IN TIME

How did we get here?. Everyone trying to meet up. Just last week my sister insisted on saving her money in flex dollars instead of naira. I laughed over it. I didn’t know how it worked. But then it made sense. The INFLATION. Things in the country were getting wrong. Devaluation of the naira currency, everyone trying to do what would benefit them in the future. The future?, Have I thought about mine?. Time!. So much has changed. I don’t know how it happened either. I used to be so comfortable asking my mum for money. “Can I still do it?”, yes. “Would she give it to me”, with a little suspicious look, but yes. “Do I feel comfortable?”, A big no.

My mates.. They are doing everything and I am doing nothing. I want to be like them. I could be business oriented. I could sell thrift wears and attach a wonderful unrealistic price to it. I want people to know about me, organize zoom classes and talk like I know it all. I want to be referred to people and put up “HEY NEW CONTACTS, THANK YOU FOR JOINING US. I SELL….” On my stats. Am I a potato?, my mates are doing it.

Am I nterested in all these things?

*Holds breath for a while, gives a little thought, proceeds to answer..*

NO

“Why?”, *This voice is asking. It’s obviously mine, reduced to a whisper*. Why am I not like other people. Where did the zeal go?.

Is it me or I feel like the generation is the mess. Or am I just using this as an excuse for my pathetic self. “Learn a skill, School na scam oo”, They would also say. Believe me, there’s a bit of laughter in this narration. A sad one.

I believed in school. My father believed in school. I thought we were all supposed to finish school and wait to earn a living. I knew grown-ups then had issues of unemployment but I always thought I would be different. Maybe because I thought they were not smart enough to get one. Did I believe I was smart?, YES. Do I still think the same way?...

We all laugh when people talk about the government and their nonchalance towards education these days *.* This shouldn’t be funny. I’ve been in school for five years, the length of time I was to complete my degree and I’m not even half way through. This same school that I held so high. I sound like a joke. The anxiety, fear and uncertainty of my future. I used to be happy. Now I’m stuck in a loop..

The media?. Scrolling, liking, commenting, and sharing make it seem like we're all having a good time on apps, but WHERE IS EVERYONE?. Why am I sitting alone in my comfort zone scrolling on this small device in my hands. I started to think about life for a second and became quite anxious, so I thought I’d do anything to divert my attention, right?. And now everytime I begin to feel this way, I simply take out my small device and WAIT until the feeling passes. But look at me: worry, sadness, memory issues, addiction, insecurities, phony lives, selfishness, and loneliness. I am well aware that the more I consume, the worse I will feel. So why don't I just STOP the LOOP?. Talk to people like our forefathers did. The toxic lifestyle of waiting for who texts first, because of pride?. How do I make connections, find new people other than my regular cycle of friends . How do I grow?...

Fear of living... I think it was in 2017/2018 in Nigeria where the rate of Yahoo and using body parts to make money ignited. I hadn’t entered the University yet. I was still a child that needed pampering in my mind. My mother on the other hand didn’t believe that. She felt I was a terrorist, *you know what I mean,* that I was wild and all. I remember one day after morning prayers she told me “oburu na ha hu gi na họtelu ka akụkụ ahu di efu, ha akpom ka m bia buru ahu gi. Agam agwa ha ka hapu gi ebe ahu o. onweghi onye kwesiri imesi m obi”. Translating to “If they find you in hotel with missing body parts and they call me to come and carry your body. I will tell them to leave you there o. Nobody should stress me”.

I got scared when I entered school. I really don’t know what I was scared of . I didn’t want to be involved in anything that wasn’t a school activity. Matter of fact I became an introvert all of a sudden. The first time I decided to go for a faculty night, I was robbed. I decided to believe “ others can do it but I can’t”. I just wasn’t lucky. “ what if I hang out and get high and do something stupid”. My friends are doing it I know, I can’t. I’m not lucky. “What if I decided to visit a friend in another state and something happens on the road, where will they tell my mother that I was going?”. The dead can’t defend themselves. I got scared, I lost track of time.

Reality struck me tho. I realized that I have never done anything fun before. I haven’t lived a life of ecstasy. Time has run out. When will I get the opportunity to be free again, what have I turned myself into?. A sack filled with regrets. No beautiful memory. Just a loop of school, church and home. Wow!.

Successful people will come up with quotes like “Don’t look at other people, run your own Race.”, yes they are lying. I don’t think time waits for anyone. We are supposed to take advantage of the little opportunities we get. It is limited. The question now is “ Will I do something to reassure myself that I still have control?”

NO!