesus! I can't believe this!

' OK na, I won't tell you anything again' said Pamela.

'you have to tell me, you have aroused my curiosity'

'do you promise not to chew me raw? Asked Pamela.

' ok'

'visiting that prophetess didn't work. My friend Shade was the one that took me there. When it didn't work, she took me to another place' said Pamela

'but why take me there to suffer for nothing when you know it didn't work for you' asked Bose

'I thought it will work for you na.'

'you made me to waste time and money. It almost cost me my life. Do you know how painful those canes were? Cried Bose

' you don't need to tell me, I experienced it too.' replied Pamela

' so now, you are telling me that there is another place that you got your solution from? Asked Bose

' yes, if you are willing to try 'replied Pamela.

Bose was ready to try anything at that moment. She persuaded Pamela to tell her.

' it's another place, this time an anointed man of God '

'another beating abi' mocked Bose

'nothing like that. This is different'

'I hate surprises oh. Please tell me what to expect'

'nothing much'

'I don't believe that I grew up in a church and I am supposed to be a Christian, yet I am just following you like this'

lamented Bose

'leave that talk. Even the Bible says' heaven help those who

help themselves 'replied Pamela

' really? Anyway, I don't have time for preaching now. I need help '

' now you are talking. It's solution you need, no be so?

Asked Pamela

'na so'

'because of my baby, I won't be able to go with you. I will introduce you to Shade. She will help you'

'ok'

Shade was a tall woman, fair in complexion with the help of bleaching creams. She was beautiful in a strange way with her tribal marks that was nearly hidden under very thick makeup.

Pamela had told her that Shade was an auxiliary nurse at the teaching hospital but had her 'chemist shop' where she prescribed medicine to her numerous clients.

With the description given to her by Pamela, it was not difficult to find Shade. She was a popular woman in that neighborhood.

'good evening aunty' Bose greeted. Shade was in her mid forties.

'good evening, wetin you wan buy' she asked.

Bose explained her mission and immediately Shade got up and hugged her.

'I don help people for this world oh' she began.

Shade took Bose into her inner room and went out to get a bottle of drink even after Bose protested.

Bose looked around the room and saw an old framed picture of Shade in her white choir regalia. She picked up another framed picture of Shade surrounded by some group of women and a man at the middle beaming, all in their choir regalia. 'this must be the pastor ' she thought

'that's our Apostle ' said Shade coming in at that exact time.

'no woman had gone to him and returned childless unless

something is wrong with her womb' Shade said.

'really?

' yes and even the women that discovered that something was wrong, I have also helped. You are in the right place ' Shade replied.

' I hope so' said Bose. She felt an instant liking to the jovial and ever smiling woman.

As they left for the church and the Apostle 's place, Bose prayed sincerely that this would be her last bus stop... .

Apostle Dele was in his early fifties, Bose could deduced with the little spray of Grey on his bushy hair and full afro. He looked like some one who visited the gym often and Bose could not help but notice his strong arms under the short sleeve shirt he wore as he preached.

Shade had told Bose that they had to attend the evening church service before they could see him.

Bose looked around her at the number of women who sat praying and listening like her. She could count the number of men in her one hand but the number of women were astonishing.

'whatever situation has brought you hear, will receive answer in Jesus name' pastor Dele shouted

'amen' responded the congregation.

'you have reached your last busstop' he thundered  
'amen'

As he continued to preach and pray, Bose sincerely hoped that she had reached her place of solution.

After the service, Shade took her to the waiting room and Bose was amazed to see the long queue of women waiting to see the pastor

'many women have come here like you and have their babies now. So be rest assured' said apostle Dele.

Bose was sitting in front of him. He looked at Bose and closed his eyes.

'you will be given some prophetic assignments to do'  
'what!'

' nothing serious. You don't need to fast '

Bose sighed with relief. She didn't want a repeat of the prophetess. Her ears perked up at the apostle's next statement.

' some prayer warriors will intercede on your behalf. You will need to sow a seed of ten thousand each for the five of

them'

'OK..... Bose said slowly

' we will also feed them after the three days fasting on your behalf '

' you will look round the church and look for something tangible to do for the church '

' hmmm'

'you will sweep the church for three days for the duration of your prophetic assignment and those days, you will be sleeping in the church'

'what!

' is it too much to sacrifice for having your baby? Asked the apostle

'hmmm, not at all' lied Bose.

Bose could not imagine how to go about the prophetic assignment. It was going to be a difficult thing..

Bose left the church that day with Shade troubled. The money for the 'seed' was not the problem, neither was sweeping the church for those days. How would she spend three days in the church without Tunde's knowledge? She desperately needed to obey the prophetic instruction but didn't know what to do.

'so when are you coming for the prophetic deliverance? Asked Shade.

' that's my problem. My husband must not hear of this. I can't tell him' Bose said

'you don't need to tell him' said Shade

'so how will I do it?'

'hmmm, let's see. I will help you' replied Shade.

Bose could not believe her eyes. It was two weeks later and she was with Shade.

'I need to spend three days with Pamela. She is admitted at the hospital' Bose lied

'what happened? Asked Tunde  
' apparently, the baby has fever and she needs my help'  
'but her mother is there' protested Tunde  
'no oh, the woman left for the village two days ago. She  
can't just start coming back. Besides what are friends for'  
replied Bose.

Tunde grudgingly agreed to allow her go and Bose secretly  
thanked Shade for her advise. Even Pamela was amazed at  
the nice plan.

Now, Bose was prepared for the task ahead. She left with  
Shade to the church premises and discovered she was not  
the only woman there. They were about five of them and  
Bose could tell, that they had the same problem.

That morning, shade left Bose in the church and went back  
to her house. Shade met the five prayer warriors who  
prayed for her and the other women.

After about an hours prayer, they were given brooms to  
sweep the church grounds. Each woman sweated it out as  
they claimed and swept the massive land.

After the noon prayers, each woman returned to her  
assigned little room to wait for the evening prayers.

Bose was happy to see the apostle in the evening. He  
prayed for them and encouraged them.

'just believe that God will visit you'

'amen' chorused the women

'the way he visited Sarah, he will visit you' he prayed

'the way he visited Hannah, he will visit you'

'amen'

'I say, the way he visited Elizabeth, he will visit you'

'amen'

'are you ready to receive this divine visitation' apostle Dele  
asked

'yes' shouted all the women.

'then be open. Tonight as you go to sleep, leave your doors  
open for divine visitation. Do you hear me? He said



' yes apostle ' the women replied.

' now, let me have the prophetic 'seed' he said.

Each of the women opened her bag and brought out an five envelopes with ten thousand each and handed them to the apostle.

He asked them to kneel down and he prayed over them.

When he had finished praying, he instructed the prayer warriors to follow him.

'remember what I said. Open your doors for divine visitation'  
pastor Dele said

'this is going to be easier than I thought' Bose mused

'There was really nothing difficult in the prophetic assignment' she thought.

'I wonder why Pamela did not bring me here straight instead of that cruel prophetess' she wondered.

She opened her Bible to read the passages about Sarah, Hannah and Elizabeth that the prayer warriors had given to them.

She looked at her wristwatch and discovered it was 10pm already. It was the designated time for personal prayers.

Bose stood up from the small iron bed

The room was really a small space that held just the six spring iron bed. Bose had kept her little belongings under the bed.

She finished reading the passages and knelt on the cold hard floor to pray as instructed. She already knew what divine project she was going to do.

She had looked around the church and discovered it needed a new rug at the altar. She decided to also make the tiny rooms homely. 'it could need some comfy rugs as well' she thought.

'if she could conceive and have a child, she would do so many things for the church' she decided.

'afterall, she has enough money that she had not used since

she got married and started working' she pondered.  
'like Sarah, visit me. Like you visited Hannah, oh lord visit me. Remember me like Elizabeth and may this miracle happened even as your pastor have declared' Bose prayed. She looked at her wristwatch again and discovered she had just prayed for thirty minutes.

'will I be able to do this' she asked herself. She was supposed to pray till 11 pm.

She yawned and stood up to pray. As she did, her thoughts strayed and she began to see herself pregnant and happy with Tunde. She intensified her prayers and a burst of fresh energy came upon her. The next time she looked at her wrist watch, she was happy to discover that she had made it to 11.

Bose yawned deeply and lay on her bed. Suddenly she got up and unlocked her door. She had nearly forgotten the pastor's instruction.

'ha, I would have missed my divine visitation tonight' she thought.

She calmly went back to the bed and the next thing, she was sound asleep.

'my daughter, your divine visitation has come'

'amen' Bose replied in a whisper

'open up to receive it'

Bose jostled up from bed. She thought she was dreaming that a hand was creeping down her vagina and swept it away. But when it persisted, she woke up and found apostle Dele almost naked before her.

'what is happening here' she shouted

'shhhh, don't make a noise. You need to be in the spirit' he whispered.

'can you sincerely tell me what is happening here' Bose could not hold her anger

'this is the final prophetic assignment for you. A divine seed will be planted inside of you tonight'

'can you please stop that nonsense'

'listen, those other women are undergoing same thing right now with the prayer warriors' he said

'my God! I don't believe this. You want to have sex with me' asked Bose

'if that's how you see it. This is what I have been doing for other women like you. It will open your womb'

Bose couldn't believe it. Was this really what Pamela had done? And when she listened carefully, she could hear the sensual noise coming from the room next to hers.

Bose was confused. She needed to talk to Shade. She stood up from the bed and walked out of the room....

'well, you have to choose what you want' Shade said

'but this is not right. Why didn't you tell me'

'why should I tell you. It's a normal thing. Do you know how many women do this?

' 'unbelievable!

' believe it. I did it '

' what!

' yes. Are you surprised?

'yes'

'my husband people drove me out of my matrimonial home after 10yrs of childlessness. It was pastor Dele that delivered me. After the deliverance, I had two children. It's just that my husband died five years later, I would have had one more'

'you mean, it worked for you?

' yes na '

' hmmm, those children must be pastor's own ' said Bose

' who cares. What you don't know doesn't hurt you. Don't you think it also means that the infertility problem might be from the man? Replied Shade

'I don't think I can do this' said Bose

'come on. If I did it. If Pamela did it. You can, my dear'  
Bose sat pondering over what Shade had revealed. She was torn between opinions.

'I think we need to go to the hospital instead' she concluded.

'suit yourself' what if the problem is from you. By that time it will be too late. Your husband will throw you out. If you need my advice, now that you are here, try and do it. If it doesn't work, you can go medical.

Bose didn't know what to do. She weighed everything that Shade had said and her mind was made up on her next line of action..

It was six months after the deliverance by apostle Dele and yet Bose had not missed her period. She had gone ahead to have sex with him.

She could not forget that episode of her life in a hurry though her mind tried to hide it. She could only imagine what Tunde would have done if he had known the dark secret she carried in her heart. While she was happy that she didn't conceive immediately (because this would have meant she was impregnated by the apostle ), she was now worried.

'I don't know what to think Shade' she had called her after three months.

'hmmm, you still saw your menses? Shade asked

' yes. I will not be happy if all I went through with your apostle was in vain 'lamented Bose

' hold on. Wait for another three months, let's see'

Now it was six months and still no pregnancy. Bose never felt so drained and empty in all her life. She had spent time and money all to no avail. What kept bugging her was her

lies and deceit towards Tunde her husband and most especially her infidelity.

Bose never believed that she would have agreed to have extra marital sex with a so called man of God.

She was already five years old in her marriage and even if her parents inlaws were outside the country, her own mother was more worried than Tunde.

'what are you waiting for Bose. We are fruitful in our family oh'

'I am trying mama'

'trying how. Can't you see your sister? Two sets of twins in three years.'

It was true. Her elder sister was expecting her fifth child any moment.

'are you sure that the problem is not from your husband? Ma Bose asked.

'mama how can you say that? Replied Bose

'you can't tell na. Does he perform well in bed at all?

'ah, mama!

'I am just asking oh. This one that he doesn't even worry about children!

'mama, you should know his background. He even wants us to have just two ' said Bose

'God forbid! Two Kor, two ni! You better close your mouth. You will have as many as God put in your womb'

'OK, since you will help us take care of them'

'who helped your father and I? Anyway come let me pray for you' you people are not even serious with God. To think that you are a pastor's daughter 'ma Bose complained.

After her mother's visit, Bose thought hard about what she had said.' was the problem from Tunde? Or was it from her? What if it was from her? How would Tunde react?

Bose decided to do her own medical check up before she involved Tunde. She didn't want to be taken unawares. She didn't want to have it at the private clinic that Tunde's company used so she had to make another plan.

Bose had cut off her ties with Pamela and Shade after the pastor Dele's episode but she needed shade to help her in her next plan, so she called shade.

With the help of Shade, she made an appointment at the general hospital to see a specialist.

Bose went through rigorous tests and more tests that she had not seen before. She was xrayed and scanned. By the time she was through with the tests, she was very tired.

'you are expected back here in a weeks time for the results' the doctor told her

'thank you doctor'

'you are welcome'

'I sincerely hope that the problem is not from me' she told shade

'let's hope and pray'

'I mean it! So that I can confidently tell Tunde to follow me to the clinic'

'yes na. Most men are the problem and they make the woman suffer for what's their fault' said Shade

'exactly'

Bose could hardly wait for the one week to elapse. She quickly rushed to Shade's place who accompanied her to the hospital.

Bose walked into the doctor's office and sat down as he opened her folder.

'hmmmm Bose, having gone through your report and the results of your tests, we discovered some issues' the doctor said

'what is it doctor?' she asked in fear

'ahmm, how do I put this? It is really impossible for you to conceive'

'what!'

'calm down please'

'I don't understand doctor, what are you saying' Bose asked

'I will like to ask you some questions before I continue'

'ok'

'did you have a d&c?'

'no'

'she had never been pregnant not to mention a d&c'

'then I am amazed. Please think carefully. Any evacuation?'

'doctor, I have not taken in since my marriage five years ago'

'how about before you got married?'

'no... Wait, yes...'

'what do you mean?'

'yes I have been' Bose said inside her heart. She had totally forgotten that period in her life. She had deliberately erased Ola and that Era from her heart. She never wanted to remember that day that her elder sister had taken her to do that procedure.

It was a girl, she had been told. Bose didn't know she was five months gone before the evacuation until after everything.

It was the most painful experience as the doctor tugged and pulled. It was a crude process but did they know better?

'Bose, I am waiting for your answer' said the doctor

'doctor, I had an abortion when I was sixteen. I am thirty two now. That means I had it sixteen years ago' wept Bose

'that explains a lot of things. One of your tubes is blocked and your womb has lesions growing there. Some particles of embryonic substance has eaten into the linen of the womb.'

It is impossible for you to conceive a baby' declared the doctor.

'why me'

'unless.....

Bose cried unashamedly as she listened to the dead sentence hanging over her head.

'my sins has found me out' she thought.

'why didn't I find this out before all those nonsense things I did'

'how will Tunde react to such news?' why had she allowed Ola to ruin her life ' Bose cried helplessly as her thoughts went wild.

She didn't wait to hear more from the doctor as she fled outside. Bose felt Shade' s presence but didn't acknowledge it. She was sitting on the hospital pavement crying with large snouts flowing down her beautiful face.

'it's okay, stop crying. Tell me what it is' Shade finally said 'I am barren. Did you hear? I am a man. You want to know more? I am useless! Useless, useless.... Bose cried

' shhhh, don't say that '

' see one mistake in life has ruined my life ' Bose narrated her story to her

' other people do it, nothing happens to them' ' you have seen now. My own is different. Ohhh why is mine different?'

'we can't answer that. This world is a mystery. Some girls marry as virgins but no children. Some men marry prostitutes and these women have children like rabbits.'

'aunty Shade, do you know that some of my classmates had several abortions and some of them I have met, have children?

' my sister, we can't explain. What works for one person may not work for the other '

' I made a terrible mistake. I should have kept the baby'



'were you ready for it?  
' ahh. I was not and my parents were too strict '  
' sorry to ask, did you go to a proper clinic?  
'we didn't have enough money'  
'ha, what young girls pass through. This is why we teach abstinence'

Bose was pained in the heart. She was the victim here and was in deep thoughts. She had met Ola again three year after her marriage. He was married with a child then and though she didn't speak to him, he had seen her.

'what am I supposed to do now' Bose asked as she stopped crying.

Shade had taken her to her chemist shop and given her a drink.

'nothing for now. Relax first'

'I can't relax. This is a serious matter'

'so what's your plan'

'I don't have any. Tunde must not find out'

'hahan, you won't tell him?

' never!

'so when no child is forthcoming nko?

' I need your help!

'remember the statement you made to me once about helping women without womb?

' hmmm. So you remembered?

'yes, tell me more about it' said Bose.

Shade told Bose everything she needed to do and she went home that day prepared to execute it.

Bose could not wait to tell Tunde the good news. She looked over the moon in joy as she waited for him to come back from the office.

As soon as Tunde walked into the house, he could feel Bose's excitement.

'what's up! You look happy'

'I am so happy. Can't wait to share my happiness' she gushed

'hmmmm. Let's hear it then'

'come and sit down. You need to sit down to hear the good news' replied Bose

'I am so ready to hear whatever is making you feel and act so happy' Tunde said

'OK. Guess?

' you have been promoted?

'nope'

'hmmm, you are sent overseas for a course?

' nope'

'then I don't know what else to think. Just get it over with already' Tunde was frustrated not guessing right

'OK. Here it is' Bose said handing over a sheet of paper.

'what is this? Tunde asked going over the contents of the paper

' I am preg..

'you are pregnant! They said in unison.

Bose watched as Tunde stood up and carried her round and round laughing in joy.

' we are pregnant, we are pregnant, we are pregnant 'he sang.

Tunde could not believe that God had finally answered their prayers after five years.

Bose could see that he was overwhelmed as tears of joy flowed down his eyes.

'I will buy you a new car after the delivery' he promised 'really?

' yes. In fact you should think of having this child overseas' he said

'no oh. You want people to say that I bought the child? She was prepared.

' OK. It is true. Especially after waiting so long.' Tunde said.

' you know nah'  
'the next one will be overseas'

Bose could not believe that she had acted so real. Shade had told her to make sure she did it well else it wouldn't work.

Bose was ready for the next line of action.

' I feel so sick and nauseous '

' sorry dear, it will pass, that's what I read' Tunde was reading 'everywoman' and snacking on some chips. Bose dipped her finger into the wrap and took a bite and immediately ran to the toilet to throw up.

'are you okay? Asked Tunde. He was really concerned about Bose.

' I think we need to go to the company clinic to register you' he said

'no!

Bose almost shouted. That was not part of the grand plan.

' I have registered already at the general hospital. I heard it's better than private clinics ' she said

' OK. If you say so ' Tunde replied.

Bose was surprised that the hormonal drugs she had been given was really making her feel pregnant.

Shade had taken her to a doctor who specialized in such cases like hers. Bose had been surprised to see two other women besides her for similar issues.

It was really a residential place in the midst of other houses. If shade had not taken her there, Bose would not have know that such things happen in such neighborhood.

As Bose and shade worked into the fenced compound, they met three teenage girls seated in a circle picking beans.

Bose did not remember them until later.

The 'doctor' spoke to Bose at length and a form of confidentiality was signed.

'at no point must you reveal anything to anyone about this operation'

Shade had already told her everything before so she was prepared.

'you will pay three hundred thousand. One hundred goes to the girl, one hundred for hospital costs and one hundred for delivery costs' he continued.

'ok'

'the hospital costs include the injections and hormonal drugs you will be given. We need everything to be real since that's what you want' continued the doctor

Bose nodded in agreement. Pamela had actually begged her to consider adopting a baby but Bose had refused.

'imagine the shame I would face from my family and friends! No way.' she had replied

'you will pay additional twenty thousand since it's a boy you want' the doctor said

'no problem' Bose had made up her mind and she was ready to go all out to get her heart desire

'Three hundred and twenty thousand was too small to pay for her happiness' she thought.

Bose went along to witness a 'drop of' as Shade had told her. One of the women was expected to take delivery of her 'baby'

That day, Bose and Shade were at the hospital waiting for the 'drop of'

One of the teenage girls had put to bed that day and the baby was taken to the hospital where the woman was already admitted.

The woman's husband was told that his wife had delivered the baby as she was wheeled out of the labour room with a crying new born baby by her side.

Bose watched and learned that day. The doctor instructed the husband to buy some baby food for the baby because the mother had some infection and couldn't breastfeed....

Bose planned Everything to the latter. She chose to go into labour when Tunde was at work. She was in mock tears and pain when she called him.

'I think I am in labour' she said

'what. I am coming now'

'no, don't worry, take your time. I have called my friend Shade to come and help me' she said.

'still I am on my way. Have you called your mother? He asked

' I will call her now' she said

'OK. Can't wait to see our baby' he said

'me too. Later'

Bose had no intention of calling her mother. She had succeeded in avoiding her mother for more than three months. Their parents had been informed that they were expecting a child but that they wanted it private.

Bose remembered her mother's last visit and sighed. Her mother had scrutinized her so much that it had made her very uncomfortable.

'ha Bose, did you say you are almost six months gone?

' yes ma'

'na wa oh. This your pregnancy hide oh.'

'mama, the doctor said everything is OK. Don't worry'

'if you say so!

Bose could tell that her mother was not satisfied and it was only when she left that Bose could breath freely.

Bose drove to the clinic and was given an injection that made her drowsy.

Bose woke up with her baby boy beside her. She picked up her ringing phone just as Shade walked into the room.

'your husband has been calling you' she whispered.

Bose remembered that she had not remembered to tell Tunde where to meet her.

'hello'

'hello, where are you. I am at the general hospital and no

record of you here' he shouted

'I am so sorry, I forgot to tell you that things changed'

'what do you mean? Where are you now?

' I have delivered our baby'

'what!

Bose gave him directions and Tunde was there in thirty minutes. He rushed into the room and saw Bose lying disheveled on the bed and the baby sleeping by her side.

' it's a boy' she said

'oh my gosh! I love you sweetheart' Tunde gushed.

He picked up the baby and cuddled him. He had forgotten why Bose was not at the general hospital. He was filled with joy that he was finally a father.

Bose told him to call her mother because she had not been able to reach her.

Tunde walked out of the clinic whistling under his breath.

'won't you breastfeed this boy' ma Bose said.

Bose had been discharged after three days at the clinic.

'I have slight infection. After one week, I will start.' she had said

'na wa. Hope this child will behave well. All this baby milk is from cow. I don't want my grandson to behave like a cow oh' ma Bose said

'he will not'

'OK na. It's time for your bath' ma Bose said

'mama, just put the hot water there for me. I will bath myself' Bose said

'no na. It's not like that. I need to press you well. You think to deliver a baby is easy?

' mama, this is modern times. The doctor said that I should not do that and I want to obey '

' no mind them. What do they know?

'mama, it took me five years to have this baby. I will follow their instructions to the end' Bose said with a tone of finality. After seven days, they had an elaborate naming ceremony.

Tunde 's parents came from the UK and bought lots of presents for Bose and the baby.

' are you doing exclusive breastfeeding? Asked Tunde's mother

'my sister, ask her for me' ma Bose said

'no ma'

'why. Baby friendly is what is recommended you know? Ma Tunde continued

' ma, I don't think I will breastfeed at all! Said Bose

'why? Asked ma Bose

' why? Asked ma Tunde

'for personal reasons' Bose said

'like?

' OK. If you must know. I don't want my breasts to sag!

Bose watched as the two women laughed their heads off. She knew she had gotten them

'oluwa, this children will not kill person' ma Bose laughed

'what arrant rubbish. That's selfishness. Robbing this poor child his milk' ma Tunde said.

'this young generation is something else. Wonders shall never end' ma Bose clapped her hands.

Bose was glad when everyone finally left. It was three months later and she was adapting to motherhood nicely. She had succeeded in her plan and she was happy about it...

They named their son Tunji after the first letter of Tunde. He was a cute little boy and Bose felt everything she had passed through to get him was worth it.

Tunde saw the birth of Tunji as a greet blessing as it seemed everything began to work well for them. He found another job at an oil company that took him offshore with more money surpassing his former salary. Tunde was so happy that he bought a new car for Bose after working three months in his new office.

He stayed offshore two weeks and stayed with his family another two weeks. It was a perfect arrangement for the family and they made good use of it.

'I am thinking of us going on summer holidays to my parents' Tunde said.

'wow, that will be great' exclaimed Bose.

'I want us to travel, so you could have our next baby there' Tunde added

Bose knew that Tunde was serious about her having the next child overseas and she had been thinking how she could handle it.

Tunji was already two years and her mother had been on her kneck ever since he started creche.

'what are you waiting for' asked ma Bose

'mama, what do you mean' replied Bose. She already knew what her mother meant.

'you were not supposed to waste anything. You should have hit it while it's hot' she continued

'how mama?

' you know how long it took you to have this boy, you should not have waited. You should have gotten pregnant immediately 'ma Bose said

' mama, no hurry in life. I will take in when I am ready '

' na wa for this girl. Please do quickly oh. You are not getting younger. To push may become hard for you oh' ma Bose continued

'who told you that I have to push? These days women just go and they cut them open and bring out the child' laughed Bose

'olurun maje! This world Don spoil' see laziness of the highest order' she clapped her hands

'mana it's not laziness. It's choice'

'in our time, if you don't deliver your children the normal process through your vagina, other women will laugh at you' ma Bose said

'well mama, times have changed. Now women can choose



how they want to have their children. Some might be for health reasons' Bose said

'OK oh. I have heard you. But in your case, follow my leg oh. I had five of you the normal way. That's why I am still so strong. Are you not seeing it' she said

Bose laughed with her mother and thought about what she had said.

Bose knew it was a little while before people began to expect another child from her and she was ready. All she needed was how not to have the child overseas else it would be a big problem.

Bose called Shade and told her of their upcoming trip to the UK and Tunde's plan for her to have the next child in the UK.

'hmmm, that will be a problem' reflected Shade

'tell me about it' Bose was worried.

'we will cross that bridge when we get there' Shade said.

Bose took her annual leave and everything was set for their trip. Tunji and her were traveling for the first time outside Nigeria.

Tunde's parents hosted them and she also met his two other siblings who looked so much like him.

'I really look at this small guy and wonder who he looks like'

Tunde's father observed. He was talking about Tunji

'hmmmm, maybe he takes after Bose's part of the family' declared Funke.

Funke was the only girl among two boys, she was Tunde's sister and was carrying Tunji on her laps.

Bose was uneasy but just laughed it off.

'he is just looking like himself. He mustn't look like any of us'

Tunde replied

They stayed for two weeks and left for Nigeria after Tunde had told his parents that they planned having the next child in the UK.

'that will be so lovely' ma Tunde said.

'so get ready for us again soon' he laughed

'you are always welcome son' pa Tunde said.



'I think I am pregnant' Bose told Tunde.  
'wow! Great news! I love you darling' shouted Tunde.  
Bose felt bad lying to Tunde after seeing him so excited.  
'I wish it is going to be a girl. I want my family complete'  
Tunde said  
'what do you mean?  
' what I mean is that, I wish this baby would be a girl so to  
you don't get left out. We are only having two children ' he  
said.  
' are you really serious? Asked Bose  
'yes. Two children is enough'  
'really?  
' I am serious. So even if this one turn out to be a boy, we  
are okay with it. Are you on my side?  
'completely' laughed Bose  
'there's no need having so much children that you can't  
cater for' Tunde continued  
'I feel you. Most women just have children like rabbits'  
'exactly! And I feel like flogging the men that keep  
impregnating them' Tunde said  
'and the painful thing is that these same women would be  
the ones to hussle for their welfare' Bose said  
'why can't the women say no, do something, maybe family  
planning...  
' dear, don't go there. It's like a taboo to many women..  
Family planning? They don't want to hear that...  
'then, let them abstain...  
' I am laughing at you. How many men will agree. If these  
women refuse, they look for other willing ones' Bose said

'education proper education is needed. Women should not make themselves a breeding machine. They should be taught several methods that will be good for them.' Tunde said

'well, I am happy to have a husband like you' Bose kissed him on his forehead.

Bose wanted a girl and that's what she told Shade to arrange for her.

'now that you have told him you are pregnant, he will start counting' shade said

'I know'

'are we still on our plan'

'of course'

'so you still want lyabo' s child? asked Shade

'yes, that's the one I want' Bose replied

'hmmmm. I would have preferred it if you had gone for the other girl-- Philo' Shade said thoughtfully

'why?

' lyabo is always acting sickly. Since she came to the compound, she has been getting sick' Shade said

'she is a beautiful girl. Her baby will be beautiful. I want a beautiful girl child' Bose said

'I know. But you need to look before you leap. All that glitters is not gold' warned Shade

'I know. I just love the girl'

Bose had met the two teenage girls. They were new and she wondered where the doctor got these girls from.

Though she had not met the teenage girl who gave birth to Tunji, she had wanted to see the mother of the baby girl she would claim.

lyabo looked fourteen but Bose was told that she was sixteen years. When she had probed Shade how these girls come to the clinic, Shade had told her so many stories.

'some of them are housemaids. Some of them ran away from homes, some from single parents home and some of

them are from poor homes that deliberately chose to do it for money' she had said

'but couldn't they just give up the children for adoption?

Asked Bose

' they won't get paid for keeping the children there and these girls need money ' Shade said

' but I still think government should be involved ' Bose said

' so, you think to adopt is easy. You wouldn't have gotten a child if you wanted to'

'hmmmm

' and especially for people like you that don't want people to know '

' even if. It is illegal oh' Bose said

'see this one oh. Are you not the ones promoting it? If you had gone the legal route, all this magomago would not be necessary'

'I really feel bad'

'no demand, no supply, no be so? Asked Shade

Bose was distraught with shame and worry but she had no choice. Things were working so well that she didn't want to change it. She paid the three hundred thousands and hoped that Iyabo would be given something tangible for all the trouble of nine months.

Tunde got Bose and Tunji a two years UK visa. He had planned everything for them. When Bose had told him that she was pregnant, he had counted the months and knew when she was expected to have the baby.

'that means you will have the baby in July' Tunde said

'yes'

'that's perfect. It's summer time then'

'I think so'

'you will have to go in April. That means you have three months to be in UK before the baby arrives'

'yes sweetheart'

Bose laughed within herself at Tunde. She knew what she

needed to do and she was bent on doing it.

Tunde came home for his usual two weeks off and Bose went for her antenatal. She called shortly after to tell Tunde the latest news

'I have been admitted'

'why? What happened?

' doctor said I needed bed rest and I need to be here till tomorrow '

' I am on my way to see you right away '

' No! Don't bother, you can come tomorrow ' Bose said

After much talking, Tunde agreed to see her the next day.

' did he buy it? Asked the doctor

' yes. It's left to you to convince him when he comes tomorrow'

'leave that to me'

'she needs total bed rest for the next three months' the doctor told Tunde

'why?

' there has been a complication with the pregnancy. If she does have a bed rest she may lose the baby'

'God forbid!

' doctor, she is supposed to be traveling to the UK to have this baby ' Tunde felt like crying.

' sorry. count it out. She is not permitted to travel at all ' the doctor shook her head

' doctor, I really need to travel. My husband has gotten us the visa. Can't we risk it? asked Bose

'I am so sorry, you can't take that risk. The placenta is almost cut off. You need total bed rest' said the doctor

'well, we need to listen to the doctor. You had Tunji here, otherwise I would have asked for a second opinion' Tunde said.

Bose was discharged three days later and sent home to rest. She got one of her small cousins to stay with her as Tunde left for work.

One July morning, Bose called Tunde at work that she was in labour but he couldn't come because he was not yet billed to return.

'don't worry sweetheart, you will meet your darling daughter when you return' Bose said

'I can't wait to see my own daughter' gushed Tunde

Bose didn't have to pretend and lie on a bed. She planned to call her mother when she was already at home and that is what she did.

'the baby is so beautiful' ma Bose said

'I know mama. We are so lucky' Bose replied

'thank God for safe delivery but I hope you will breastfeed this one' ma Bose said

'no mama. Can't you see that not breastfeeding Tunji helped my breasts?

' na wa oh. You want to give this fine pickin cow milk?

'it's not cow milk, it's baby formula'

'it is cow milk. This child is too beautiful for that' ma Bose said

Bose had fallen in love with the little baby girl when she saw her. She was perfect and so cute.

'I still think you should have taken Philo' s baby. I don't know why I don't feel comfortable with this one' Shade told her

'no worry. I like this one'

'hmmm let her not be sickly like her mother oh'

'she won't be. Is she not cute?

' she is. I just pray it works out for you ' Shade said

' it will. Thank you so much for your help. I am done with this child bearing thing' Bose said

'I hear you. Tomorrow you will come for another' laughed Shade

'never. Two is enough. I am trying to live with the guilt' Bose said

'unless you talk, I would not say anything. We have been doing this for a while now. Patients confidentiality, you

know!'

'I trust you completely'

Tunde was so happy to see his daughter and declared a one day party for his colleagues to celebrate.

On the seventh day, baby TirenioLuwa was named. Tunde's parents could not come so Bose and Tunde flew to the UK after six months and that was where Tirenio had her first crisis.

'her eyes are too yellow' said ma Tunde

'and she has not stopped crying since yesterday night' said Tunde very worried

'she is running fever' ma Bose said touching Tirenio's forehead.

Bose noticed some swellings on Tirenio's wrists and when she tried to touch them, she screamed in pain.

As though Bose had awoken something deep, Tirenio kept screaming at every slightest touch.

'I think she is in pain, we need to take her to the hospital' said Tunde.

'I think it's the cold' said ma Tunde on their way

'ha, this is serious' said Pa Tunde.

Bose was afraid that something terrible would happen to Tirenio and she would have gone through all that stress for nothing.

'what have I gotten myself into? Bose wondered as she followed Tunde and his parents to the car.

Tirenio's eyes held hers as she carried her gingerly. Every movement caused her pain as she cried.

Tirenio was taken to the emergency ward of the hospital.

Bose was afraid of what would happen to her if things got exposed.

As if the doctors already knew what to do, her condition was



brought under control quickly.

Some tests were conducted and she was discharged after a few days.

'she just had a crisis' the doctor said

'what crisis? What happened?' asked Tunde.

'let's just be thankful that she is okay. When we return to Nigeria, I will do a proper check ' Bose replied quickly.

' yes, I think the change of weather too affected her' said Tunde.

Bose breathed a sigh of relief because she had been nervous that her secret was about to be blown open. She persuaded Tunde and their trip was cut short.

'I am happy we came back home. I think the cold was too much for her' Bose said

'yeah. I think so too' Tunde said

Tireni had recovered and looked as though nothing had happened to her.

Shortly after, Tunde left for work and everything seemed to have returned to normal until the day that her nanny called her from work.

This was three months after their return from the UK and Tireni had another crisis. Bose was thankful that Tunde wasn't at home, he had gone back to work so she decided to rush Tireni to the clinic where she had gotten her.

'I don't understand why this child is always sick' Bose complained.

'what do you mean?' asked the doctor

' I have not rested since I took this child, one sickness to the other, what is wrong?' cried Bose. She was worn out already with the whole stress.

'we will do a comprehensive test for her' the doctor said after examining Tireni.

Bose left that day after Tireni had been treated without the tests results only for her to return with Tireni a week later for another treatment.

'doctor, I am very worried now. I can't take it anymore' wailed Bose.

Bose had returned from work to find Tireni feverish and coughing seriously and screaming at every touch. Her ankles and wrists were swollen.

'I think you have to know what is wrong with the baby' the doctor told her

'what do you mean'? What is wrong? Bose asked in fear.

'you know that her biological mother was always sick? The doctor said

' yes, so?

'Iyabo was a sickle cell patient. She had the' SS' genotype '

' what!

'yes....

' I thought she was just getting sick..... ' Bose trailed of.

'the baby is also a sickler, she is' SS' too

'my gosh!

Bose cried in shock throughout that day. She held Tireni and wept.' 'Shade had warned her but she had refused. How would she cope with a sick child' 'what will Tunde think if he discovered that Tireni was a sickler?

She had listened half heartedly as the doctor put her through the lectures of how to care for a child with the sickle cell disease.

Bose came back to the house and prayed that she would be able to carry her burden. She called Shade and told her everything.

' I knew it. I tried to warn you but you did not want to listen ' Shade said

'what will I do now?

' nothing! That girl Iyabo had disappeared. You have to live with it' Shade said.....

When Bose discovered that Tirení was a sickle cell child, she had managed to hide it from Tunde until the last crisis that he had witnessed. He had insisted on taking Tirení to the company's hospital and that was what had opened the can of worms!

'so that is the whole story' Bose said.

Doctor Gbenga had finally let the cat out of the bag when he had declared the real reason for Tirení's frequent visits to the hospital.

'hmmmm,..... hmmmm, .... Tirení and Tunji are not our children' Bose finally confessed.

It felt like a million years before Tunde spoke any word. He was numb with shock and disbelief.

'I don't believe it! I don't believe you' yelled Tunde.

Bose had been narrating her story for a while. She knew the story sounded unbelievable but it was the truth and for the first time in so many years, it seemed like a huge load had been taken off her head. She knew it was a temporary feeling as the next minutes could bring bigger and heavier problems.

She looked at Tunde and saw something creep into his eyes. He was sad and bitter when he spoke.

'so for the past eight years, you have lied to me? He asked slowly

' please understand....

'so I have been living with a total stranger. A fraudster, a liar? Tunde shook his head.

Bose cringed at the tone of his voice. She lifted her head to glance briefly at him, he was weeping silently.

' please understand me. I did it because I was desperate.....Forgive me! 'Bose cried kneeling down  
' desperate? Why didn't you tell me from the start.... Bose why..... ?

'I am very sorry.....

' did you consider that we could have worked something out? cried Tunde

'please...

' did you consider IVF? Tunde asked

'I.. I...

Bose was confused and ashamed of herself. It had not crossed her mind at all. And she just remembered that the doctor had been telling her something that day some years ago but she had ran out without listening...

' I can't live with children that are not mine. It's not like we adopted them knowingly! You are a deceitful woman. You can't be the woman I call my wife ' Tunde spat out

' please forgive me. I did it because I love you' she cried

'if you loved me, you should have told me' said Tunde

'please forgive me.....

' I can't just believe that you lied to me? To think that Tunji and Tirení are not mine.....

'I am very sorry, forgive me....' sobbed Bose

As if on cue, Tirení's mournful cries came in from the other side of the door. Her nanny was helping to hold her in the children ward.

'do you know what you have done? Tirení is a sickle cell patient. For crying out loud..... Tunde cried

' please, please..... ' cried Bose

' no, I can't live with you anymore. I can't be caught in your deceitful web anymore. You will have to live with your lies and mistakes alone. I am done. Jeez!'

Tunde did not look back. He walked past Tirení and her nanny cleaning away the tears from his eyes. With his

mouth set in a determined stance, he slowly inserted the car key on the door lock. He opened the car, entered and after a while, started the ignition and drove off...

The end