

HOWLS ON THE HILLS

Dusk it was when Dave and Sade who were lovers laid down on the green grass at the foot of the Kukuruku hills. They were on tour at the time with four(4) other friends. They all had explored the caves, the streams, the springs, done a little game hunting and the next day, they planned hiking and wrapping it up with a picnic on a hill top.

The resort was quiet and brightly lit up, the sky was beautiful outside, so the both of them (Dave and Sade) went to star-gaze. It was a romantic moment, he looked deep into her eyes, more like staring into her very soul, she blushed, he tickled her, she giggled revealing her gap tooth. "Look at your Abuja highway dentition" he teased, "You'll soon start paying to see it with your torchlight eyes" she teased back. They lay there, his head on her breasts, her heart beat synching with sound of nature at the time.

To Dave, it was a moment he could live again and again in an infinite loop.

He held her left hand and showed her a ring, "marry me" he said. Sade was quiet for a while and rejected his proposal. She said she didn't love him enough and their tribal difference won't allow her take him home.

He was distraught. He accused her of misleading him, that they've been dating for years and she could utter such words only now. She apologized and went to their room.

He was sad, looking (lost) at the stars when Nosa approached him. Nosa beckoned Dave to follow him. Dave made it clear that he was not in the mood for any chit-chats but Nosa assured him that it was worth it, it was important and he had to come with him. Dave followed Nosa and met up with the other two guys (for the 4th friend was a lady).

He asked them what the matter was and they told him that they were taking a walk that evening outside the resort and they found an unguarded shrine of some sort. They confessed that they actually went outside the tourist boundaries, but they reckoned it was worth it.

"There were cool carvings, precious stones, astrological markings on slates" Said Mike. "I wonder why they have not given those artefacts to any museum, it would rake in millions! Imagine if we can smuggle them out and sell to the British Museum" Said Bobby.

"It is just as if we've found a pirate's treasure" said Mike.

Dave thought for a while and asked to be taken there. The boys had left markings on trees to help them remember the location, for some reason, they had noticed earlier that their compass was not accurate outside the tourist boundaries. The moon was out but not full yet but it gave light enough and they all had their mobile phones for lighting their path as well. It was a beautiful evening. So they crossed a bamboo bridge, climbed some other hills, passed a tunnel-like cave as it had an opening at the other end, they continued moving. Dave complained that they are way past the tourists bounds and they were warned seriously by their tour guide during the day never to exceed it.

" Don't be a chicken " said Mike.

"Dave the chicken" teased Nosa.

They got to a river and boarded one of the canoes they found by the bank and crossed. When they got to the other side, they continued to follow the markings they made on rocks, trees and with stones.

"Finally, there it is!" Said Bobby on pointing at a cave with a faint glow of light at its entrance.

Nosa asked Mike and Bobby to keep watch outside while he shows Dave what they had found, so they can stack up some treasures (for he was with a back pack).

Going in, the first thing that piqued Dave's interest was a glowing stone, placed on a rocky stand, it was what lit up the cave. Nosa was picking bronze carvings, ancient slates with strange markings and other things, but Dave was seriously intrigued by the stone.

"Could it be radioactive?" Dave asked.

"Surely" Nosa responded. Dave tried to remove it from the stand but it seemed glued so he took a rock and hit the stand.



The stone fell, he picked it up, but a sudden vibration from the stone made him drop it, Nosa picked it up, but noticed Dave was screaming, shaking and tearing his clothes.

Nosa tried to calm him down, but Dave threw him outside the cave. It was at the moment, Nosa knew something strange was really going on, he was picked up by Mike and Bobby who were on guard outside, he picked up the stone, put it in his bag, the other two guys picked up the other artefacts that had fallen, put them in the same bag and asked him what happened.

Nosa was speechless, then, they heard a sound, out of the cave... Out of it came a werewolf, huge, with darting fiery eyes staring into their very souls, they were frozen for a while and the beast just walked towards them rubbing its head with a pained expression. To them its expression was utterly horrifying and they were snapped out of their shock-state, then, they took to their heels.

The beast didn't follow at first, it looked all around for a while and then followed them. It overtook them as it was very fast.





Stopping in front of them, they screamed and changed direction, it followed them again, they kept running, but it was always faster. They managed to make it to the river and when it got there, it stopped, for it saw its own reflexion.



It ran back immediately. The other guys hurriedly took the canoe and rowed back

to the other side of the river. They ran as fast as they could back to the resort. Nosa went to the sleeping Sade, woke her up and asked her to pack up for they are leaving immediately. She asked about Dave and Nosa said he is dead.. She asked if this was a kind of joke and he said he would explain better on their way home. Bobby also made his girlfriend Ada to pack up too, they all checked out of the resort and raced out in their jeep.

Back in the hills, Dave was conscious within himself. He was in sorrows. He wondered if it was really himself he saw in that water. He now understood why his friends were running away from him. He thought about his life, he thought about his family and his girlfriend and then he remembered her rejection, he fell into despair. He was saddened that they would never know how he ended.

He mourned and cried but it came out as growls and howling. The howling resonated in the hills. The fleeing friends could hear it as they sped out of the terrain, it sent shivers down their spines. The ladies were confused.



Billy was driving, Bobby was comforting his girlfriend. Nosa was explaining that they went for a walk and a certain monster pounced on Dave and ate him up. The girls were shaken to their bones.

Nosa assured them that he had communicated with the authorities, but they just had to vacate the resort for their own safety.

Would he transform back? Or would he be condemned to this form for the rest of his life? Dave thought to himself. He grieved for 2 days and on the second night, he had a strong sense of hunger, it was as though a power had taken over him, he could not control himself, he didn't know what was going on, but he knew he was giving a chase. At dawn, he realised that he had eaten a deer and torn another one apart. It was the full moon the night before, he realized it and was grateful it wasn't a human he chased after.



He went deep into the heart of the hilly terrain having no drive to try to communicate with any human again, since he had been rejected by the one he thought he lived for, he might as well die in this state, he thought to himself.

And it was not a happy ending, but that was his end.

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