

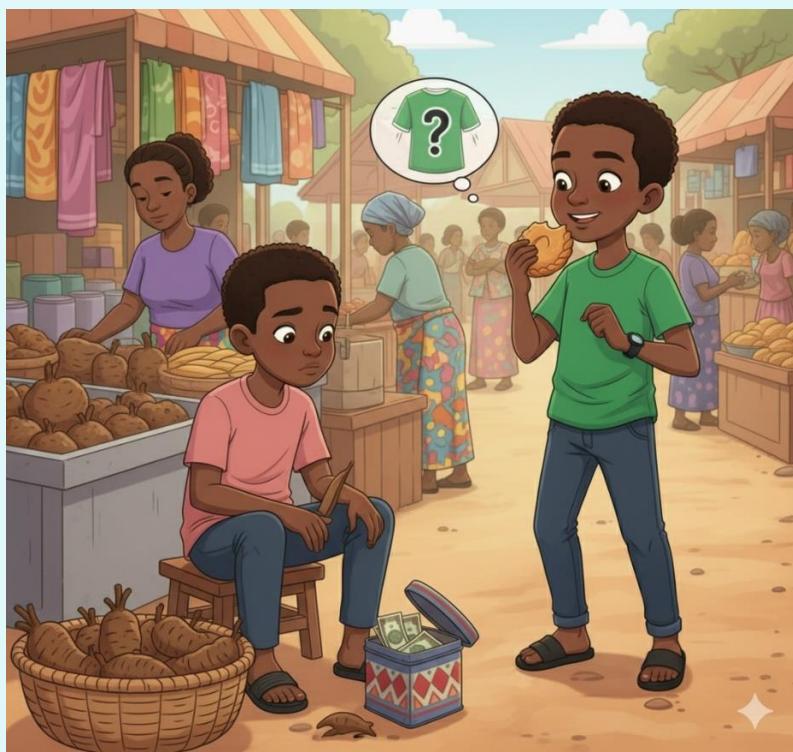
## Chapter 1 - The Dream in Green and White

Jide had a dream. It wasn't a dream he had at night, but one he carried with him all day. The dream was the shape of a football jersey—the bright green of the Nigerian Super Eagles, with the number '9' and the name 'OSIMHEN' printed proudly on the back. To Jide, it wasn't just a shirt; it was a uniform for a hero. He imagined wearing it, feeling the power of his favourite striker as he scored the winning goal in the sandy pitch behind his compound. The jersey cost ₦8,000. It might as well have been a million. Jide's only income was the money his mother gave him for helping her at her food stall in the busy Obalende market after school. He had saved ₦4,500, each naira note carefully folded and tucked away in an old biscuit tin. It was slow work.



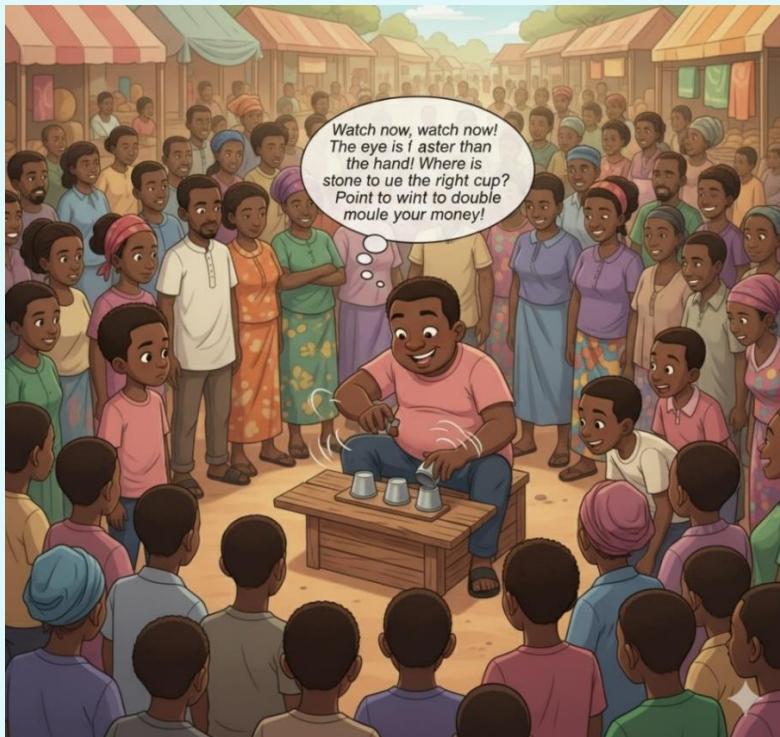
## Chapter 2 – The Whisper of a Shortcut

One hot afternoon, a boy named Tunde swaggered past Mama Jide's stall. Tunde was older, and he always had things—new sandals, a fancy-looking watch, and today, a meat pie he hadn't bought from any of the market women. "Jide! Still sweating for your mama?" Tunde laughed, taking a big bite of the pie. "A sharp boy like you? There are faster ways to make money, you know. Much faster." Jide ignored him, but Tunde's words were like a small seed planted in his mind. He looked at his hands, stained from peeling yams. He looked at his biscuit tin that night. It felt like it would take forever to fill.



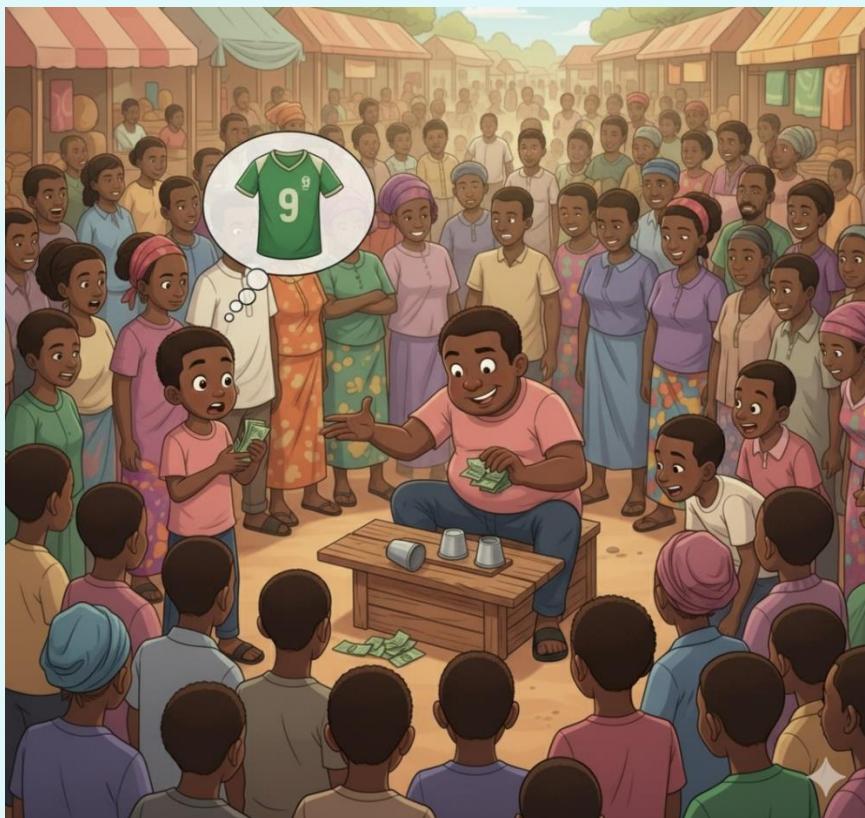
## Chapter 3 – The Game of Three Cups

The next day, Jide saw where Tunde's "fast money" came from. In a noisy corner of the market, a crowd had gathered. In the centre was Tunde, with three small tin cups and a little stone. "Watch now, watch now!" Tunde's voice was slick and exciting. "The eye is faster than the hand! Where is the stone? Point to the right cup, and you double your money!" His hands moved like a blur, shuffling the cups. A man pointed, Tunde lifted the cup, and there was the stone. The man cheered as Tunde handed him a crisp naira note. It looked so simple. It looked like magic.



## Chapter 4 – The First Taste

Jide clutched the ₦200 his mother had given him for a snack. He only meant to watch, but Tunde saw him. "Ah, my friend Jide! Come and try your luck. Just small money." Jide's heart thumped. He hesitated, then pointed to the middle cup. Tunde smiled and lifted it. The stone was there! Tunde dramatically counted out ₦400 and placed it in Jide's hand. It was the easiest money Jide had ever held. It felt warm and powerful. The whisper of the shortcut was now a loud, tempting voice.



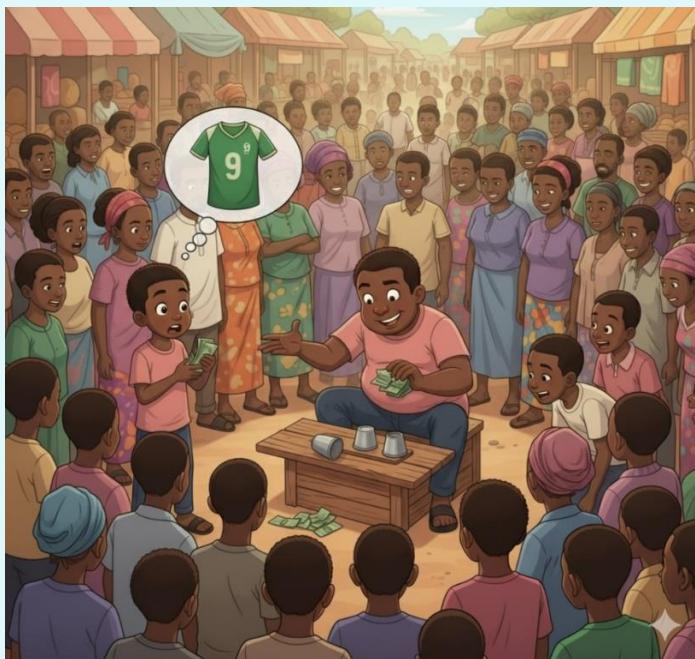
## Chapter 5 – The Biscuit Tin Decision

Jide couldn't sleep that night. He didn't buy a snack; he saved the ₦400. He kept thinking about the game. If he could turn ₦200 into ₦400, what could he do with his entire savings? He could turn his ₦4,500 into ₦9,000! He could buy the jersey today and still have money left over! The thought was too exciting to ignore. The next morning, before his mother was awake, he took all the money from the biscuit tin. The honest, hard-earned notes felt different now. He was risking them all for a bit of magic.



## Chapter 6 – The Fastest Hands

He found Tunde at the same spot. "My big man is back!" Tunde announced to the crowd. "He wants to play for high stakes!" Jide felt a knot in his stomach, but the image of the green jersey filled his mind. He handed over all his money. "Everything on this one game," Jide said, his voice trembling slightly. Tunde's smile tightened. His hands moved, a dizzying dance of metal and motion. They stopped. The crowd was silent. Jide's eyes were glued to the cups. He was sure he saw the stone go under the cup on the left. He pointed. "There." Tunde lifted the cup. It was empty. He lifted the middle one. Empty. He lifted the right one. The stone sat there, mocking him. The crowd groaned. Tunde scooped up Jide's life savings without a word and shouted, "Who's next?"



## Chapter 7 – The Long Walk Home

Jide felt like the world had disappeared from under his feet. The noise of the market faded to a dull hum. His money, all of it, was gone in ten seconds. The dream of the jersey was now a pile of dust. He couldn't face his mother at the stall. He couldn't face anyone. He took the longest, slowest walk home, his empty pockets feeling heavier than they ever did when they were full of coins. The shame was a bitter taste in his mouth.



## Chapter 8 – A Father's Wisdom

That evening, Jide's father found him sitting silently behind the house. He didn't shout. He just sat beside Jide and asked, "Is the load you are carrying too heavy?" Jide burst into tears and confessed everything. When he was done, his father put a hand on his shoulder. "Ah, Jide. You tried to take a shortcut through the forest, but you forgot that shortcuts are often where snakes hide. Money that comes with speed, leaves with speed. But the money that comes from your own sweat, from honest work... that money builds a house."



## Chapter 9 – Starting from Zero

The next day was the hardest. Jide went to his mother, apologized, and asked to work again. He started from zero. There was no biscuit tin. But this time, something was different. As he worked, he watched the market not for shortcuts, but for opportunities. He noticed how hot and tired the shoppers were. He had an idea. He borrowed ₦500 from his mother. He bought a bag of ice blocks and sachets of clean water. He became "Jide the Water Boy," selling cold, refreshing water to thirsty customers.



## Chapter 10 – The Real Prize

It was still slow work. Some days were better than others. But Jide didn't give up. He was honest, and he always had a smile for his customers. Weeks passed, and his new savings grew. One glorious afternoon, he counted his money. It was ₦8,000. He walked to the sports shop, his head held high. As he handed over the money, he felt a pride a thousand times better than the cheap thrill of Tunde's game. He put on the jersey. It wasn't magic; it was something better. It was the feeling of a promise he had kept to himself. He had earned his dream, the honest way. And that felt like a victory no one could ever take away.



## Chapter 11 - Lessons from Jide's Journey

Our friend Jide finally got his Super Eagles jersey, and we all cheered for him! But as you now know, the jersey was not his real prize. The real prize was the wisdom he gained.

Jide's story is finished, but your own story is just beginning. As you go on your own journey, here are a few golden lessons from Jide that you can pack and take with you.

### 1. The Trap of "Fast Money"

Remember Tunde's game of three cups? It looked so easy and exciting, promising to double Jide's money in seconds. But it was not magic; it was a trick designed to take from him. This is the trap of gambling, fraud, and "get rich quick" schemes. Always remember Jide's father's wise words: "**A shortcut through the forest is often where snakes hide.**" The easy road is rarely the best one.

### 2. The Power of Honest Work

Think about the two types of money in the story. The money Jide won from the game felt exciting for a moment, but it led to greed and then sadness. The money he earned from selling water came slowly, but it brought him pride, respect, and a happiness that filled his heart. Honest work builds more than just savings; **it builds character**. The feeling of achieving a goal with your own effort is a reward that no one can ever take from you.

### **3. Mistakes Are Your Teachers**

Jide made a big mistake. He felt ashamed and foolish, but he did not let that be the end. He was brave enough to admit his mistake, listen to his father, and start again from zero. Your mistakes are not failures; they are lessons. Don't be afraid to make them, but always be ready to learn from them. **Your story is defined by how you rise after you fall.**

### **4. The Secret is to Help Others**

Jide's best business idea came when he stopped thinking only about his own dream and started looking at the needs of the people around him. He saw thirsty shoppers and found a way to help them. When you look for ways to solve problems for others, you create real value. This is the secret of all successful people. **If you want to succeed, find a way to serve your community.**

#### **🌟 Final Message for Children:**

So, as you go out to achieve your own dreams—whether it's a new book, a bicycle, or helping your family—remember Jide. Be smart, be patient, and be honest.

Build your future one right choice at a time. That is the millionaire mindset.