

# GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## PROLOGUE

I never knew death could come in many ways until my life ended and the last chapter was splattered in different newspapers, the broken heads of Efe and Maro my kid brothers, my step Mum's battered naked body though blurred but visible, then my father's butchered hands and chest, the only person missing was me. I was supposed to be there but Grandma had delayed my travel. Then the final sentence of the last chapter of my former life ended with Grandma's death. I did not die physically but I died mentally.

After the perpetrators were brought to book, I tried to start another life but I soon discovered not all were brought to book.

It started with a tingling at the back of my neck, then I saw them, same people I had been seeing around me for a week, I

quickly contacted the Divisional Police Officer who had helped bring their murderers to justice. He promised to handle it.

Two days later, they were surrounded by armed police men. The DPO said they were looking for something. They thought my father left an evidence that could nail someone but I had no idea. Later, undercover policemen were put on my trail. I still did not like being watched. I found a way to evade them, about three of them but everything changed from fear to dread just few days later.

I was going home after staying in campus to read for a test. University of Benin, Nigeria to be precise. I knew something was wrong when I saw people gathering around the dead body of one of the policemen. The others were nowhere to be found. Fear gripped me and I started running.

As I ran home, I felt his presence, I could not see him but I knew he was there, another one, he radiated danger. The hairs on my skin stood up and I could taste dread. I was good at noticing something unusual but I could not tell where he was, then suddenly, the feeling stopped. I had evaded him, but I was very wrong because the moment I entered my room, I knew someone had been inside. The door was not broken, there was no sign of a break in but my bed was no longer where I placed it, it had been shifted to the right. I tried to calm my fears, to think of a way out. I contacted the DPO and he told me he was on it, he told me to stay clear of the night and that was what I did, until few days later.

I had seen one of the policemen, he was with six others; they had increased their numbers. It told me more than enough. And for the first time, I did not evade them as they trailed me

from a distance. Immediately I got to the less busy Edo Street, I started running but same time, the dread came again. He was following me, I turned to try locate him but there was no one. I changed to another street but I was suddenly being lifted. He was very swift, I knew I was first on the roof but before I could comprehend it, I had landed on the ground and my body was being pushed to the wall same time my eyes were covered. I wanted to scream but my dread froze my mouth. He was tall, very tall and masculine. As he used his body to push me further to the wall, my adrenaline kicked in and I tried to wriggle myself out of his grasp but I was not sure he knew I was fighting him. He let me struggle for a while and just when I opened my mouth to scream, he gaged my mouth and pushed me further that I was almost suffocating. I was going to die, my second miserable life was about to end in the arms of someone I could not see. He never spoke he just held me till I gave up struggling.

Then he wrapped me with his arms. I stood there waiting for what he would do next, I wished he would be quick. He bent his face to my neck, then he dipped his right hand in my jeans pocket. Immediately his hands touched my pocket, I felt heat all over my body, followed by a sweet tingling sensation in my stomach. I had no idea what the feeling meant. I had been raised by a very strict Christian Grandma and in all my life, this killer was the closest I've ever been with any male. I tensed and waited for what he would do next. It was my phone he wanted. I tried to look, even though it was dark, I wanted to see something about my killer but he held my hands and pulled it up, then used only his left hand to keep it there. I had no idea what he was doing with my phone or what game he was playing.

Soon my phone was back in my pocket but his hands remained there. Fear gripped me when I felt his hands leave my

pocket and moved to my waist. He was going to rape me. I should fight him but my body had its own mind. I had never felt fear and excitement at the same time. He must be doing something to my brain. He moved his hands slowly burning anywhere he grazed. I did not want him to continue, neither did I want the desire he was awakening to stop but I found my will and struggled. If he was going to rape me, I would not give him to satisfaction of making me a willing partner.

Suddenly, I felt empty, like really empty. He was gone and I knew he took my sanity with him. He did something to my body because I felt like I lost something. As I struggled to remove the gag, my sanity returned because the dread was back in full force. He was still there watching me. I hated being watched.

“Show yourself and just kill me. Just end my miserable life” I shouted but there was no response, not that I was expecting any.

I still felt being watched until I got to my hostel gate. I felt a temporal relieve that he had decided to let me be. He must have gotten what he wanted.

I was very wrong because my body froze the moment I entered my room. Not only was he in my room, but he had arranged my scattered bedspread, my books and my clothes. As I shook from fear from the invasion, my phone blinked. With my hand shaking badly, I slowly brought out my phone from my pocket. There was a message. I did not want to read it but I found myself opening it.

‘Hello Ella. I will be with you till I get what I’m looking for. Keep your mouth shut if you want to live- Ghost.’

## CHAPTER ONE

My favorite movies were those with zombies and walking dead because I shared the same similarities with them. They were dead but could still walk, same with me. They had no feelings just like me. The only difference was I could still think and be aware of my environment making my case worse than their own because I could feel the emptiness and feel my miserable state.

My life could just be summarized in two words ‘living dead.’ But I somehow found a way to fill that emptiness with few list. Number one was my hatred for all Hausas and Fulanis, number two was my hatred for Hausas and Fulanis. That was my list till number ten and I made sure I pasted it on my wall and read it every day.



You shouldn't judge me nor tell me no matter what happened, I should not have practiced tribalism, just get to know my story, and get to understand that my childhood memory was all about one of them. His name was Ibrahim and he was my best friend but he died long ago, the last good Hausa I had ever met. So try understand where I was coming from.

I once had a life, I was once living although never fully felt alive, it was far better than my present state. Two years, seven months and two weeks ago, I had family, a dad, a step-mum, two kid brothers, Efe was three years and Maro was three months. I also had a grandma but those herdsmen had ended their life and their sponsor had been my father's client who actually came for the burial and gave us two million naira to compensate us. He even made a speech of how wonderful my dad was but the DPO who was from my tribe had helped expose

him. He was at the forefront of making sure Alhaji Umaru got a death sentence, even one Mallam Abdul and Musa who led the group who raped my step-mum, who butchered my dad and who could not spare Efe and Maro my little brothers, they were just kids but they still killed them. If I had followed them back when my dad came to Ozoro to pick me, I would have also faced my step-mother's fate. Grandma had said I should still wait because she wanted to sew clothes for my step-mum and my siblings. I only saw the news once and the picture in the front page of a newspaper would forever taunt me. I couldn't watch anymore, I could not turn on the TV because it was the topic for discussion. They were not the only ones, there was also another family. One Mallam Farouk was killed alongside his two wives and five children. At least there was no one left behind to suffer the pains of losing them, unlike me. I shut off social media and anything that would make me see my family being discussed. The DPO

helped me follow the case because he always updated me. It was even discovered that one Hausa soldier who was supposed to protect my family had ignored what was going on, he had watched them destroy my family and kept silent and never reported the killers. Eleven of the men were killed during a shoot-out with the police while the police had lost two. Now you would understand my hatred. They brought about my emptiness, my zombie lifestyle and hatred for them was the only feeling I had. Every night I wished I had superpowers, I would visit Boko Haram, I would stop herdsmen from murdering people in the name of religion. I did not write that I hated Muslims, I wrote Hausas and Fulanis and it had nothing to do with any religion. In fact I hated them for using religion to perpetrate their crimes.

But as time passed on, only the writings on the wall remained because I could no longer feel much of the hatred. I still hated

them mentally but I could not feel it. It was a good sign because it could indicate I was really becoming a full blown zombie.

After Grandma slept and did not wake up and was buried same day by good neighbors, I was consolidated with my admission to study English and Literature Education at University of Benin.

Although I applied to study law, I was okay with it as long as I would be busy with something. Money was never an issue

because I had more than ten million naira in my account from different compensations. Although clearance was stressful, I

loved it because at a point I almost forgot about my miserable life. I had rented a hostel in Ekosodin even before I started

clearance. I was advised to stay in BDPA because it was safe but

I chose Ekosodin because I had nothing to fear about. I could

not end my life by myself because I knew it was an abomination

and my body would be thrown into the evil forest. I still had

little respect for my body but I would be happy if someone ended it, then my emptiness would be over.

I made sure to write a bigger list of what I hated and I gummed it on my wall. I was never attacked, it was as if death and danger hated me because I always went to the school to read from 6:00PM to 8:00PM and I also went to fellowship at All Saints' chapel but I always walked back to my hostel without getting attacked. My life was just go to lecture, ignore friendship offers, make my hair when it was rough, go to fellowship on Thursday, read in school, then watch zombie movies using my laptop. I did not buy generator because neighbors would want to come charge and I did not want people to come close. The emptiness did not increase nor reduce, might be because I had already acknowledged myself as a Zombie.

If only I knew that I would run when death really came, if only I knew that dread had a taste. My empty lifestyle was over because this new dread had filled it up. Even the DPO was lost, he had confirmed two of the people following me were killed and no one saw the culprit, nothing to describe him. He asked me a lot of questions and I had nothing to tell him. Apart from the man being tall, nothing. He had told me to change my SIM which I did and I also sold the phone and bought another one. I did not end there, I moved out of the hostel the next morning to a hostel not far from LTV visions, the first street by the right by Edo street. I hired boys to transport my things and I told the caretaker he could give out the hostel and forget about paying me back. It worked because I never heard from him again.

Just after two weeks, my life was back to Zombie mode, he was not coming back. He had no idea where I was and I had stop

moving in the night and dark which was his working time. The police officers were still hanging around, about six of them and for some reasons it was no longer making me tense. At a point, I started thinking all was an illusion, like he was never real but I was very wrong because I felt him again and it was not in the night.

I had gone for mid-week service at All Saints' which ended by 5:30PM and I had taken a cab to Back Gate. Just when I crossed back gate to Ekosodin, I felt dread, my hairs stood up and goose bumps appeared on my arms making me fold my arms. He was back. I turned round to locate him, but I had no idea which side to look. He was everywhere because the feeling was everywhere. I became confused on what to do. I could not go to my hostel because he would follow me, I was not about to show him where I moved to.

“Shift commot for road” I heard an angry female voice.

She was already using her load to push me out. I shifted to my left which was pointing towards Newton Street. I made sure I stayed clear of pedestrians because the crowd coming into Ekosodin was much. It was the rush hour time. I studied every tall male that walked past the gate but saw nothing suspicious. I stood there watching, studying and eliminating them as suspects and I forgot darkness was coming. I only knew that was the game he was playing too late. He was waiting for me to be trapped by the dark. I quickly walked over to one of the police officers who was chatting with a taxi driver. I was not supposed to talk to them and they were not supposed to talk to me but they were my only option.

“He is here” I whispered.



He looked at me and understood what was wrong. He said something to the taxi man in Edo and held my hand. He brought out his phone and started typing, soon I saw the remaining five. They positioned themselves in a way that I was in the center.

“Let’s go. He won’t attack when we are six” the man said.

I nodded and I allowed them take me home using Newton as route. It was already 7:19PM and it was dark because there was no light but I could tell people were having fun with their lives. Some girls held their boyfriends’ hands while buying soya. A fruit seller was screaming for people to buy her pineapple, some group of girls walked past us chatting about the kind of guys they loved.

“Tall, dark, masculine and long cassava...” one of them said making some pause their talk to look at them, some had to turn

back to look for who spoke. The girls all burst out laughing at people's reaction to her statement.

They continued talking excitedly oblivious to the danger around. None of these people knew there was a danger walking amongst them. Or maybe I was the only one in danger. This was what I had wanted, to die and join my family but it was easier said than done. Now that death had finally noticed me, I wanted to live. I hated my miserable life but there was also the fear of the unknown, of the world beyond. We entered the first street by the right which was before Newton hostel. It was very dark, we should have used Edo Street, it was closer than Newton Street. I could feel the tension in the air, even the officers were tensed. I could only see just few people on the street but it was hard to figure them out because of the darkness.

“Stop” I said.

How could I forget or not understand his game? They were leading me to my hostel, showing him where I live.

“He will know where I live.”

Nigerian Police Force needed to do more. I shouldn't have been the one to point it out. From their posture, they had no idea what to do. I should have thought of a hotel earlier.

“I can go to a hotel for now” I suggested and they nodded like they were waiting for me to bring out the solution.

At least they had their guns and they were six because they acted like they knew nothing. I would just tell a cab man to take me to a hotel. It even made me remembered they should have transported me, not walk me to my hostel. I knew the killer wanted something but he could have changed his mind and I was in the open.

I turned to start my walk back to Back Gate but stopped. It happened so fast. I would never be able to fully comprehend what happened. I just knew within ten seconds which I was just guessing because I was not counting, the policemen were all on the ground. All six, one looking dead and the others tased. That instrument must be a taser, it electrified someone and made their body shake like they were having a terrible seizure. I knew one was dead because he was the only one not shaking, the one I had gone to, who should be someone's father. There was no time to assimilate everything because my body had a mind of his own. I was running, running without knowing where I was running to. It was a waste of energy and adrenaline because he was on me in less than three seconds. My screams were cut off by a gag. Did people not notice something wrong was happening in the street? The police officers where still on the ground when he dragged me to a secluded area behind an uncompleted building. Just like

the last time, he pushed my body to the wall and brought out my phone. I tried to fight him but he was strong, I could not talk because of the gag in my mouth. He kept my phone back and removed his hand without lingering but he did not release me, instead he pushed me to the wall with his body, enveloping me with his powerful male scent. I had no idea where the thought came from, but there was a scent to his body, I had no idea if it was common to every male. Like I had said, he was the closest I had ever been to a male. I was trapped, unable to even wriggle my body, unable to scream or do anything. I was at his mercy. I felt his breath on my neck. It was warm, then hot, then liquid because it flowed down to my stomach and below. Something I had never felt before. It was sweet and wrong. I knew it was wrong. Grandma had trained me enough to avoid males and to avoid ending up like her and my mother who died after giving birth to me at nineteen. My father was also nineteen then, and

my grandma had also gotten pregnant at nineteen. She was always mistaken as my mother because she was still young. She had always told me to be the one to break the chain.

“Don’t let a male touch you. You can live different from me and your mother and your father. Your body belongs to only your husband” she had said to me every day till she died and I had succeeded in escaping the nineteen years curse as she called it.

The day she had seen me talking with a new neighbor, she had told me if I continued I would end up like her. I knew about sex because I was not living in a stone age. There were lots of books to read, I had also read descriptions of the feeling of the characters but I had not experienced it. I was not going to delude myself into believing the feeling I was having was something else and not sexual urge but it was not supposed to be. I was not supposed to experience this with a killer, with someone I could

not see, with someone I dreaded, with a ghost. I could still taste dread but that sensation was already mixed up with the dread.

He had not moved away, neither had he done anything else. I tried to wriggle away for the fifth time but nothing. He was just too strong and he was not letting me go.

“What do you want from me?” I mumbled hoping he would hear me or understand what I was trying to say.

There was no response but he still held me, heating me up, filling my icy pores with a hot sensations. I was beginning to feel faint from being enclosed and I struggled again to free myself. He had loosened up and I could move my body. He allowed me struggle but still kept me in his grasp almost like he was having fun with my futile attempts. If only I could twist my body for a second, I would at least see his face, I would know my killer but I just knew he did not forget to cover my eyes. He

must have felt it was not necessary. I froze when his hands held my waist and his lips touched my ears, I found myself breathing in gasp anticipating what I had no idea of. My breathing increased when his lips moved to my neck and I found myself surrendering to the feeling that went way down to where I could not mention, to where Grandma called sacred. The thought of Grandma brought my sanity back. I tried to push him away but there was no need because he was gone. I spun fast to catch up with him but nothing, nobody. I did not even hear the sound of a footstep to show someone was walking or running. He was completely gone because I could no longer feel his presence. I immediately ran out and found myself on the spot we were attacked. There were crowd but no police officer. People were discussing in groups. I walked up to a group of three girls.

“What happened?”



“Somebody died” one of them answered.

“Where and how?”

They looked at me like I was asking a dumb question.

“Here now, and how will I know how?” the second one answered.

“Sorry, I meant the person that died, is the body...”

“They just carried him away. Please let’s go back” the third one answered.

They walked towards Newton Street and as I watched others, I understood why he held me for long. He only released me when the policemen had carried the dead body of the man he had killed.

I cried as I walked to my hostel. Not too long ago, that man had been talking to a friend, he had been alive and he would

have still been alive if I had not asked for help, if I had faced him alone. At the end, he had what he wanted and a policeman was dead, the third one dying because of me. At least he was gone and only had my number but had no idea of where I lived, so I thought until I opened my door and saw my bed had been made and the clothes I had dropped while trying to choose the best one for the day were no longer on my bed. He already knew where I had moved to, he knew where I stay.

My body shook from the knowledge and at the same time, my phone blinked. I knew it must be him. I brought out my phone and opened the message box.

‘The more you talk the more somebody dies’ was written in capital letter.

So that was it, that was the game he was playing. He was not planning to kill me until he got the document he was looking for,

instead he would be killing those sent to protect me. And it was so easy for him to render six policemen useless in less than ten seconds.

‘What do you want?’ I sent back.

‘There is a file with you. The last place your dad visited was Ozoro and you are the only lead to get it.’

That was what the DPO said. He told me many people were hunting for the file because it was not only Umaru and Abdul that were involved in my father’s death, that there were more people in high places and had hired assassins to get it hence the first people I had seen who had confessed one Mohammed a Senator sent them. But the DPO said he had no idea who this killer was working for and even Mohammed could not be arrested because there was no proof. Only the file had the proof and they all believed I knew where my dad must have kept the

file. I had told the DPO where to take our house key. He had called back that there was nothing that I should think hard because I would be safe once the file was found and the perpetrators were brought to book and I had been thinking since I moved to my new hostel but I had relaxed because he never showed up again until now. He wanted to take the file that could bring justice to not just my family but the other families that were murdered.

‘I don’t have any file and you will still kill me anyway.’

‘You forgot to add all the people following you. Keep talking to the DPO and they will keep dying.’

He knew how to play dirty, he was using them to blackmail me. Either I died alone or I took so many lives along with me with three deaths already recorded because of me.

‘Leave them alone, they have nothing to do with this.’

‘The file Ella.’

I wished I knew where the file was, I would just send it straight to the DPO, even if I would die, there was no way I was going to allow those murderers walk free.

‘Don’t even think about it. From now on, if you answer the DPO, one of them dies.’

How did he know what I was thinking? My phone started ringing making me jump. I was that much afraid. It was the DPO.

“Are you okay? I got report of what happened” the DPO said.

“I’m fine. I’m sorry for your loss” I stammered.

“Hmm, did you see him?”

“No.”

“What of the file?”

“No.”

“Ella you need to think, think fast, that file is important. Once you find it, call me. This will be over if you can find that file.”

“I will try” I stammered.

“Make sure you stay clear of dark places. Take care Ella, this will soon be over.”

“Okay sir but...” but he had already cut off the call.

The reality of my situation immediately became glaring. Three police officers were gone and more would die because of me, because he believed I had a file, a stupid file. I could not have more men die just to get justice for the dead. I was his main target, he was going to kill me and it was not okay for me to take innocent people along with me.

I wanted to tell the DPO about my plans, to play along, to still use my phone and my SIM, to still stay in my hostel so the killer would stop attacking the police officers, then tell him once I discovered the file while deceiving the killer but he had cut the call.

‘Don’t kill anybody, I will get you the file, do anything you want with me but stop killing them’ I sent another message.

‘Do you really understand your message?’ he replied almost immediately.

I scrolled up to read my message and just when I grasped what he meant, another message came.

‘Deal. I have a thousand and one things I want to do with you as I wait for the file. Be warned! Once a deal is made with me, it cannot be broken. See you tomorrow-Ghost’

Panic gripped me as I quickly wrote another message.

‘That was not what I meant. I meant I will cooperate with you not you doing anything to me.....that’s not the deal.’

But the message bounced back and there was a glaring ‘message not sent’ with a red color on my phone screen.

I had just made a deal with a merciless killer, a predator and a ghost.



## CHAPTER TWO

I could not sleep, I kept turning on my bed thinking of a way to get out of my current predicament. Every hour, I re-sent the message but it kept bouncing back. I had to check my call balance which was showing 'N919.56', I even had ten free text messages. But the message was not going through. He had written 'see you tomorrow' which was my fellowship day.

I had a 7:AM lecture at B2 lecture hall at Faculty of Arts but for the first time, I went late. The hall was already filled up and I had to stand by the wall. The noise at the back prevented me from hearing what the lecturer was saying, not that I would have heard anything. My mind was occupied with the killer with the name Ghost. I brought out my phone to check if my message had been sent but it was still showing the same thing. I tried it again and as I press send, someone pulled my phone from me. I

struggled to pull it back same time raising my head to see who was pulling it. The loud laughter from the students explained my shock. It was the lecturer, I never saw him coming neither did anyone alert me to drop my phone.

“Get out of my class” Dr. Bright shouted pointing at the door.

“Please Sir” I pleaded knowing fully well I was in trouble and my phone was just the beginning.

“What’s your Matric number?”

I was really in deep shit. Those were the words students dreaded from him. There was a saying that the question came with carry over, meaning I had to repeat that course.

“Please I...”

“Class rep, give her a paper and biro to put her matt number. I want you out of my class and I don’t ever want to see you in any of my lectures.”

He walked back to the front and continued his lecture.

“Don’t stress yourself Ella, I have your matt number” Chidi the class rep shouted so everybody could hear him.

The class resumed their laughter and Dr. Bright was silencing them when I left the lecture hall.

I had no idea what to do and how to go about my predicament. I found myself sitting down at one of the iron chairs at the car park which was directly opposite the busses selling snacks. I inhaled the fresh air and allowed the cool atmosphere brought about by trees to calm my body. My dad had always said it was better to think about the positive side of everything not just the negative. There should be something

good from my phone getting seized. I would no longer communicate with him. But would he understand or believe I was not lying and trying to evade him?

What about the carry over issue? I was already feeling headache and the fact that I did not sleep throughout the night was not helping. I felt being watched and I turned sideways. They were still around. The policemen, but my gut told me they had increased their numbers. I could not tell how I knew people were watching me, I could just tell. I felt so sad that one of them who had watched me just the day before was dead. He had hanged around the bus stop and I had seen him with a bottle of coke and egg roll. He was killed because of me, because I could not face and handle my own problem. I wondered if they were not afraid. Okay they were definitely too alert and kept looking around like Ghost would pick one of them soon. I wished I could tell them

to relax, that he was not around, that I would make sure none of them joined the list of those that had died because of me, but I could not. My eyes met with one of them and he turned the other way. I raised my head and rested it on the iron handle of the chairs. There were few people sitting down because it was still too early.

I must have slept off and it was understandable. A tap on my left shoulder woke me up.

“Hi Ella.”

It was Chidi. He had been one of the first people to ask me out.

It was because of him and others I did thread on my hair. It attracted the wrong people because it was long past my shoulder.

I had no memory of ever cutting my hair, Grandma said it was a disgrace for a woman to cut her hair. But even with the thread

and long gowns, I still felt stares from unwanted males. I thought of how to answer him and decided on remaining silent.

“The lecturer wants to see you.”

That caught my attention.

“Don’t be afraid, you girls have easy life here. If it was a boy, that phone is forever lost. At the end wetin you nor won give me na him you go use beg lecturer.”

He stood up and left. I understood what he was implying but that did not stop me from running all the way to the department and to his office. I knocked, my hands shaking.

“Yes?” Dr. Bright shouted.

“Sir, I was told you wanted to see me, the girl you sent out Sir.”

There was no answer but the door was opened after some seconds.

“Come in and sit down.”

He did not go to his seat but sat down on a black couch by the door. He pointed to the tiny space close to him. I stood there debating if it was proper to sit down that close to a man known for sleeping with students.

“My friend, I am busy. If you don’t want to sit down, the door is not far from you.”

I decided to sit down, he had not done anything to warrant my suspicion but I stood up almost immediately after he grabbed my shoulders.

“I was told you wanted to see me” I stammered.

He looked at me for some time.

“Why are you behaving like a novice, you are acting like you have not done it before. I like you Ella, and I want you to be my friend.”

He said it like it was something normal. I still stood there.

“Except you don’t want your phone and your A.”

“Sir, I’m sorry about what happened in class, I apologize Sir.”

“What about my offer of friendship?”

He stood up and walked close to me but I shifted back making him stop. He suddenly pulled me to him but I pushed him away.

“Please sir this is harassment.”

“Okay, you can go now. Get out, not many get this opportunity you have just thrown away.”

He was already on his official seat and was writing on a book.



I walked slowly to the table.

“Please sir, Please sir” I said bending one knee.

“I said get out. Come back when you have stopped acting childish. Out” he shouted.

As I walked to another lecture hall for my 9:00AM class, I felt lost. This lecturer would also lecture me till four hundred level and most tales I had heard of him, he could follow up on someone and he had connections. The DPO would not be able to help in this matter. He was far away north and this was south and I had no proof even if I wanted to report him. I almost did not hear what the lecturer said throughout and also, my three other lectures. I only remembered I had not eaten during my fourth and last lecture for the day which was ending by six. I always went for fellowship straight from my faculty. I had to

bear the sting in my stomach, then bought a drink and meat pie after the lecture.

Night was approaching, so was Ghost. I thought of not going for fellowship but I remembered the deal. I was not playing a game with a normal human, this was a killer. I could not allow anymore police officer die because of me. But he never mentioned location and he knew how to enter my room. I was feeling tired and needed to rest, then think but going home was not the best option. I would have follow-up fellowship brethren calling me to ask why I was absent and then if I did not give them a convincing answer, they would visit me and put themselves in the list of people I would protect. Not that I could even protect them from him. They had already paid me visits more than three times because of my two weeks absent. I just decided to go for fellowship to avoid further complications.

Throughout fellowship, I was body present but spirit absent. I only knew they were saying the grace when they started singing the fellowship song. And just before they concluded their loud amen, I was out. I did not want to follow the crowd back to Ekosodin. We always moved in groups because it was safer that way. It took about twenty minutes to walk from All Saints' Chapel, through Engineering to Ekosodin Back Gate and they always announced for Ekosodin brethren to wait and move together. The night belonged to cultists, bandits, robbers who linger around and attacked easy targets like a girl walking on her own. But I had a bigger predator who could disarm six policemen within seconds. If he wanted to attack, even the whole fellowship would not be able to stop him. It was better I walked alone.

And I was right to make that decision because I felt his presence immediately I entered the street that led to the office of the Vice Chancellor. At least, the solar light in that street were still functioning with one constantly going off and on. I turned and saw like two of the policemen behind me. I hurried my steps and as I got to Engineering Faculty, I sighted two more resting by the flame of the forest tree situated at the car park. The last working street light ended there, it meant the rest of my journey was going to be dark. I started shaking as I entered the passage of their lecture hall which would lead me to the main road. I had no idea why my adrenaline was kicking in. I felt the desire to run, to get out because his presence was too overwhelming. I heard footsteps behind me and I turned in time to witness the death of the police officers I had just passed by the flame of the forest tree. They could only mutter a dying sound like they were gagging. For the first time, I saw his full height but that was all,

it was too dark to see his face. I wanted to run, my head was screaming for me to run to safety, but my body was frozen. He started moving towards me and my body only listened to me when he was just few steps to me.

I had no idea why I was running, where could I run to? But I still ran. It was after few minutes when I was already in Faculty Park that I noticed he was not following me. There was just one bus loading to Main Gate. The driver was shouting one chance as I ran past him to the street leading to Back Gate. I paused and inhaled a lot of air, then continued running.

I had completely forgotten I had nowhere to run to. It did not take long to remember because I felt his presence immediately I entered my street. He knew my street, he knew where I live. It was a waste of time running. There was nowhere to run. I thought about running to my Secretariat but changed my mind.

If he could enter my iron door room with nobody having any idea or memory of seeing him, then my Secretariat was not safe, I would only lead him to my fellowship brethren and they will be added to people he would use to blackmail me with. Just few people were in my street and they were totally oblivious of me and my predicament. I was tired and I needed to sleep. There was nothing to do but go to my hostel. I had not opened the gate when he closed up on me. His body pushing me to the gate.

“You broke our deal.”

That was the first time I was hearing his voice. It was all male and deep and husky. How funny that word came to my mind.

“You don’t have a soul, you just murdered two police officers.”

I was still terrified but there was another emotion waking up in me. I was angry, I was vexed that he was making my life miserable.

“Where did you keep your humanity? How can you be this soulless?”

“I am a ghost.”

He answered calmly like I was asking a funny question and he was giving an obvious answer. There was no remorse in his voice.

“I did not break any deal, my phone was seized and I did not refuse to see you. You are just looking for an excuse to kill innocent people. How did I break the deal? How?” I shouted.

“Sssh, don’t attract more deaths.”

I froze from his words. He was serious. It made me remember we were by the gate, someone could come in or go out and they were in danger.

“Follow me peacefully.”

He was going inside the street by the time I turned to look at him. It was same time one of my neighbors walked towards the gate with her boyfriend holding her waist. They had no idea I just saved their lives and as they entered the gate all happy, I walked to my doom.

I never thought of exploring my environment, I only focused on where I lived and the road to school so I had no idea about the street he entered but what was clear was it was the darkest street I've ever walked on. I kicked a wood and struggled to balance myself. By the time I raised my head, he was nowhere to be found. I turned around and discovered I was standing close to a hostel which was not yet completed because there was no sign of life there. While I considered where he had disappeared to, I was suddenly lifted like the first time. The rope must have been hooked to him. He dropped me on the roof of



the building. It was already roofed, might be the other essential part of the building that was yet to be fixed. He was still holding me from behind and I waited for what he planned to do but he just held me, like he was calming me down, making me comfortable with his heartless soul.

“Why?”

There was no answer.

“I did not break any deal. You have not yet told me to do anything, yet you killed them, why?”

“You told the DPO my name is Ghost, then you told him you would play along with me but will quickly give him the file when you find it while you keep playing along.”

“You were monitoring my text?”

“I told you a deal with me cannot be broken and their death was the consequence of the rule you broke and more will die, even your fellowship brethren won’t be safe.”

“Don’t, please don’t hurt them. Please, no more deaths, please” I cried.

I did not stop crying, it was as if I had to release all the stocked up emotions for the day. If I had not sent that message to the DPO, those police officers would still be alive. And he was threatening to hurt students, innocent students who did nothing but to be in the same fellowship with me. He did not stop me neither did he do anything. He just let me cry.

“What do you want from me?” I asked after exhausting my tears.

“You must continue with the game you started.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Make him believe I’m not aware of your plans. Pick his call and talk to him as usual.”

“I thought you wanted me to stop.”

“The game has changed. You changed it. But from now on, you will be playing to my terms except you want more deaths.”

“Even if I can locate the file you are looking for and you collect it from me and kill me and the criminals are left to live freely, there will still be karma. God has a way of preserving the wicked for the Day of Judgment. There is no appeal in God’s case and you and all the people who killed my family and the other families will rot in hell.”

“So we have an agreement?”

My case was hopeless. I was thinking my speech would reawaken his humanity but there was nothing to show it went past his ears.

“As long as you don’t hurt them.”

“As long as I’m not offended” he countered me.

“But I don’t have a phone, I don’t want you thinking....”

“I know, I heard everything.”

He was very calm with his last statement but there was something to it, something scary.

“You can have your phone.”

He placed something on my hands. I wanted to ask how but I saved my energy. That would be a stupid question.

“In case you have forgotten the deal you offered which I accepted, you asked me to do anything I want with you in exchange for my targets’ life.”

“They are human beings not targets.”

“We will start the hunt for the file tomorrow but I have something else in mind this night.”

“I don’t...”

His lips was already on mine. The little touch sent a sensation all over my body. I did not forget everything about my Christian background, it was my body that betrayed me. I found myself opening up for him. I had watched more than a hundred kissing scene in movies, then read a character describing the sensation of being kissed but no one mentioned a shock. It was like an electric shock and it shook my body then became liquid fire filling my blood stream and setting me on fire, a fire that I

wanted to burn, to consume me. I never understood the meaning of emptiness until our lips touched. I felt filled, I found myself turning to face him, I wanted more, I wanted to be filled to the brim. I was going crazy because the more he deepened the kiss the more I felt it was not enough, the more I felt there was still a cold part of me that needed to burn, that needed to be filled. I pushed closer grabbing his shoulders. His hand left my waist to my neck, then to my back, then my head. I felt warmth wherever he touched, like I had been frozen and he was heating me up. It was intoxicating and my body was working separate from my mind. I knew it was all wrong, religiously and morally wrong. I was kissing a soulless killer, I was dishonoring my family's memory, I was betraying the police officers he had killed because of me, but I've never been this filled. He needed to stop, I needed to hate him, oh I hated him but this feeling was good, so good and irresistible.

My sanity returned when his hands raised my T-shirt. My body did not want him to stop but my will was now stronger. I pushed him away and surprisingly, he did not resist, he stopped and turned me before I could look at him. I never thought I was supposed to look at his face until he turned me. Not that I would have seen him clearly, but I would have seen something.

He held my waist and took me down, then left. Before I could turn, he was gone. I ran few steps from the house to look at the roof but he was gone. I felt guilt and shame. I could not accuse him of abuse because I gave in, there was no force, I had even been the one to turn, I had even enjoyed it and he had stopped when I pushed his hand away. This was torture. He knew what he was doing, making me a willing partner. I was hopeless and I could just imagine what Grandma would say. I felt filthy and I hated myself. My phone blinked.

‘You have five minutes to get back.’

He was still around, I could still feel him. I felt like crying and I did not stop the tears from flowing as I walked back to my hostel. He was gone the moment I entered my room. I knew it because I could not feel him anymore, his absence brought back my emptiness, like I lost something. I hated what he was doing to me yet my body wanted it, my body wanted to be filled up again. I went to my bag, where I had kept Ibrahim and held it close to me as I cried. He had died when I was just seven yet I still missed him. The teddy bear was a gift he bought for me after doing all kinds of jobs. He was twelve and his uncle was our neighbor, then we were still living in the north.

I was one major reason Grandma came back to Ozoro, although she kept denying that she just wanted to come home. She said tailoring business could be done anywhere but I knew I



was the reason. I was just seven yet I had fainted when Ibrahim's Uncle came to officially tell us and confirm Ibrahim was dead and had been buried according to Islamic rights, that was after not being able to see him for two days because his uncle said he was seriously sick and visitors were not allowed. I was sick for a long time. That was the period my prodigal father returned home. I had no knowledge of him, Grandma said he ran away the day I was born. Grandma had refused him from entering the house but after my dad knelt down for the whole day, she caved in. He had cried after seeing me, he said I looked like my mother. He said he did menial jobs and was already training himself in the university. He had asked why I was looking sick, when Grandma told him, he became afraid I would die. Then Grandma had come up with the idea of moving to a new environment. Grandma had been the one to sew his name on the cloth of the teddy bear, and I made it my best friend. I

was always with it, I even took it to school and Grandma had begged the teachers to allow me. She said being close to the teddy bear was healing me. I stopped carrying it around when I discovered it would go bad. So I only held it when I was down. It always comforted me. I held it and cried myself to sleep.

Friday was not that busy and I had just two lectures, the first one by 8:AM. I was able to make it on time but I knew something was terribly wrong as I entered Faculty. There was an ambulance belonging to the university health service Centre. A man was being carried on a stretcher, his body was covered with a white cloth and only his face was opened. There was a blood soaked white cloth on his ear. He was still breathing, and he was Dr. Bright.

“We just got through the locked door, luckily for us, he is still alive, he is on his way to UBTH, he has not yet mentioned any name. Okay sir.”

The man on the phone was carrying some tools unknown to me. Dr. Bright was already being driven away when the man ended the call. My phone blinked. It must be him.

‘Until the deal is over you are mine, no one touches you but me’ was written in capital letter.

(Don’t forget to like and comment. Thanks)

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

CHAPTER THREE

The stares I received as soon as I entered the lecture hall was disturbing. I had been Dr. Bright's last victim before he was attacked. I followed some of their stares to the phone I was holding, I quickly put it in my bag but it was too late. They knew it was the phone he seized. No one boldly came to accuse me but the glares were enough accusations. Once again, I could not concentrate throughout the lecture, neither could I scribble anything on my note.

As students trooped out of the lecture hall, I felt a tap on my back and turned. I did not know him, just one of the familiar faces who always loved staying at the back and spent all the time making noise with their gang. I heard they were probating hundred level.

"Which levels your guy dey?" he asked.

"I don't understand."

I turned to see that the class was almost empty and just the boys remained. I tried to walk out but was blocked by one of them.

“You nor won answer, I know say nor be our own. You know say we dey treat who give Dr. Bright fuck up.”

“I wish I understand all this gibberish you are saying.”

I was still blocked from moving out.

“See this girl oh, she think say you dey ask am and she fit decide say she nor one talk.”

I knew the last speaker, he was also in English Education and he was rumored to be a cultist. This was not the shit I wanted my life to become. I did not like the fact that I had not been able to focus on the reason I came to school. My zombie life had been simple. Did Ghost not know I could be arrested by the law if Dr. Bright pointed me out as a suspect? Or I could be in trouble

because he had boys who protected his evil acts? I was sure he did not care, I was just the link to the file he wanted.

“I don’t have any business with you and I have important things to do.”

This time, I pushed him out of the way and he was not expecting it. I was at the B series corridor and running down the first floor, I did not turn back till my foot touched the last stair. They were standing by the rails watching my movement. I had another class at my department but I felt like not going. I was going to be sick. I walked to the faculty car park and sat down same seat I had sat down the other day. There were just five people on my roll. I brought out my phone and sent a message to him.

‘You think you saved me?’

It sent but no response.

‘You are not helping me, you are breaking the deal, stay out of my school activities.’

Still no response.

‘What satisfaction do you get from tormenting me? He will report me as a suspect and I hope you enjoy my suffering.’

‘He can’t report you, I made sure of that.’

Finally a reply but not what I wanted.

‘Leave me to handle my school business, he did not deserve this treatment.’

‘Now you are defending a rapist, I did him a favor.’

‘Seriously? You are worse than him.’

‘How?’

‘You are working for the killers of my family, you are killing men just to blackmail me and force me into....

I paused, I did not know what to write.

‘becoming a willing partner, that is also rape.’

‘I still remember every details of you pushing your body to me and raising your legs to have a deeper taste of me, you harassed me Ella not me.’

‘I did not give you permission to kiss me.’

‘You must be a dullard to forget you offered yourself willingly to me.’

I wanted to scream out my frustration, replying him would not do, I wanted to tell him I did not offer my body to him, I wanted to shout and scream and kick something and tear and punch.

‘Leave me alone, get lost and get out of my life, I hate you.’



I wished he could feel all the emotions I used in typing the text.

‘Okay’ he replied almost immediately.

This was not what I was expecting, I just knew there was more to it but I was having headache and needed to sleep. Lecture was over for me because I was not concentrating, I needed to fix my life. I stood up to go back to Ekosodin but people started running as soon as I had crossed the road. There was no particular way they ran, just different directions. The faculty park for busses was empty in a jiffy. Elderly Ekosodin residents who used the school as route to different destinations were running back to Ekosodin, a woman stumbled and fell on the ground and immediately started shouting for people to help her but no one responded. Everybody was taking cover but I stood there confused on what was going on, then I felt his presence but there was something different from the other times, it felt more

like my emptiness was getting filled but there was also fear and dread because my mind was totally against the invasion my body wanted. I turned round to sight him but felt ridiculous.

Even if I saw him, I wouldn't know. The feelings wouldn't even help because it was not pulling me to any particular direction, it was permanently with me so I could not use it to find him. What I was sure of, was he must be behind the panic, then it all made sense. I had broken the deal and somebody was dead.

"No" I screamed running back to the park and towards the ebelebo tree by UNIBEN faculty security office where people were already gathering. They had stopped running.

I was wrong, somebody did not die, three people died, just one face was familiar, the others were new.

“I still don’t understand what happened. There was no sound of any gunshot but they were all hit by bullets and they are all confirmed dead” a security man said with a walkie talkie.

I turned to get a glimpse of some of the undercover policemen I had seen earlier but no sign of any of them. They would not even be able to show themselves because they were on undercover. The ground where the three dead men laid was soaked with blood and more was still pumping out of their body, the skull of one of them was opened and I could see what was inside. The three were hit on their head, he did not miss his shot. I ran away from the gruesome sight and found myself throwing up. I was not the only one, some girls were also throwing up. I stood up and covered my mess with sand then started running. I ran all the way to my hostel. I could still feel him and I knew

he was following me but I did not care, he already knew my hostel.

As soon as I stepped inside my room, I shouted.

“No, no” I said grabbing Ibrahim.

He had been in my room, he had arranged my scattered room.

I picked my phone and sent him a message.

‘You will rot in hell.’

There was no response, then I remembered he was now a loose killer and I had not renewed the deal. Another person could die.

‘I broke the deal not them, just kill me.’

‘You are my subject not yet my target, we have rules. I can’t kill you.’

‘Did you have to kill them to make a point?’

‘Yes, the earlier you understand me the better. Are we back?’

‘Not on my own will.’

‘Then I can move over to the next target.’

‘Don’t, please don’t....’ I replied immediately.

‘So?’

‘Stay and don’t get lost.’

‘Deal. See you this night.’

‘Can you at least give me the day? You can’t torment my day and night’ but the message bounced back.

I dropped my phone on my bed and cried out all my frustrations.

Six people dead, six humans not animals, six humans. How did I get myself involved with him? That was not even my biggest worry. My biggest worry was the fact that my body had never

felt repulsed by him, the fact that my body wanted to have his presence back.

I had cried myself to sleep and only woke up when I felt a sting on my stomach. I was hungry and I had not prepared any food. I had to make do with corn flakes, then went back to the bed. I later stood up to study my books but nothing was entering so I gave up and started watching a zombie movie. The first film finished and I checked the time. It was already 9:00PM but there was no message from Ghost.

My phone vibrated same time the second movie ended.

‘The roof.’

I looked at the time, it was already past eleven.

‘It’s past eleven’ I sent back.

‘That’s my working time. Six minutes Ella.’

If there was one thing I had no doubt of was this ghost did not waste words and would not fail to kill someone if I did not make it on time.

‘I need to collect the gate key and it will take time.’

‘I’ve opened it.’

Of course, he had opened it. Stupid me.

I was afraid as I stepped outside. I had never in my life come outside by 11:PM, it was a first and there was something scary about it, like someone could just pounce on me, like a spirit could be staring and following me. I doubled my step but the fear tripled that I could hear my heartbeat. Every tree or building suddenly had eyes staring at me, even the pole looked like it would grab me. My phone blinked making me jump.

‘Switch off your light.’

I did as instructed and almost immediately I was lifted. He dropped me on the roof but did not hold me like before. He gently pulled me down. I wished he was rough, I wished he did not act like he was a lover on a picnic with his girlfriend, he was worse than a rapist. He made me sit in-between his legs, then used his hand to wrap me up like he was trying to remove my goose bumps and calm my nerve. My body immediately responded to the warmth and it automatically relaxed on him against my will. And some people would say the body and the mind were the same thing. I was a clear evident that they were wrong.

“You are struggling too much. Why are you fighting what you are feeling? It’s dangerous to separate your mind from your body.”



“If you care so much, just set my body free. Right now, I prefer my mind to my body.”

“And I prefer your body to your mind, so I’m the wrong person to ask for help.”

“Just know that I hate you, I hate you with every fiber in my being, if I have a choice between what you are doing to me and death, I will so choose death.”

“But your body is not saying the same thing. The mind is supposed to be more powerful than the body, it is supposed to control it, you are a unique subject Ella, your body is stronger than your mind and I don’t think it hates me.”

“My body, my mind, my soul detest you” I answered putting enough venom in my words.

He did not answer but suddenly pushed himself against me, his hand already under my T-Shirt and very close to my bra, his lips very close to my mouth. And that was it, he did not do anything else but my body was already on fire and I was already breathing fast. He was waiting for me to push his hands away and I wanted to, my mind wanted to but my body felt starved, my body wanted that liquid fire to once again flow through my iced blood stream, I could not push him away. He moved his hands closer and my mind remembered the Chaplain's preaching on Sunday. His topic was fornication in the house of God, I could literally hear his voice, that was not just what my mind was reminding me, there was the fact that his hands were filled with innocent blood and he had killed three people just few hours ago, people sent to protect me and most importantly my mind reminded me that I was nothing but a subject for him to use at will and I was making it impossible to blame him for

sexual harassment but my body was not listening. His touch was removing the icy and numb feeling and my body wanted the remaining ones gone. I felt a shock wave immediately his hand went under my bra touching my left breast, the fire erupted and filled me up making me pant for more. His lips were just too close and he was touching my mouth, I shifted my mouth and got his. I opened up for him and allowed him explore my mouth, his hand was just on my breast and I wanted him to do something. I held his hand and pushed it further. He chuckled bringing my senses back. I pulled away and he did not stop me but prevented me from leaving my position. Then I felt something else making me tense, fear gripped me. I must have pushed him beyond his limit and he could easily rape me....

“Hey I’m the one being harassed here, and yes, I can flip you down and have my way with you and you won’t be able to fight

me off, but that does not change the fact that your fear is ridiculous.”

How did he know what I was thinking?

“It’s obvious you are afraid of the bulge in my trouser, but it should not be new to you” he replied my unasked question.

It was new to me, very new and somehow scary, the worst part was his powerful male scent.

“You’ve not? You are still a virgin? You are still chaste. I’m really your first.”

“Get out of my head” I panted.

“I wish I was, I really want to know what you are thinking every second, minute and hour. I should have known you a virgin. But have you never been touched?”

“You said we will start the search for the file.”

“Did your grandma lock you up from men?”

“How did you know of my grandma?”

“That is a yes.”

“How did you know about my grandma?”

“Wrong question, you should ask how much I know about you.

You will be surprised how much I know. The first place I saw things you hated was your room at Ozoro.”

I tried to turn, to confront him but he held me back.

“It’s the normal thing Ella, I can’t work on my subject without knowing details.” The way he pronounced my name was making me feel things I could not place.

“How long have you been following me?”

“Why do you have Hausas and Fulanis as things you hated?

They are on your list from one to ten, why?”

“I’m not obligated to answer you.”

“Who is Ibrahim? You contradicted yourself by writing love only Ibrahim under your list. That name is Hausa or am I mistaken?”

“That’s none of your business.”

“Is he my competition?”

“You wish, you can never be near him as competition.”

“And you even named your teddy bear Ibrahim.”

“I still meant what I said, it is none of your business.”

“It is very much my business. The deal is I can do anything I want with you, and I want you to answer my questions.”

I did not respond, now that Ibrahim was being mentioned, my body was back with my mind, it happened automatically.

“Is it unrequited love? Why did Ibrahim leave you a virgin?”

I did not answer.

“You know I can find anyone.”

I had not laughed for a while and it was refreshing to be able to laugh. He thought he could use everyone to blackmail me, he should try find Ibrahim to his grave.

“I dare you to try.”

He did not say anything but his hands were back under my T-shirt but for the first time I was not interested. I tried pulling his hand away but could not. I thought I did not do it well so I used force but he held on. Panic enveloped me and the terror of the first night was nothing compared to the one I was feeling and tasting.

“You must have forgotten who I am. Good, it’s better to fear me, I don’t want you to ever forget I am a ghost.”

He removed his hands but did not free me, I was too frozen to run anyway.

“Your reactions to Ibrahim is piquing my interest but I will get my answer when I want, don’t forget that. Now do you still remember your dad’s last visit?”

I nodded, I was still too scared to talk, I could still feel the bulge in his trousers and my mind was overloaded with what he might do to me if I pissed him off.

“Was there anything unusual?”

I shook my head.

“Think, maybe a paper, a flash drive. He must have said something to indicate something like that was with him. The



man the leak came from wrote that your dad had the file with list of top names. He was killed just two days after your dad but his wife found what he wrote in his diary not too long ago, he wrote that in case he died, that she should find you and get the file he had given to your father, that his killer and many others would be caught.”

“Which side are you working for? Which of the names in the list hired you?”

I had so many things to ask but that was very important. I was being held by a man who had sold his soul for money, who would do anything as long as it paid and human lives made no meaning to him, this was the man I had kissed, my body had yearned for. I hated myself.

“Ella think. He died two days after returning from Ozoro.”

“He did not die, he was killed, he was murdered, it’s not the same thing” I cried, which was now my new hobby.

“Did he not mention any file? Your life is in danger because of this file.”

“No, he only visited the Cathedral and my life is in danger because of people like you, my life was okay until you came and started killing everyone on my side. Human lives have no value to you.”

“They are targets not humans.”

It was a waste of time explaining to someone that far gone. It even made me understand who I was dealing with. There would have been hope if he at least saw those he killed as humans.

“Am I also your target?”

“You’ve not yet made yourself my target, like I said, you are my subject.”

“No I am a human, a human with feelings, a human whose life has been taken from her. You can decide to call us anything but it would not change the fact that we are humans and you are a killer.”

“Says the person who sees Hausas and Fulanis as things. We are the same Ella, they are my targets, you are my subject same way Hausas and Fulanis are things to you.”

“They are not the same thing. I am not a killer” I shouted but he was already lifting me to the ground. My phone blinked.

‘Five minutes to get home.’

I kept my phone back in my pocket. I was mad and pissed off and I felt like daring him. I walked as slowly as possible but

started running when I remembered I would not be the one to be punished.

My phone blinked as soon I entered my room.

‘I will be visiting the cathedral, don’t forget the deal, you are mine and no one touches you’

‘I hate you’ but I could not send it, he might take it as breaking the deal and harm someone. This was now my life.

(Check it out on wattpad. Currently running together as facebook.

<https://my.w.tt/G4VkU1JQn7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER FOUR

I slept off as soon as my head touched the bed, I was too exhausted to think of anything. It was already past ten when I woke up. It was Saturday and so no lectures. I did my basic cleanings and went to New Benin market to buy foodstuffs. I sighted some people watching and following me. I felt like telling them to just save themselves. I just could not understand their stupidity because it was no longer bravery. Someone was killing them like he was drinking water and they had no idea who he was, yet they still tried to protect me, even after watching their colleagues die.

By the time I had finished all the basic things I did on Saturdays, it was already past 2:PM. I checked my phone to confirm if he

sent any message but none. My battery was low and there was no power supply.

I had loads of reading to do and I was far behind my reading schedule. I took some literature texts and note for jotting and went to H series at faculty to read. I made sure I went with extension to plug my phone and I was lucky to secure a space where I could watch my phone while charging.

I saw about five of them littering around the faculty and I wondered how Ghost did his own. He was too discreet and a ghost. As I sat down, I brought out my drinks and snacks and placed them on the table. The moment I opened the novel for my prose fiction course, I forgot my predicament and became lost. That was why I loved studying in school because I felt the desire to read and I easily understood what I read. I read and jotted down important points.

My phone blinked and when I checked it, it was the time and my full battery that caught my attention before I saw Ghost's message. I had read till 6:00PM. The coke drink, gala sausage, buns and meat pie I had brought were finished, just their waterproof was the evidence they were there.

‘It's getting late, start moving now.’

I felt angry and pissed off. Who was he to tell me what to do with my time? But something was missing because I could not feel him so how did he know where I was?

‘Move now’ another message came.

‘Get lost....’ But I quickly deleted it, I could not dare send that to him.

I started packing my things same time turning to know who was around. There were many, in fact night readers were trooping in,

some carrying extra wrappers to cover up. But the shadow I could not avoid was telling me to go home and if I didn't, he might kill someone and this time, their blood would be on my hands.

I had to remove others' chargers from my extension and as I started folding it, someone called me. I tensed, it was them, those cultist. I ignored him. They wouldn't dare do anything to me when the hall was crowded.

“No be you I dey call, this girl stubborn oo.”

I did not know their names and I did not want to, so in my mind I named the one talking Leader. I was through packing, everything was in my bag and with my phone on my hand, I tried to move out of the long chairs but they blocked me. Five of them, with three unfamiliar faces.

“What the heck do you want?”



“The guy, first give us the name of your guy. We don't beg Dr.

Bright but he nor won't talk, he's very afraid, I won't see that guy, I won't treat him the fuck up when he treats Dr, then you go become my girl, simple.”

The guy was one of the three new faces and I could just tell he was their leader and if I had doubt, it was confirmed with people cawing away from my area. He was dark and dyed the left side of his hair yellow, my worst color. His trousers were sagged which was same with others. He had two chains that looked heavy and a ring on the middle of his right finger. All were on red T-Shirt and had that confident posture. They had no idea who they were looking for.

“As much as I hate you obstructing my movement, I don't think it's enough for you to die. Human lives matter to me.”

They started laughing, I was not joking so what was the laughter for?

“I nor dey like stubborn people at all, I humble myself come ask you in peace and you wen nor reach anything dey waste my time. I won’t ask again, what is his name?”

My phone blinked.

‘Tell him, tell him he dies if he touches you, then get out now. Run and don’t stop till you get to your hostel.’

One of them tried to grab my phone but I pulled away in time.

He had no idea I just saved his life. I would think of how he could know what was going on but if I did not get to my hostel on time, one of the policemen would die.

“His name is Ghost.”

They looked at each other knowingly, like they were trying to figure out who had that code name among their rivals. I used that distraction to jump over the wooden chair and started running, I ran without stopping. There was no way I would give him a reason to kill another person. I did not know I could run. If not for my predicament, I wouldn't have believed I could run that long without stopping.

I was feeling faint by the time I got to LTV, Edo Street. I paused to inhale enough air but felt tense, like on Thursday. I immediately continued my race and only felt relieved when I entered my room. It was after I had sat down I discovered he did not visit my room. It was still scattered, my clothes and books and my plates were still dirty. My phone blinked as I panted.

‘Don’t step out of your room until tomorrow morning.’

‘Now you are controlling my movement?’

‘Choose carefully, get out and witness death, stay in and save lives.’

‘I never had a choice, stop making it look like I had a choice.’

‘See you tomorrow night.’

‘I should feel relieved you are giving me the night off?’

No answer.

‘How do you know where I am all the time? How did you hear what they were saying?’

No answer.

‘I hate you...’ but I deleted it and wrote ‘I hate how you’ve taken over my life.’

And then he replied with ‘Dream of me.’

‘Yes, I will make sure I dream of hurting you.....’ I deleted it and changed it to ‘I hate nightmares’ but the message bounced back with ‘not sent.’ I was beginning to hate those words.

My alarm woke me up by 6:AM. I remembered I did not pick the clothes I had hanged outside. I was lucky there was no rain. I said my prayers but I knew God would not answer. The clothes were cool to touch and would smell if I folded them, so I left them on the rope to get completely dry.

I loved first service because they closed on time and I could use the rest of my day to study. I was able to make it in time exactly when the priests and the choir were about marching inside. I hated having to stay outside because the doors were blocked till prayers ended. I sat down at the right which was at the last roll of seats separating nursing mothers’ rolls of wooden seats. I tried to flow with the service but my heart kept beating

and my mind kept screaming that I was a sinner. The guest speaker had not helped at all. His message was the sin of immorality. And he attacked me throughout the message. I begged God for forgiveness during closing prayers and I hoped my prayers were answered. I went straight home after service. I did not want to trek so I joined the bus waiting outside to pick people to Back Gate or Faculty. Those were the two names they called the park for UNIBEN student shuttle.

I knew something was wrong as soon as I entered my room but I could not place it. I made custard and eat it with fried ripe plantain while trying to figure out what I was missing. I had so many books to read, lectures would continue on Monday but I just couldn't get what was wrong until I noticed my bed was empty. Ibrahim was not there. I did not remember putting the teddy bear back in my bag but I still went to search. If he had

entered my room, I would have known because he would have arranged my stuffs but Ibrahim couldn't have just disappeared. I quickly picked my phone and sent him a text.

‘Where is Ibrahim?’

He replied almost immediately.

‘With me and I’m thinking if I should throw it in the waste bin.’

I did not know when I started dialing the line, I was not expecting it to go through but it did and he picked.

“Bring it back right now” I shouted.

“I am really scared Ella.”

“You can’t throw it away, it means a lot to me.”

“How?”

“Bring it back.”

“Who is Ibrahim, why is he different from the other Hausas and Fulanis you hate and see as things?”

“Is that what this is all about? You feel a teddy bear is your competition?” I shouted.

“Yes.”

“That teddy bear is worth more than anything I have, stop invading every part of my life, bring it back.”

“Who is Ibrahim?”

“Get lost.”

“Okay.”

“Nooo don’t” I pleaded.

I could not hold back my tears.



“Please don’t do this to me. I know you don’t have a soul and my tears and pain means nothing to you, but please I need that teddy bear, it’s my sanity and all I have please, I’m begging please.”

“You are yet to say what I want to hear.”

“I will tell you whatever you want to know but please don’t throw it away, don’t take away the only sanity I have please” I cried.

He did not answer but cut the call making me to panic. I would not survive it, I could not live without that teddy bear. I wished I could show him my mind. I wished he could see my thoughts and understand what that teddy bear meant to me. My phone blinked as I tried to call back.

‘Deal, everything I ask in exchange for Ibrahim. See you this night.’

‘You are hurting me, I can’t figure you out, I don’t know what you will do any moment, you are scaring me and making my life miserable.’

‘Now we are understanding each other’ he replied.

‘Just prepare to kill me if you are not bringing Ibrahim.’

‘Okay.’

‘Did you find the file?’ but the message bounced back ‘not sent.’

I was not expecting any form of sympathy or empathy and I was not surprised with his last text. At least I was sure he would bring back Ibrahim, he was always with the deal thing. I had no idea how far he would go to torment me. He just knew what to do to get at me and my tears would not matter to him because he was really a ghost. I should have understood him long again. Ghosts scare people, they could not been seen but could see

everyone and most importantly a ghost had no emotion whatsoever.

(running on wattpad. Check it out. Thanks)

<https://my.w.tt/tSEnGTuvp7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER FIVE

I was supposed to start reading so I could cover up but I just couldn't read nor eat. Ibrahim's absence was making me feel feverish like he would completely disappear from my life and I would forget him. I kept looking at my phone, monitoring the time but it was as if it was running backward. By 6:PM, I checked my message box, he might have sent a message but

there was none. 7:PM came and no message, then 9:PM still no message. I picked my phone and sent a message to him.

‘Please.’ It went but he did not reply.

I was becoming restless and panic was setting in when my phone blinked.

‘You can come out now.’

I was running out almost immediately, it was only when I got to the gate that I remembered I did not close my door. I hurriedly ran back.

As I stepped outside, I noticed the night was not that dark. It was clear enough to walk without a torch and clear enough to see a little of his face. He was not standing by the gate but I knew he was there because I could feel his presence. A bike was

driven to where I was standing, there was a big bag tied to it.

The driver stopped very close to me.

“Hop in.”

It was him and he was wearing those kind of helmet that covered someone’s face. I looked around and saw people were still active and going about their life. No one was looking my way, none were concerned that a bike like that were rear in Ekosodin.

“Ella.”

I hated the way my body reacted when he called my name.

“Where are we going to?”

“To wherever I’m taking you to. Five seconds.”

I knew he was not bluffing about the five seconds thing but there was no way I could navigate my way between him and the big

bag. As if he knew my thoughts, he shifted to the bike tank giving me the space I needed to hop in. I had no choice but to climb and follow him to my doom.

He drove down Edo Street, then turned left when he got to the T-junction. I had on few occasions bought akara, a beans cake at that junction. He drove straight ahead and soon, we were out of residential area and he was still driving. It was just bushes and bushes and more of foot road. I was right, he was taking me to where he would finally kill me because he had found the file.

“Where are you taking me to?” I shouted so he could hear me.

He did not answer but increased his speed. I was so afraid, that I started shaking. He could have just killed me where people would easily find me, but he had to take me to where I would never be found. I wish I could do something, like jump down but the load at my back was a big obstruction. I wondered what was

inside. He slowed down and stopped. I tensed waiting for death. He came down and without asking for my permission, he lifted me and dropped me on the ground. He did not leave me immediately but pulled me to him, then turned me.

“Look up?”

I did as instructed but there was nothing.

“The night is very beautiful especially on days like this when the sky is clear and full of stars.”

“Just be done with it.”

“With what?”

“Did you not bring me here to kill me because you now have the file?”

But he chuckled and I felt the vibration in my stomach, down between my legs.

“I can kill you anywhere if I want to.”

I always had that delusion that he was not that bad and I was kind of special and he was not going to kill me but no more. He was saying it as a matter of fact and I had no argument against that.

“So why did you bring me here?”

“You are so afraid Ella that you’ve forgotten we have a deal. Is Ibrahim no longer important?”

How could I forget? I had really forgotten about Ibrahim.

“Where is he?”

“You mean it?”

“I know what I said.”

“A teddy bear is he but humans are it?”



“Humans? Did you just say humans? You murdering soulless bastard” I shouted turning and pulling away from him.

I was so pissed up that I had forgotten who he was. He just stood there watching me and when my senses returned I wanted to run but when I turned, I was facing a river. I shifted back and bumped into him.

“You know how to swim?”

His voice was very close to my ears, I hated the sensation it sent to my cool body. I did not answer, I could only pant in fear. I just could not figure out while he brought me to a river in the night. He left me and went to his bike. He was pulling off the helmet when I turned and I was anticipating to finally see his face but I was disappointed, he was wearing a cloth mask with only his mouth and nose visible. His eyes were not because he was wearing a dark spectacle, and his nose and mouth were not

enough to define his appearance. He untied the big bag and carried it close to where I was standing.

“To wish to see my face it’s same thing as wishing to die.”

He was already bringing out things from the bag. Of course he knew what I was thinking.

“Those who hide their faces are ugly and it’s not even worth seeing” I retaliated.

Something was definitely wrong with me, I had to find my bad mouth right in the middle of nowhere. He did not answer but I knew it did not also mean he did not hear what I said. I

wondered what he was planning to do from all what I’ve called him. Fear gripped me when I remembered I had never been the one to suffer the consequences of my actions.

“If you feel insulted by what I said, just take it out on me, don’t you dare kill someone because I’ve not broken the deal.”

“Okay.”

He was on me almost immediately. I should be used to fear, I should not fear him because the worst he could do would be to kill me. I waited for him to strike.

“There are worse things than death Ella.”

“Get out of my head.”

He did not answer but covered my eyes and almost immediately, he pushed my hands behind and started tying it.

“What are you doing?”

“Sssh, don’t ruin my surprise and it’s better to remain still when you are being held by someone powerful, your wriggling

attempt can send the wrong signal to a male and give them ideas.”

I stood still and frozen.

“Good, you are a smart learner. Sit and stay still, I will be back.”

He pulled me down. He was going to leave me by the river surrounded by bushes, in the night.

“Why don’t you just kill...”

I was not even allowed to finish before he gagged my mouth.

Now the only active sense I had was my ears and it was whispering a lot of things. It was telling me the river goddess would soon arrive and claim me as a sacrifice that was if wild animals did not find me first or witches and wizards who had their meeting by a mango tree not far from me didn’t notice a girl alone by the river. What of herdsmen who slept in the bush,

who raped and killed women in broad daylight? What if one saw me sitting by the river? There could be a snake crawling towards me, maybe a big python and it might suffocate and swallow me before the others.

I shook from fear waiting for what would first get to me and I screamed when someone touched me. My scream was cut off from coming out by the gag in my mouth. This was how I would die, with no one hearing the cry of a lonely girl. I felt myself wrapped in a warm body. I never knew snakes were warm blooded animals.

“Ella, you will collapse from fear.”

It was Ghost. He removed the gag, the cover on my eyes and he untied my hands. He wore a spectacle on my eyes.

“Open your eyes Ella.”

Why did my body keep reacting anytime he called my name?

“Open.”

I slowly opened my eyes and I could see. It was like being under a blue bomb but still very clear. I could see the river clearly. It had two creeks, one running to the right and the other running straight up but bent at a certain end. The creeks were separated by thick shrubs. The one at the right was flowing and foaming like it was angry while the bigger one which was straight was just flowing normal, I tried to follow the bend and discover it must have split to two making it three creeks. By my left was a little red hill full of bamboo trees. It was so amazing. I never knew Ekosodin had a river and such amazing sight. It was like I was back home, back at Ozoro, although the rivers at home were larger.

“Raise your head.”

He was still holding me from behind. I raised my head and it was just so cool. The stars were looking so bright and the moon though not full was amazing to look at. There was one particular star that kept moving and twinkling.

“That’s not a star, it’s called a satellite.”

He responded to my thought and not only that, he just ruined my happy mood because I remembered who he actually was.

He turned me from the river and I could not believe what was before me. A transparent tent, because I could see what was inside including Ibrahim. I pulled away from him and ran to the tent. I tried to locate the zip but nothing like a zip. Suddenly, a part of it started opening, I turned to see him pressing a watch on his wrist. I rushed inside and grabbed Ibrahim. I held it to my cheek and inhaled a sigh of relief.

“Very predictable.”

I turned to see he was already inside and the tent was closed.

Then my panic came back.

“You always fear the wrong thing.”

He moved closer to me and I pushed back, but he crawled past me to where he had set food and drinks. The tent was big, there was enough space for two to lie down and there was a foam mat already placed on the ground which I was sitting on and opposite the mat was the food.

“Let’s eat so you can have enough strength to answer me.”

“I’m not hungry.”

“I know that. I can make you hungry when I’m ready. I was talking about the food in front of you not the other food.”

“You think you are funny?”

“No, my family do.”



“So you have a family? How is that possible? Are they humans?”

“Only few are humans, the rest are like me.”

“So you agree you are a soulless freak, who derives joy in killing humans and tormenting an innocent girl?”

“I prefer soulless ghost, there is nothing freaking about being a ghost and I don’t kill humans but targets. I neutralize or eliminate them. Most importantly, I send them to the underworld straight to luficer. And as for your innocence, I am yet to find out if your claim is true. Can we do that after the food?”

I looked at him, really looked at him. Even though I could not see his face and the glasses had covered his eyes, I really looked at him and thought of all the curses I could not say.

He ignored my stares and started eating. It was pepper soup with yam and the scent was making my stomach sing.

“Ella eat, unless you want us to skip this part. You have no idea the number of people looking for me to cut off my head for pickpocketing their food.”

“And if I don’t?”

He raised his head to look at me. I had no idea what he was thinking or if he was provoked.

“Then I will finish it.”

That was not what I was expecting. I was expecting him to blackmail me.

“It’s good you are beginning to see me as human enough to threaten you to eat which is for your own good. But I won’t blackmail you to eat a delicious meal, that is none of my damn

business and if you choose to starve to death, it will be good for me.”

I did not know what came over me because I was already eating before he finished his statement. And once the first taste burst in my mouth, I forgot the evil before me and rushed at the food. I had tasted a bush meat but just once. The taste was exquisite and mind blowing.

“I wonder if you are as passionate with the other food with the way you are moaning.”

And he had to kill my appetite.

“Not only are you a soulless killer but a pervert.”

“And how did your mind explain what I was saying? You may not be that innocent.”

“I am a virgin and I have never had a man....”

I stopped talking, he was doing it on purpose, he was making say what he wanted to hear.

“Why did Ibrahim leave you a virgin?”

“Get lost.”

“Who is Ibrahim?”

“Get...”

But he cut me off. He was just too fast and I never expected his action. Ibrahim was out of my hand and I was lying down on the soft mattress, he on top of me. He raised me up and made me to sit in between his legs.

“Burning of the teddy bear and throwing it to the river which do you prefer.”

He had used his calm voice, I was beginning to differentiate the implications of his voice. He was not bluffing.

“Please...”

“You broke the deal.”

“I’m sorry, I will tell you anything, please, I’m begging you please. I’m sorry.”

I started crying because he was always with the deal.

“Who is Ibrahim?”

I stopped crying. He was giving me another opportunity.

“He was my friend.”

“Was?”

“He is dead.”

He became still. I could just feel his stillness. He must have been thinking of how he would use him to blackmail me, how disappointed he must have felt.

“How long?”

“Since I was seven.”

“You are still clinging to someone who has be dead for more than twelve years? You are twenty Ella.”

“I don’t expect you to understand.”

“Tell me.”

I did not want to share. Ibrahim was very personal but I would lose the teddy bear if I didn’t share.

“My grandma and I had once lived in the north. His uncle used to be our neighbor, he had three wives and so many children all cramped up in two rooms. One day, I saw a new face. He was eleven years then and he used to sit at the corridor and cry. His tears used to make me cry too, so some days I would tell my grandma my food was not enough so I could give to him. I

thought that was what made him to cry. He would take it and thank me. I would sit close to him till he finished then, I would give him water. But he still cried, so one day, I asked him if the food wasn't enough but he told me he was crying because he missed his parents and siblings who were killed by Fulani herdsmen. He said he had walked three days to get to his uncle's place. I had no idea what death really meant but I knew it was something bad because I could almost feel his pains. I would hold his hands till he stopped crying. I told him I had no mum and dad too and it was just me and Grandma and with time, Grandma told him to stop sitting at the corridor but to come inside. Gradually he started staying with us, even sleeping with us because there was no space in his uncle's house. He became my best friend and I told him everything. He did not like the fact that he was eating for free, so he would go and do some menial jobs and give the money to my grandma but Grandma always

told him to keep it for the raining day. I always told him I wanted to have a teddy bear and he bought this one for me. He would sometimes come back with wounds in his body, he kept telling me it was an accident but I knew it was his uncle. It was confirmed the day he limped to our house with blood flowing out his right leg. Grandma had angrily confronted his uncle. That was how I knew his uncle wanted to sell him as a houseboy to one rich Igbo trader but Ibrahim did not want to go. His Uncle told my grandma to pay the money he had collected from the business man if he wanted to side with Ibrahim's stubbornness. I cried that day because I had no money, Grandma had no money to pay. Even Grandma cried too. Two days later, while he was still recovering from the wound and fever, his uncle brought men to bundle him to his house. He told grandma that he was sending Ibrahim away immediately he recovered. I kept going there but I was not allowed to see him. Then two days later, we



heard wails and screams. We ran out to see them wailing that Ibrahim was dead. My grandma did not believe them, we thought they had finally sold him away but it was true. We saw his wrapped body and we saw him being buried. His uncle later came to officially tell us he was dead and buried according to Islamic rights. I became very sick and that was also when my prodigal dad who I thought was dead came back. When Grandma saw that I was not recovering, she decided to relocate to Ozoro and she sewed Ibrahim's name on the shirt of the teddy bear. Somehow, holding the teddy bear close to me had made me heal a bit, enough to start my normal life."

But I never one day felt alive, the emptiness Ibrahim left never filled up but I was not going to tell him. I had told him enough, more than what he was supposed to know and I had a feeling that I betrayed Ibrahim.

“So I have no competition.”

“It’s not that I am expecting any sympathy from you but it’s that all you can think of? After forcing me to share something personal, is that all you can say?”

“Yes.”

“You are the worst human to walk on earth, a soulless killer.”

“You’ve said that many times but you keep ignoring the other thing I’m good at.”

“You are only good at killing and ruining people’s life.”

“You must have forgotten, let me remind you.”

And his lips was on mine without warning. I just did not understand what was wrong with my body. It was Sunday and I had asked God for forgiveness not too long ago but I was back to sinning because I did not resist him. I let him fill me. I even

shifted to give him more access. There was something different this time, I wanted more. I turned and found myself kneeling and pushing my body to him. He made a groan that sent a flame down between my legs. I pushed further and let him ravage my bare back with his rough and strong hands. He moved over to my stomach and gently pushed me to the mat. He left my mouth and kissed my ear, his teeth grazed the lobe making me jerk up with the sensation, his lips were already on my throat and I bent it to give him enough access.

“Your words can lie but actions don’t” he whispered to my ears bringing back my sanity. He was off me before I could push him away.

I felt guilt and lots of shame that tears started flowing from my eyes but he was not looking at me. His eyes were focused somewhere. I balanced my spectacle and saw what he was

looking at. There were two men standing not too far from the tent, I was hundred percent sure they were herdsmen.

“Stay here, don’t move.”

He brought out something from a bag in the tent and was out before I could protest. I did not even know why I wanted to protest but I was afraid for him, might be because of who Hausas and Fulanis represented to me. And I was right because one of them brought out a riffle and pointed it at him. I could hear Hausa and he was shouting at him to go on his knees. The other one changed to Hausa Pidgin English, after Ghost did not respond.

“I say go on my knees” the one with the gun shouted.

The other one told him he was wasting time, he should just shoot him, let them have their way with me but he responded that killing could make the locals hunt for them but they would

not bother much if it was rape because my boyfriend and I will be too ashamed to talk about it. Then the other one told him that the man he was telling to kneel down was not cooperating and he really needed to copulate with someone or he would burst.

“I don’t want to kill you, I will rather solve your erection issue. You won’t be able to sleep with a woman. But I want to give you a lifeline, go.”

And he was so calm, like he was explaining the meaning of something to someone and a gun was not being pointed at him.

“I go shoot you now.”

“Once you pull that trigger you die.”

Even before he finished his statement, I saw something spinning with light. It was cylindrical in shape. It came out from where he had left the bag, which was same place he was standing. The

man pulled the trigger but the bullet did not hit Ghost almost like it was deflected. Ghost was on him before he could get another shot. He pushed something to his throat and dodged the other ones dagger which he was aiming at his back. He raised him up and slammed him on the ground, then pushed something into his throat like the other man who was already convulsing. The other joined the first one to convulse, foam was coming out of their mouth as they jerked. Soon they were dead, because they were no longer moving.

As Ghost walked back to the tent, I started shifting back and only stopped when my back hit the end.

“Are they also humans? I’m very sure you know what they wanted to do to you.”

He moved closer to me but I wanted to disappear.

“What did you do to them?”

“They died of a snake venom, case closed.”

“Couldn’t you just knock them out?”

“Next time I will think of handing you over to them. I thought they are things to you or are they now humans?”

I could not answer, hating them was different from watching them die. And he just said he would let them hurt me next time.

“I hate them and I still hate them but that was a horrible way to die. Is not that you are different from them.”

“Really?”

“What you are doing to me is not my choice. I won’t lie to you that my body does not want it but I will be lying if I tell you it’s what I want. You are making me hate my body.”

“Picnic is over.”

“Keep on deluding yourself that you went out on a picnic if it makes you feel better.”

I froze when he looked at me. I had said the wrong thing and there was a consequence. He took my spectacle from me.

“I need to pull down the tent, get out.”

I preferred his other voice, not the calm one. I was out of the tent in a jiffy and I watched him dismantle it with his wristwatch, after he had packed out the things inside. The tent shrunk and he dug out the four poles holding it to the ground.

He did not say anything to me and he was still quiet when he dropped me by my gate.

“See you tomorrow night.”

“I thought you’ve found the file.”

“We will explore your memory tomorrow.”



And with that, he drove off. I had to knock at the gate and I was lucky someone dimed it fit to come open for me by 1:13 AM.

“Are you mad? Why can’t you sleep over there? Do you know you are disturbing everybody?”

I had to shrink away to avoid the spit he was sending to my face. He was really angry.

“I’m sorry.”

“If you plan on repeating this nonsense, just buy all the keys and have one for yourself. I hate noise.”

He left and his footsteps resonated his anger. I locked the gate and also locked the inner gate and jumped on the bed as soon as I entered my room, Ibrahim in my arms. I was worried about his silence, about what he would do. I hated his silence but I hated my life more. My phone blinked.

‘You are mine, don’t forget that.’

‘I’m not your possession.’

I did not know why I kept pushing him.

‘Is the deal over?’

He was such a manipulative jerk, making me feel I had a choice and I chose him.

‘No.’

‘Good, dream of me.’

‘I hate you’ but I did not send it.

I was trapped and there was no getting out, nowhere to run to.

(Also check it out on wattpad, thanks)

<https://my.w.tt/yhfJZtl7q7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER SIX

If I had not set alarm, I wouldn't have woken up early for my first which was Dr. Bright's class. He was always with 7:AM classes because it was not part of the lecture timetable and the classrooms were empty for use. He said he would be always busy during his lecture time on the timetable

I was already by the Faculty orchard when I remembered he had banned me from his class. I stood by the entrance to the Faculty confused on what to do. My phone blinked.

‘He is not coming today but he you can now attend his class.’

It was not just the text message but his presence that disturbed me. He was around. I turned to locate who I'd never seen his face.

‘Where are you? Why are you following me in the morning?’

‘How did you know?’

‘I can feel your presence.’

And it was just when I have pressed send I knew I was stupid to send that kind of text.

‘Really? So where am I?’

I did not answer him but moved to my now favorite sitting position. The morning was a bit chilly and students were not yet trooping into the school. It was just a minute past seven when I sat down on the iron chair. I was the only one on my roll. I

robbed my arms to warm my chilly body. My phone blinked again and I wanted to ignore him but I still opened the message.

‘Ella I hope I’ve not made you believe I’m giving you the choice to ignore me.’

‘Can’t you just give me some breathing space?’

‘How can you feel my presence?’

‘How am I supposed to know that?’

‘Can you pinpoint my location?’

‘No, just feelings.’

‘Nice gown and I want to feel your hair tonight, loose that thread, I hate it.’

I turned round, not that I was looking for him, I was looking for someone out of the ordinary, someone who gave out the aura of

danger but all I saw were those sent to watch me. They were still there. I sent a message to D.P.O.

‘Sir, is it not possible to remove your men? I have everything under control.’

I did not get a reply from him. I must have sat down there for up twenty minutes when my phone blinked, I thought he had replied but instead it was Ghost who replied.

‘I don’t remember telling you to send that message to him.’

‘Are you now monitoring my phone?’

‘You just broke the deal.’

Panic enveloped me as I typed another message.

‘No I did not, I was just trying to...’

I did not know what to write to convince him I was not trying to send away those he was using to blackmail me so I would be free. I just knew I was running out of time.

‘Please, I did not intend to break the deal.’

‘Too late.’

I prayed he was bluffing and no one would die but I was wrong.

I heard sounds of gunshots. It made those walking towards

Faculty to turn back. I did not run for my life, I ran towards the

sounds of gun battle. It had ended before I got there. It was not

too far from the Faculty security office. It was a massacre, I

counted four dead men close to a Hilux jeep, the door was

opened and the person sitting on the driver’s seat was also dead.

They all had guns that I had never seen before. I shifted back

and bumped into one of the security officers who was running to

the scene.

“Calm down young lady, I think the shooting is over” the man said tapping my shoulders and running towards them.

This was horror, I did not want to see more than the five dead men I saw, I was sure they were not the only one. My phone blinked but I refused to check the message.

Suddenly, I noticed a red beam of light was on my stomach. I had watched something like that in so many films that I knew someone was pointing a gun at me. A sniper was the right word. My phone blinked again when I was already bringing it out from my bag.

‘That is the reality of what happens when your break the deal.’ That was the first message. I scrolled to the last one.

‘See you this night’ but the beam was still there. I raised my head thinking there was a ray that I could follow to locate him, to kill him but there was none.



‘I wish I was powerful. I would have made your death very slow and painful.’

He did not answer but he was still there and the beam was still there. I was still too shaken to move.

‘You have lectures by 8:AM, move now or another dies.’

I had it in me to revolt, but I knew the consequences.

As I walked to B series for my English class, I felt numb. The class was getting filled up with the shooting and the number of casualties the major argument of different groups as I found a seat with just three people. The girl at the edge refused to let me sit down, she said the seat was already occupied. I had to go to the back before I found a seat with just a girl.

My head was on the desk immediately I sat down and I let the tears flow. I wept for the number of men Ghost had killed, I

wept for my lost soul. I wept because I knew my body would still not resist him later at night. I was miserable and it was worse than my zombie state.

“Hey, are you alright?” I heard a male voice.

I quickly wiped my tears with my palm. He was handsome and was the most popular guy in the class. Ken was not just fair and handsome but was from a rich family. Girls always struggled to have same seat with him. And nothing had changed because the seat now had six people and one of the girls was still telling her friend to shift.

“You know it’s obvious you are crying. Ella what is wrong?”

“You know my name?”

He chuckled revealing his dimples. Why should a guy have dimples? Wasn’t it a sin? He did not have beards, it was neatly

shaven. He had a pointed cheek bone and his nose was perfectly made to fit his face.

“Everybody knows your name, with the stunt you pulled on Dr. Bright.”

“I did not pull any stunt. I have no hand in what happened to him.”

“What of the phone?”

“You won’t understand even if I told you.”

“Okay, let’s skip that to why a pretty young lady is crying.”

I quickly cleaned my eyes.

“The tears are no more but I know you were crying. What’s wrong?”

The noise in the class was much and he had to move his face very close for me to hear and in addition to that, I could feel the heavy glares from the four ladies on the seat.

“Ken you promised to give me the novel today” Mabel, the most popular girl in class said.

I had seen her coming to our seat from the front seat where I could not sit because her friends had kept seat for her. She glared at me as she spoke.

Ken was still looking at me, and he did not turn to her as he brought out one of his literature novels to give to her.

“I will see you later this night, hope you’ve not forgotten our outing?” She made sure she strained the last words for my listening ears.

Ken nodded and she felt angry at his non attention, she faked a smile and cat-walked back to her seat.

“So? What’s up Ella?”

But the lecturer entered the class saving me from answering. He was one strict lecturer that could send someone out for just sneezing. The class went silent that one could hear a pin drop.

“Sorry for coming late, it was as a result of the shootings and dead bodies.”

“Yes class rep.”

“Any news sir, are we safe? This is the second in less than a week.”

“The only news is that students are safe, that’s according to the police. The casualties were not Uniben student and even though their identities are yet to be known and the reasons are yet to be

unraveled, they are sure they are not students. But we hope the police bring an end to these shootings and killings, we don't want any student becoming casualty of a stray bullet. Okay to the business of the day.”

Lecture started but I could not concentrate. They were not unknown, they were police officers on an undercover mission to protect me from the man who killed them for fun. They could not even protect themselves, they had no idea who he was and they were yet to accept reality that they were the prey of a dangerous predator who was using every single opportunity to gradually pick them out. He had said I broke the deal but I did not, I had no way of countering him then but I now had.

“Are you sure you followed the lecture?”

It was Ken, lecture was over and people were already strolling out. That was when I remembered the cult guys, they were not around. They hardly attended classes.

“Hey Ella, I’m right here.”

“What did you say?”

“Are you this always distracted?”

“Sorry.”

“I was asking you about who made you cry.”

I looked at him and saw he was serious, genuinely serious about knowing.

“I wish I could tell you but I can’t. Thanks for asking.”

I did not look back as I hurried to my now favorite seat. There was no damn way I would put him in the line of fire.

Immediately I sat down, my phone blinked.

‘Smart girl.’

‘Don’t you dare use him to blackmail me, he was just worried about me.’

‘You are just too receptive to everyone, you think that is all he wants?’

‘It doesn’t matter, I won’t accept, I won’t let you harm him.’

‘I had no plan to consider harming him, he is not worth my attention, not even close to my competition.’

‘Because you know I won’t look his way because I’m trying to protect him.’

‘No, because you are not interested in him like you yearn for my touch of ecstasy.’



It was just a text but my body had reacted and I was getting aroused and it made me want to tear my skin. Something was wrong with me.

‘Then promise not to harm him if I go out with him.’

‘I don’t care as long as it does not interrupt when I want you. Go prove me right.’

He was so sure of himself and I was going to prove him wrong.

‘I did not break the deal, you said I could pick his calls and answer his messages.’

If only I remembered that earlier.

‘Knowing, understanding and comprehending are three different things. I take back my ‘smart girl.’ Try comprehend what that meant then text me with a better argument.’

He was right, he said I could only pick and reply his calls and messages, but I had been the one to contact him. But it did not change anything, it was not enough reason to murder anyone.

And the worst part was he was still around I could still feel him.

I did not want to text him, I wanted him to hear the anger and resentment in my voice so I dialed his line and he picked.

“What is the difference?” I shouted attracting people to me.

I stood up and walked towards the orchard.

“Six dead men is the difference.”

I shouldn't have called him because his voice was ringing inside me.

“Because you...”

I turned to see if someone was close to me. There was no one but Grandma had always said the walls and trees could sometimes hear and gossip.

“How do you feel now, are you happy? Are you satisfied?”

“Absolutely. You are now understanding me. I am even chilling with meat I pickpocketed. You won’t believe the way she was screaming my name and she is so feisty, one hell of a pup.”

I tried to ignore the fact that he mentioned pup, like a baby dog.

“I hope you choke to death as you eat and I hope satan welcomes you to his kingdom.”

“You really look damn hot in that gown, I am almost angry at the attention you’ve been receiving and I hardly get angry.”

I turned round but nobody suspicious. He was right about some guys looking at my behind. Grandma said it was the proper

language to use. I remembered he loved using the roof and raised my head.

“I’m not on the roof and you won’t even see me if I was.”

“Can you leave now?”

“If you can leave your shadow. I feel like plucking out the eyes of that guy on ash T-shirt.”

I located the guy he was describing. There were six boys sitting down on the iron chair sharing boundary with the orchard. I had backed the orchard when I turned to search for him. The guy was not hiding his raw desire and it was making me sick. I had another lecture in two hours’ time, so I decided to just go and find an empty class to read.

“Don’t you have anything to do with your life?”

“That’s exactly what I’m doing. I never knew this was going to be fun, to think I had first rejected this assignment.”

“Killing people is fun? And it’s just like an assignment to you? You bastard.”

I had said it before I knew what I said. I stopped my movement afraid of the repercussion.

“You always fear the wrong thing Ella.”

“Punish me if you felt insulted.”

“Keep walking, you are blocking someone’s path.”

I turned to see that someone was very close, I continued walking.

“Don’t take it out on anybody, take it out on me.”

“Okay, it’s just sad you always enjoy it. I just need to touch you for you to melt in my arms and you are so passionate.”

His words were doing something to my body, I hated my body's reaction.

“And the fun part I was talking about is you, you are too interesting. You are such a delicious subject and I can't believe I'm going to be heavily paid to have fun.”

I cut the call, I hated my body but I hated him more.

Just when I had brought out my book to read, my phone blinked.

It was not Ghost, but the D.P.O.

‘Ella, the only way to save the lives of these men is to locate that file. I can't leave you unprotected.’

I did not reply him because I did not want to lie.

“So it's not just his ears that was pierced but he was stabbed in his.....” the girl was in front of me with her two friends. I could

not just place why girls always grouped themselves in threes.

She turned round to see if people were listening to them. I bent my head and pretended I was seriously occupied with my book.

“In his manhood.”

The other girls gasped, one covered her mouth with her palm.

“It was my aunt at UBTH who told me. He was first tied and locked in his office and the culprit had come back to do the stabbing very early in the morning. He would have bled to death if he was not rescued early.”

“Good for him, I heard it was a cultist girlfriend who he seized her phone who did it to him” the girl by the right said.

“And he has cultist as friends, I hope that is not the reason for all these shootings, there is no smoke without fire” the girl by the

right said. The first speaker was in the middle. I took my phone to send a message to Ghost but a message came from him.

‘There is really no smoke without fire, smart and stupid girls, they are turn down, can’t wait to see you this night, you are mine.’

He too was listening. It was one thing to be followed and another to be monitored and followed. I was really in a mess. I could not believe that the whole time I had let him kiss me that night, Dr. Ken was tied in his office and he had still gone back to pierce his ears and stab him in his unmentionable part as Grandma called it. I wished he got stabbed there too

‘You are evil beyond redemption’ but the message bounced back as not sent.



(Check it out on wattpad)

<https://my.w.tt/Tvzmt728v7>

Thanks.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

I had an impromptu test during my last lecture for the day and I knew I wrote rubbish and I would be battling to avoid F during exams. He was ruining my present and future, that was if I had one. As my course mates trooped out, I saw Ken coming to my seat.

“Hope you wrote something?”

He sat down on the empty space close to me.

I shook my head in response.

“Is it that you did not read or you are still very distracted?”

I did not answer nor look his way. I concentrated on my note like I was reading something. He held my hand and there was no feelings, I felt nothing, I knew what would have happened if it was Ghost and it made me ashamed.

“Can I take you out?”

He had finally decided to go straight to the point.

“Why?”

“You need a distraction, I really want to know what is troubling you. I can help.”

He would only end up as one of the casualties.

“I can’t tell you.”

“It’s okay, I won’t pressure you but don’t let it disrupt your studies.”

I did not respond, somehow I just did not like his presence.

“So will you go out with me?”

“You have lots of girl tripping for you why me?”

“You are different and unique. You are very beautiful but you always do everything to hide it. You are not like those girls and I have always been attracted to you.”

“I’m not interested in any relationship now.”

“It’s okay, can will be friends, reading friends?”

I wanted to say no but I remembered Ghost.

“Just reading friends?”

He nodded.

“Okay.”

His smile was captivating and those dimples were distracting.

He brought out a paper and pen for me to write my number.

“I know you won’t agree to come to my place, what if we use empty classrooms?”

I looked at him and wondered what I just got myself involved in.

He was handsome but I felt bored being around him. I nodded.

“Good, I will call.”

He left and my phone blinked.

‘When a guy ask you ‘can we be friends’ after you’ve rejected him, it means ‘can we start with friendship before dating?’

‘Yes’ means I’m giving you another chance to ask me out later.’

‘Thanks for the relationship tip, maybe I’m giving him the chance to work his way to my heart.’

‘That’s why he is not my competition.’

‘Wait and see.’

‘That’s the issue, time is running too slow and this waiting to see you in the night is not working, but I will still wait.’

I remembered the message I had sent earlier and re-sent it.

“You are evil beyond redemption’ but it still bounced back as not sent.

As I waited for him, I wished he would cancel and let me be for the night. It was already past nine. My phone started ringing, the number was unknown.

“Hi Ella.”

It was Ken.

“Ken.”

“Sorry I am calling late, will you be free tomorrow night?”

“I don’t know.”

“Okay, lets’ study during free time tomorrow.”

“Okay.”

“Goodnight.”

I did not answer, I dropped my phone without checking if he had cut the call. The feeling I had when talking to him was the same feeling I got from watching a very boring movie and I just did not know why. My phone blinked.

‘Come outside.’

The night was not pitch dark neither was it clear enough. The stars looked like they were being forced to wake up and the moon seemed to be having a beef with the sky. There was light

but nothing like streets light. Just stores which were not powerful enough to illuminate everywhere. He was on same bike with same bag.

“Your hair is beautiful.”

I had to lose my hair to prevent him from seeing another reason to take another life. I stood there watching him.

“Ella let’s go.”

“You are destroying me, why are you doing this to me? Why can’t you just kill me? If I die, that file won’t ever be discovered because I’m the last person in my family. You are torturing me, forcing me to do things against my will. Please can you give me my life back, or just kill me?”

I just could not explain what came over me. I was crying and it was from the depth of my heart. I was going out with a soulless

murderer who had no value for human lives and that was not the worst part. I kept enjoying his presence and his touch. My body kept yearning for his touch. I was just messed up in every way.

“Three seconds and I’m off.”

And the worst part of my messed up life was I kept expecting him to change, I kept thinking there was still hope for him to become a bit human. I rushed at the bike when I noticed he was almost moving.

I cried all the way to the river and I did not bother to look his way as he fixed the tent. I did not protest when he gave me a spectacle and told me to enter the shelter.

I sat knees raised and placed my head on my knees and I just let the tears flow. I raised my head after I have exhausted my tears. He was eating unperturbed by my tears. He did not even ask me



if I had eaten, he was becoming worse each day. I watched him finish the food and put back the empty flask in a small bag.

“You know you did a good job. I heard indigenes discussing about the herdsmen who were beaten by a poisonous snake.

Some said their charms against snakes must have failed them.

People are now afraid to come to the river because they believe the snake is still around, if only they knew they are right.”

He did not answer, he just looked at me. I wished I could see his face, at least know who I had kissed and yearned for. What if he had a monstrous face? I hated that beauty and the beast story, just didn't know why.

“I won't say I'm handsome but I'm sure I'm not ugly.”

He knew what I was thinking about .

“If you are that good why hiding your face? Why are you afraid I will be able to describe you and you will be caught?”

“There are just three categories of people who can see my face. My family, those who will not even remember seeing me among the crowd of faces they had seen, and then my targets. But not all my targets see my face. They have a higher chance of surviving if they don’t see my face.”

“Then which category am I in?”

“You have the answer to your question.”

“That’s a way of saying I’m a subject for now but will become a target when you have the file.”

He did not respond.

“Why can’t you just kill me now? Is it too much to ask for. I’m sitting here trying to figure you out, wondering what I will do in

future and who will die as a result of it. You were right, there are things worse than death and I'm experiencing one now. I can't get over the number of policemen who have died because of me, their lives are hanging on a balance and I have to do anything to keep them alive."

"Is that what the D.P.O told you? Police officers?"

I kept quiet

"What did he say about me?"

I kept quiet.

"Ella."

That calm voice. I opened my mouth and spoke very fast.

"That you are working for one of people in the list. He said he is not sure if you are working for one Mohammed, a senator."

He did not say a thing, he just watched me. The silence was too loud. He finally spoke after some minutes.

“Why do you hate Hausas and Fulanis?”

“Can I choose not to answer?”

He shook his head.

“You are forcing me to share every private thing about me, it’s not fair. I don’t know you, I have no idea what you look like.”

No answer.

“They killed my family.”

“Who told you that?”

“I thought you already know so much about me? Did you not study the part where my family were murdered by Fulani herdsmen? My step-mum was raped and butchered, my kid brothers Efe and Maro were not shown mercy. They were just

three years and three months. My dad was also butchered and Grandma had slept and did not wake up. The worst part was one Umaru, my dad's biggest client was among his killers. Then there was a soldier who could have saved them, he could have alerted the military but he did not. He watched my family die, he is Hausa too. The army even refused to prosecute him."

"I read and studied everything about you but I never came across the story of the soldier."

"The D.P.O told me. I could not follow up using the media so he updated me. Two police officers were killed during a shootout with the twelve herdsmen. One Musa was arrested and he confessed that the soldier was their friend and it was actually the soldier who killed one of the policemen."

"Then why can't you just hate the criminals? Why the whole tribe?"

“I choose who to hate and I have nothing to explain about. The D.P.O is from my tribe and his life is always in danger because they see him as an enemy.”

“The one you should fear is the D.P.O because the friend you don’t know is more dangerous than the enemy you know.”

“Any more questions?”

“No.”

“Can I ask?”

“No.”

“Will you stop if I offer you enough money?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“It’s against the code.”

“So criminals have a code?”

He did not answer.

“Is there any way to appeal to the humanity left in you? You are also destroying my future, I wrote a test today and it was terrible.”

He did not answer.

“Please, I promise to help get that file, just don’t use every opportunity to kill those men. I don’t want to see any more dead bodies.”

No answer.

“And please don’t intervene in my academics, I can’t concentrate and I’m being tagged as the girlfriend of a cultist.”

“Then Ken must be very bold, if he believes you are dating a cultist he won’t ask you out.”

“I have been saying a lot since but you chose to answer this?”

I shouted.

No answer.

“Did you have to stab him there? Very soon the rumor will spread to my course mates and I wonder how they will see me.”

“Dr. Bright is a very lucky man. He just needs to heal and go back to normal. He is lucky he did not encounter my sister.”

“You have a sister? You are really human? You have a sister?” I shouted.

“A crazy sister who would have castrated him. There would have been no need for hospital because she would have treated him.”

I tried to imagine what he said but could not. The picture he was trying to paint was not believable.



“I don’t believe you.”

“I was never trying to convince you, I was just stating a fact that my sister wouldn’t have been so lenient to a confirmed rapist.”

I did not want to know how he confirmed Dr. Bright was a confirmed rapist.

“So you are telling me that your sister is also not human.”

“I will prefer crazy, a definition of sweet but poison.”

“So your family runs an assassin business?”

He did not answer but moved close to me, he was so close that I could feel his breath.

“Don’t touch me”

He was trying to touch my cheek but I shifted away, I knew how my body would react and I did not want it.

He did not listen but instead pulled me to him and forced me to sit between his legs, then used his hands to wrap me in.

“You are cold, the weather is a bit chilly.”

“I never knew you cared so much. You think there is a difference to what you are doing and what Dr. Bright did?”

“Ella did your dad show signs that he was worried?”

I wanted to ignore him, I wanted to just have the power to snub him but I knew the consequence.

“No..” but then I remembered.

“Yes, he said he was having some stress at work. Grandma had noticed he was looking lean.”

“Did he not elaborate?”

“No.”

“There was nothing in the cathedral.”

“Then he did not bring the file home.”

“He did. The man wrote that your dad told him he was going home to hide it where only you can find.”

I tried to think of any secret place I shared with my dad but there was none.

“There should be Ella, maybe somewhere you use to visit together.”

“The D.P.O has asked me something like that and I gave him same answer, there is none apart from...”

I paused.

“Ella.”

“My mum’s grave, but we did not visit the grave.”

“Your mum’s grave was already visited before I got there.”

I had almost forgotten there were many of them looking for the file.

“Have you also been eliminating your rivals?”

He did not answer but spoke after some minutes.

“Are you sure you are okay? Your body is warm.”

“That’s the best news I have heard in days, maybe nature will kill me before you do, saving me from extra tortures.”

I did not know what was wrong with what I said because he became stiff.

“You think your death will set my targets free?”

“I wish I understand your question.”

He did not answer but pulled me closer, his hand on my hair.

“Your hair is beautiful.”

I did not answer because I was loving what he was doing to my scalp and how his hand was running round my hair like he was massaging it. I struggled to make my body reject the feeling.

“Ssssh, relax Ella, for once stop battling with your body, Just feel. You need rest.”

“The only rest I need is freedom from you.”

“I wish I can grant you that but it’s not possible.”

I was angry, very angry. I turned to look at him and he did not stop me. I wished I could tear off his mask and gouge out his eyes.

“Enjoy your captive” I said putting all the hatred I could summon.

“With pleasure”

His lips was on mine and before I could comprehend his response, I was already opening for him. I was really cold, I never realized how cold I was until our lips touched. The ice in my body started melting and at the same time heated up. I wanted the heat to fill me up and remove the remaining ice. I pushed myself against him and something told me my top was obstructing the heat from circulating. My hands automatically pulled his hands away from my neck and guided it to my waist. His hands were inside my top and the way his rough and strong hands were running through my body but avoiding my breast was excruciating, I needed the heat there, I pushed my breast to his chest and his groan sent liquid fire running between my legs but he still did not touch my breast. I pulled my hands down to his shirt but as I tried to raise it, my hand grazed something hard and swollen bringing back my sanity. I tried to pull away but he still held on. Fear immediately replaced my excitement and it

became panic when he pushed me to the mat. Then suddenly he was off me and outside the tent.

I was still in panic state when he returned. I could see the bulge and I found myself shifting back. There was nothing I could do if he decided to force himself on me.

“You keep fearing the wrong thing.”

“You keep saying that.”

“Till it enters your skull.”

He moved closer. There was no escape because he was blocking the entrance.

“Are you going to rape me?”

I blurted it out.

He did not answer but pulled me back to my former position. I did not resist him, it was foolishness to. He did not say anything

and because I was very conscious of him, I noticed there were no more hardness and bulge. I was going to study how the male organs worked. It did not take away my panic but it at least reduced it.

“There is a new rule.”

I did not answer, I just waited for him to continue.

“Don’t go anywhere unless I tell you to.”

“Why?”

“I am not suggesting for you to ask why. If you want less death do as I say.”

“Less death? I thought the deal was no death.”

“The deal was if I’m not offended.”

“Ghost please I will do anything but no death.”



“This is the first time you are calling my name.”

“Please.”

“Anything?”

“Yes as long as there is no death.”

“Can I have sex with you?”

He took me unaware, it was a perfect way to say he did not rape me.

“You know I can’t.”

“Why?”

“I’m a Christian, it’s a sin to have sex before marriage.”

“You are using religion to say no.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“I thought Christians are supposed to abstain from all sexual immorality? Why kiss and romance me if you don’t want sex and why hate Hausas and Fulanis when you have been told to love?”

I did not answer because I had no answer. He had been the one to kiss me but I had been the one to kiss him back.

“See, that’s why death will be inevitable for my targets. They are increasing and they are becoming desperate because they now have an idea of who I am.”

“I don’t understand.”

“It is better to eliminate a witness with the evidence if there is no more means of having the evidence. They know that my presence indicates they will never get their hands on the evidence, so the best thing will be to take you out before you find it.”

“You mean your competitors.”

“If you call it so.”

“Then why don’t you just join them and kill me?”

“Not when I’m sure I will get the evidence.”

“Because you have me in check and chains.”

He did not answer but started massaging my scalp again.

“So am I permitted to go for my lectures tomorrow?”

I made sure he heard the mockery in my voice.

“Yes but don’t leave the class till I say so.”

“Or I can leave and allow them kill me, that is the best way to save those policemen.”

He stopped his movement and became very stiff.

“If you come out and get killed, just know as you are entering the underworld that all the people you are trying to protect will be coming behind you.”

His voice was very calm, he was not bluffing.

“So in other words, even in death I won’t be free from you until you decide so.”

He did not answer but what he was doing to my scalp was making me feel sleepy and as I allowed sleep to overwhelm me, he spoke again.

“Emmanuella, what am I going to do with you?”

(Your comments are very welcomed)

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/VlrlsyKx7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER EIGHT

I woke up a bit distorted about my environment but I immediately recovered. I was still wrapped up in his arms and he was staring at me.

“It’s almost 4:AM.”

I did not answer, I just stared at his covered face. I wished I knew who he was, what he looked like. I wished I could understand him and I wished I could change him but that was impossible, he was already a lost soul.

“Let’s go.”

He gently pulled me away from him and I felt cold and empty, my body was literally screaming for me to go back to his warmth.

He did not say anything else, he just drove off after dropping me. I had listened to the other guy and I had my own keys. As soon as I entered my room, I used my palms to check my temperature and my body once again had betrayed me. It was back to normal. I had lectures by 9:AM.

I felt his presence immediately I stepped out of my gate. I turned round but did not see anything suspicious. My phone blinked.

‘You really can feel my presence, you’re looking good. I like the jeans.’

I did not answer but continued my movement. Suddenly, I stopped. I just did not know why I stopped but something was definitely wrong.

The first thing I noticed was the cult boys including the ones who were not my course mates. They were standing close to the first entrance door. I ignored them and entered through the second door.

“Hi Ella.”

It was Ken, it was as if he was waiting for me by the door.

“Ken.”

I forced out a smile and allowed him lead me to a seat at the middle of the class amidst the heavy glares from so many feminine eyes.

“You are giving people the wrong idea.”

We were already sitting down.

“You are looking good and your hair is so beautiful. This is the longest hair I’ve seen on an African lady.”

“Thanks.”

I would have preferred he did not talk but I would never give Ghost the satisfaction that he was right.

“So what course do you want to read after this class?”

“I need to update my note on Dr. Bright’s class.”

“Okay, but I don’t think the one hour break is enough.”

I was not allowed to respond because the lecturer was already in class.

I could concentrate a little but I was still distracted because he was very much around. As the lecturer left the class, my phone blinked.



‘Don’t move till I say so.’

“Ella let’s go.”

I remained sitting staring at his message. I really wanted to ignore him but I remembered what he had said about the repercussion.

“Hey Ella.”

He was almost looking at my phone. I quickly locked it at looked at him.

“Can’t we read here? I don’t think there will be a class.”

He raised his head to confirm my statement. There were no students trooping into the class which was the normal thing if there was going to be another class. He sat back and shifted very close to me. I wanted to move away but I forced myself to remain still. I needed to win against Ghost.

I never knew time had gone far until students started rushing into the class. Ken was really good and I had almost forgotten my predicament, if not for his constant presence I would have forgotten I was in a mess. He had put me through what Dr. Bright taught the day I was walked out of the class.

“I guess it’s time up.”

“Thanks Ken.”

We packed our books and was out of the class in less than thirty seconds.

“I have an art class now” Ken said.

“Me too, Education class.”

I knew there was something more. We were already close to 1000LT, the road to Education Faculty when he spoke again.

“Ella what about dinner this night?”

Then I remembered I was not supposed to come out. I stopped walking fear holding me pinned to the ground.

“What is ...”

His question was cut off by numerous gunshots. Students started running towards different directions and I let Ken pull me to take cover at 100ft where crowd were already taking shelter. I was shaking seriously and Ken had misinterpreted the reason.

“Ella, the shootings have stopped. You are shaking badly.”

He pulled me to him and I allowed him. I was expecting to feel warm but I felt chillier making me bite my teeth. Ken pulled me closer and started rubbing my back.

“It’s okay, we are safe. Ella people are already moving out, it’s safe now” Ken whispered to my ears.

I gently pulled away from him.

“You are still shaking, are you that scared?”

He held my hand but it felt like ice on my skin. My phone blinked making me pull my hand away.

‘You can continue to your class.’

I had no idea what to expect but definitely not the message he sent. My cold disappeared and was quickly replaced with anger.

‘I thought you are among the dead.’

He replied immediately.

‘See you this night.’

I felt like throwing my phone and smashing it on the ground.

“Ella.”

I had almost forgotten about Ken.

“I’m sorry, I need to go now.”

“You think your class will still hold?”

That was a good question but I had no answer.

“I don’t know.”

“What if we go somewhere else to read because from what I’m seeing these shootings have destabilized many things. It is getting out of hand.”

“I still have to go to...” My phone blinked.

‘You can go with him, do whatever you want.’

‘I will make sure I maximize this freedom, probably fall in love’  
but the message bounced back as not sent.

“Let’s go” I said before he made inquiry of who I was chatting with.

I followed his lead back to Faculty but we stopped at where a large crowd were gathering with students taking photos of two dead men.

“Four in total for today. I think I will run back to Lagos” one of the students around the bodies shouted.

Others were also talking and I could read the fear in their eyes.

UNIBEN security were coming to the scene when Ken pulled me away. I did not really see their bodies so I had no idea if they were new or the old ones I had been seeing.

I let Ken take me to the mobile restaurant behind my favorite seat at the Park. He bought two take-away fried rice and chicken, then two coke drinks. I allowed him pull me towards the orchard.

I could still feel his presence so I held Ken’s arms and he must have taken it that I was still afraid because he pulled me closer.

The grasses were clean and dry enough to sit down and the trees

were enough shade. He sat down close to me and brought out the foods. I took mine but opened the chilled coke. I took a sip and rested my head on Ken's shoulder.

"I wish I can make your fears go away but you won't talk to me."

I did not answer but closed my eyes. I wished Ghost could see me.

"Won't you study again?"

"I'm too shaken to. Please can I just rest?"

He did not answer but placed his arms on my shoulder. I felt so cold to his touch but I did not push his hand away. As soon as I stopped feeling his presence, I raised my head and gently pulled away from him.

"Thanks for the food. I'm ready to study."

Ken looked at me like he was trying to figure me out.

It turned out that Ken was fun to be with. Apart from his icy touch, I enjoyed his company. He was a combination of beauty, wealth and brain. He put me through all the courses I was struggling with and he never made any sexual advances like Ghost. For the three hours we spent at the Orchard, I felt human and normal. We would have continued if not for the rain. We had to run into his car. I became tensed once his car was closed.

“Hey I am not going to pounce on you Ella.”

I looked at him.

“It’s written all over your face. I’m not that kind of guy. I have liked you the very day I saw you but I won’t force you. I’m happy you allowed me to be your friend.”

“So what about the rumor that you are dating Mabel?”



“I am very single, I won’t deny I have a lot of girls throwing themselves at me but it’s you I want.”

I did not answer because I was debating on allowing myself to be normal. I had read stories of those who started as friends and developed feelings for each other. Ghost had said it was dangerous to separate the mind from the body. I could use my mind to force my body to love Ken. He was not that bad.

“Ken even if I date you, you won’t like me because it will look like we are friends.”

“Why?”

“I am a Christian and the bible is against sexual immorality and I don’t joke with my Christianity.”

My brain was screaming ‘liar’ and I felt so ashamed, I wondered if Ghost was laughing.

Ken did not answer but smiled at me.

“What?”

“The fact that you are considering it is enough for me.”

He moved closer to me.

“I’m okay with your principle, in fact it’s making me fall in love with you. You are the first girl to ever tell me that. I promise I won’t touch you unless you say so and I will like to follow you to church.”

I was pretty messed up because I was thinking about Ghost instead of concentrating on the real human before me, my memory had to betray me.

“So what do you say Ella?”

“I will think about it.”

I opened the door before he could say anything else and I was running home but the rain started again just when I had crossed the road. I ran to take cover by the ATM machine at my right. I had already entered when I noticed Mabel. It was not just Mabel but some of the cultists. No wonder students were stopping midway and running back. I should have noticed them. I was not surprised to see Mabel with them. There were rumors that she was Dr. Bright's special mistress. I tried to run back but I was blocked and pushed back by one of the boys.

“Are you having fun?” Mabel asked moving close to me.

She had to put enough scorn in her voice.

“Everybody knows Ken is off the market. Are you so dumb that you want to dare me?” she shouted.

I tried to move away but I was blocked.

“See the way this nonentity is ignoring me.”

She slapped me and I felt the sting down to my teeth.

“Wait Mabel, your own na second, we never finish the first issue.

This girl why you dey use us play? I dey ves. I am angry. There is nobody like Ghost” the one I had named Leader said.

“Let me go” I shouted.

“You get luck say here too open, I for don show you how to respect. I won give you one last chance to take us to meet your boyfriend. As this rain dey end so, you are taking us to him. As for Ken, forget am, I nor won see you near am again.”

“You have no idea who you want to meet.”

I wished I could tell them that the man they were looking for was behind the massive killings. I wished I could tell them that

to see him meant to die but I could not. They were assholes but not enough to die.

“I go decide that.”

My phone blinked but he prevented me from bringing it out of my bag. It started ringing.

“If na who we dey find, pick am put am for loud speaker.”

I brought out the phone and it was really Ghost. I picked it and put it on loudspeaker.

“I have just one question to ask you, think before you answer. I have no problem with you wanting to see me, but to see me means death. Do you still want to see me?”

His voice was too calm. I shook my head at the leader, I mouthed for him to say no.

“Fix place and time and know say if we nor see you, your girl go suffer.”

He did not listen. They always believed they were the powerful ones until they discovered they were the prey of a bigger predator when it was too late. They should have even been worried that Ghost spoke to them directly when I did not tell him what was going on, but I was sure none of them noticed. The call had distracted him enough to move a bit away from me. I needed to save them before Ghost gave them an address. I took the opportunity created by their distraction and zoomed off.

I ran faster than I had ever ran before. I did not stop until I crossed Back Gate. Just when I was about to enter my street, my body already wet, I felt his presence but it was followed by gunshots. One sounded too close to me making me to turn. I saw one of the familiar faces who had always followed me from the

beginning. He was even among the six men Ghost had knocked down while trying to escort me to my hostel. He was very dead.

I could not take the sight before me, so I ran all the way to my hostel gate, to my room. I threw myself on the bed and cried my eyes out.

(Your comments are welcomed)

You can also check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/cHTWVicOy7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

CHAPTER NINE

I did not know how long I was on my bed still on my wet clothes but I had to pick my call after the fourth ring. It was the D.P.O.

“Ella what is going on? I thought you had everything under control?”

“I am sorry, I am trying my best” I cried.

“We just lost eight men today, four in the school, four in Ekosodin.”

“Four in Ekosodin?”

“He killed two early this morning, then two not too long ago.

You need to find that file, it can’t get to the wrong hands because not only will the culprits go free, the one who gets his hands on it will use it to blackmail others. Don’t allow the



efforts of this men to be in vain. Your father said you will know where the file is, just think.”

He cut the call. I wanted to cry and scream but all I had was anger. I was pissed off. He was always with the deal yet he could not keep to it. That was what I had felt in the morning. I was not doing a good job of protecting them. I knew the one who died behind me. He had been following me from the beginning. Ghost had no emotions and feelings. I needed to do something. I left my phone and went outside with my ATM card.

I breathed a sigh of relief when I did not feel his presence. I entered a Faculty bus to Main Gate and withdrew fifty thousand naira, then I entered a bus to ring road where I bought a Nokia torch phone and an already registered SIM card. I only spent about six thousand naira in total. I had written down the D.P.O's number on a paper. I dialed his line.

“It’s Ella Sir.”

“You have good news?”

“I have a way to make him stop killing your men.”

“I’m listening.”

“He is going to make me meet him this night. I will send you the location using this number, he will not be expecting your men.

Then I can settle down to think of where my dad could have kept the file.”

“You are very smart like your dad. I never thought of that idea.

Well done. I will get many of my men ready.”

He cut the call before I could tell him to make sure they were many and they wore bulletproof.

I did not feel his presence even after I had entered my hostel.

It was almost 6:PM and I kept on moving round my room thinking of how it would work out. My body kept screaming no, but my mind told me it was the right thing to do. But I could not erase the fear I was having for him. I was really messed up. He had killed so many innocent people yet I felt so sad that he was going to be ambushed and killed. I even started crying and I felt miserable. I just couldn't place what was wrong with me. My phone started ringing and it was Ken. I remembered the warning I was given to stay away from him. If only I knew my life would become this exciting. The one person I did not want was who my body yearned for and the one person my mind loved was who I was not allowed to date except I wanted to end up dead. That was if Ghost did not eliminate them and that was if Ghost was not killed as I had planned. Just the thought of him dying sent panic to my veins, it felt like massive ice was forcing its way through my bloodstream, freezing my blood.

“Ella are you still there?”

I had been distracted again.

“Sorry Ken, what did you say?”

“Ella what is wrong? I have been talking for like two minutes now. What is distracting you?”

“I’m sorry” was all I could say.

“I was asking about this night. You promised to think about it.”

“Oh, can it be tomorrow?”

Then I remembered Ghost must be listening

“That’s if I don’t have plans.”

I hoped I didn’t because Ghost must have been killed. But the ice increased and my body protested against the thought.

“Okay, have you been to Kada cinema?”

“No.”

“Okay, now I have one place to take you to. What kind of films do you like?”

I wanted to say Zombie and walking dead but I needed to end the call. I had more pressing issues

“Anyone will be okay, Ken I have something to attend to. Can I call you later this night?”

That was if my plan worked out and I needed a shoulder to rest on.

“You promise?”

“Yes, bye.”

I cut the call before he could delay me further but delay me from what?

9:PM yet no show from Ghost. I got a text message on my new phone. It was the D.P.O.

‘We are ready and waiting for you.’

‘Okay’ I replied but tears forcefully came out of my eyes and the liquid was very cold. I really needed to get rid of him before he encapsulated me and make me love his soulless body. My phone blinked and I rushed to see the message.

‘Five minutes to get to our roof venue.’

My hands shook and it felt like a force was pulling it away from my new phone. I felt cold, feverish and sorrow as I described the venue and sent it to the D.P.O.

I discovered I was no longer shedding tears but was literally crying aloud when I noticed the message had been received. I got an instant reply from in D.P.O.

‘That is too difficult to know, you need to come out and my men will follow you, you are safe. I sent the best of the best.’

I went back to read my description and he was right, those who had not been to Ekosodin would not be able to locate where I had described. I checked the time and discovered I had three minutes more. I took off leaving my phone behind but taking the Nokia torchlight.

The night was very chilly and I was wearing a spaghetti hand top, I ignored the cold, the chattering of my teeth, the feeling of extreme sorrow, my icy tears and ran all the way to our venue.

As I rested on the wall, I felt myself falling on the ground. I had never felt such sorrow before, even when I had lost my family I did not feel like I was entering into a bottomless dark hole of pain and loneliness and hopelessness. It felt like my heart was trying to tear out of my body in protest of what my mind had

done and that feeling in my stomach up to my chest was excruciating. I struggled to stand up and that was when I noticed something was very wrong.

I was supposed to feel his presence but I could not. He was supposed to have lifted me to the roof but he had not. My mind told me he must have already been killed and my body screamed in protest. I had no idea what was going on but my gut told me something was off.

I wanted to send him a message to tell him I was already at the venue but I was only with my new phone. I decided to send a message to the D.P.O.

‘Is he dead? I’m there but he is not around.’

I just could not understand why mentioning anything about him dying was making me cry.



Suddenly I felt his presence and my body responded like it was leaping for joy. I waited for him to lift me but it was gunshots I heard. They were numerous, and I believed I would be deaf when it all ended, that was if I was not killed by a stray bullet. My adrenaline kicked in when I felt a bullet graze my hair and landed on the wall. I ran inside one of the uncompleted rooms and covered my ears with my arms. As the gun battle continued, I sat knees up and rested my head on my knees I did not know how long I was sitting down but my new phone blinked. The shooting was still going on.

‘I hope you are safe?’

‘Yes Sir.’

‘Come out, someone will escort you to a safer place.’

I knew the D.P.O was concerned about my safety and he must have been getting updates on what was going on but he had no

idea what was really going on. There was no way I could come outside, I preferred where I was, so I did not reply. I had to switch off the phone. I would call him later that was if I survived.

The shootings continued. I did not know how many casualties the police now had but what I was very sure of was Ghost was still alive, I could still feel him. It made me to start crying. I had not done good at all because if he was still alive in the midst of the shootings, then so many police officers were already dead. I had seen those he had killed, it took just one bullet and it had been clear he got where he was targeting. If I was to calculate based on that, the dead among the police would be so many. I remembered his night vision goggle, he would not be shooting sporadically because he would have a clear vision. There was also the thought that he was not that human because he was too discreet and invisible.

The shootings gradually reduced to countable numbers, then it stopped. Just as it stopped his presence was no more. It was not like the feeling I had when he had left me to be for the day, it was the feeling of emptiness. Like I lost something. I started crying. I wished I could describe what I was feeling, I was so cold and I felt like nothingness. I should be happy that he was gone but I felt lost. I felt like climbing the roof and jumping to my death because life was meaningless. I had read so many stories and novels but no one had described this feeling of loss. I had thought of suicide so many times but I had never been compelled to do it, to just end the meaninglessness that was called life. I stood up and staggered out of the building, it was as if I was possessed because I went to look for the stairs to jump down. My mind was screaming that suicide was an abomination and I would go to hell but my body was too powerful.

I should have noticed the dead bodies on the ground, I should have noticed when I stumbled upon one of them and fell but I did not. I was focused on ending the emptiness left by Ghost. I was on the stairs few minutes later and I walked straight to the roof and looked down. I felt a little happiness that my emptiness would soon be over but before I could jump I felt his presence again. I froze where I was standing wondering how I got there in the first place and why I was standing too close to the edge but before I could fathom what was wrong, I was pulled back and saw myself on the floor of the roof. It was Ghost. He was with mask, I could not see his face but I could feel his anger.

“I told you I’m hardly angry.”

His voice was always calm when he was angry but this was on a different level, it was too dangerously calm. I did not know what

I was supposed to feel, relieved that he was alive? Or sad that he was not dead but all those who were sent to kill him?

“I must have been making you believe I’m a joke. The deal is over, just sit and watch bodies follow your wake.”

And he was gone. His words froze me to the ground. He was not someone who made threats, he always did what he said he would do. I stood up and tried to run after him, even though I had no idea where to run to but I still ran out.

“Please I’m begging you” I shouted, my knees on the ground.

The only response I got was the lack of his presence. He was gone. The rain knew exactly when to show its presence, for amidst the dead bodies which the dark had saved me from seeing the details, the rain poured and it came with lightning and thunder.

(I will love to read your thoughts, thanks)

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER TEN

I cried for a long time but I had to stagger back to my hostel because I knew crowd would soon come out to find out what had caused the shootings and I did not want to be found there. It was still raining and I was shaking badly when I entered

my hostel. I did not take off my wet clothes, I sat down on the tiles and continued my mourning. I should have known the kind of person I was dealing with. I should have remembered how he had rendered six armed policemen useless in less than ten seconds, I should have known he was not human, there was no way he could be human. A human wouldn't have been able to take out those men unhurt, a human would not be able to control my emotions, the feelings I had was not human. I had read a lot of books but none had a description of what I felt except the supernatural books about vampires and werewolf. He was a ghost. If only I had sat down to think of who he really was, I would have prevented the death of so many men. And now he was pissed off. The deal was off and he was going to be killing every single person trying to protect me. I had to think of a solution, a way out. I picked my phone and sent him a message.

‘Please I’m sorry, I could not take the deaths anymore that is why I did what I did please kill me instead. I was the one who set you up, I was the one who wanted you dead’ but the message was not sent.

I dialed his line but I was told the number did not exist. He meant everything he said. I dialed the D.P.O’s number but he did not pick so I sent him a message.

‘Please sir withdraw your men. You can’t protect me and you should know that already, I can’t stand anymore deaths.’

The message went through but he did not reply, I just hoped he would listen to my plea. I just did not understand how the Nigerian police had suddenly changed and become serious that the life of just one person was worth more than a hundred police officers. I only knew it was so for U.S.A, I never thought Nigeria had joined them. My phone started ringing and I rushed



at it thinking Ghost had changed his mind but it was Ken. I wanted to ignore his call but I really needed someone human at that moment.

“I have been waiting for your call.”

I did not answer, I did not trust my voice.

“Ella.”

“I’m sorry, just had a rough night.”

I started crying, I just could not hold my tears.

“Ella are you okay?”

“I’m not.”

“Can I come over?”

I removed the phone from my ears to check the time, it was already past 12:AM.

“It’s late and you don’t know my place.”

“It doesn't matter, don’t bother about me, please.”

I thought about it and decided I would be better off if someone was around to distract me.

“Okay, I will send you the direction.”

I cut the call and took off my wet clothes. I had to quickly arrange my scattered room and fold my clothes, then changed the bedspread which was still wet.

I received a call about twenty minutes later and I just knew he was by the gate. I went to open the gate for him.

He had come with his car, but he would have to leave it outside because I did not have the key to the big gate.

“It’s dark but I don’t need light to know you look a mess.”

He was standing by the gate not yet inside. He pulled me to him as soon as I locked the gate. I allowed him hold me and resumed by tears. The ice feeling was not there although I did not feel warm like Ghost's touch. The fact that I was thinking about him was making me cry more.

“It's cold, let's go to your room.”

I took him to my room and it was when I had locked my door my senses came back that a guy was in my room. There was no power supply but my torch was bright enough.

“Ella why are you always tensed when we are in a closed place. I am not going to pounce on you, it hurts that you don't trust me enough.”

“Sorry” I said pulling a chair for him to sit down but he sat down on my bed.

“Come sit down and tell me why you were crying and why you look a mess.”

I did not respond but I remained where I was standing feeling scared and tensed. Grandma had said no man was allowed to sit on my bed apart from my husband.

“Can you trust me for once? I promise not to touch you.”

But I still stood there. He looked at me and smiled.

“Shit, you are a virgin?”

What was wrong with guys and virginity? Why was it a big deal?

I did not respond but I quickly joined him on the bed. But the way he was smiling was a clear indication he was not going to let the topic go.

“Wow, you are really a virgin.”

“What is wrong with that? I am not married” I shouted.

He raised his hands in surrender.

“Sorry I did not mean to piss you off just that virgins are scarce.”

“Were you not afraid driving in the middle of the night?”

I had to change the topic.

“Nope, my car is bulletproof and I have taken care of them.”

“I don’t understand.”

“My parents wanted me to have a bodyguard but I told them I have another way. I give the bad guys a lot of stimulus, including rivals, so I’m even protected.”

That explained why Mabel was their follow up coordinator in their cult and there must be other girls sent from other cults to capture his heart.

“I see.”

I had almost forgotten I had been banned from talking to him and there was no way I would tell him what happened.

“Did something happen recently? I saw crowd down your street.”

“There had been some shootings.”

I looked away because I did not want him to see my face.

“Hmm, thank God you are safe.”

I kept quiet.

“Ella what is wrong? What is eating you up?”

Then the tears started flowing again. I allowed him pull me to his shoulders as I cried my eyes out.

“You know you have not said anything” he said after I stopped crying.

“I am just going through a lot.”

“Is it money? Have you called your dad?”

I started crying again because I missed my dad so much, from the very day he returned, he was there for me. He left me with Grandma but he always visited and took me out. He adored me so much. He had wanted to make me come over to join him help with my siblings. His wife also loved me and she was happy I was coming over. I never knew they would die such horrible death.

“Ella your tears are tearing my heart. What did I say wrong?”

At least I could tell him about my dad.

“I don’t have anyone. My whole family were murdered.”

The shock on his face showed he was not expecting anything close to that. He pulled me to him and I allowed him.

“I’m sorry” he said rubbing my back but I felt nothing, I was still cold.

I pulled away after some minutes. I told him how they were murdered and how I was the only one alive after Grandma had died from the shock of their deaths. I told him I had no money issue and I told him other things apart from what was the crux of my messed up life. We talked till 3:AM and he was a gentleman throughout unlike Ghost who used to force himself on me, but my mind was screaming 'liar.'

He refused to leave, he slept on a bedspread on the ground. I could not sleep because I was worried about what lied ahead. He left around 6:AM. We had Dr. Bright’s class by 7:AM and I was not sure he would come but I still had to hurry up to meet up. As I hurried up to school, I saw crowd were still gathered at the site of the shootings.



“I counted twenty five, it’s not hearsay. They looked like militia, this one pass cultist fight” I heard a man from my back.

They had walked past me before I could turn and they were still taking oblivious to their environment. How was it possible for Ghost to kill twenty five persons without getting hurt? Twenty five human lives gone just like that, because I was stupid enough to think I could trap him, I could trap a ghost.

Dr. Bright did not come for his lecture, I attended all my lectures half listening throughout, the other half was spent thinking about what Ghost would do. I had made sure I sat down where Ken would not see space to sit and I had avoided him immediately after a lecture. I went for midweek service and went home without another shooting or his presence.

The next day was a bit quiet, I did not feel his presence as I hurried to Dr. Bright’s last class for the week which he did not

show up for. I remembered it was now a week since my encounter with Dr. Bright. I still avoided Ken and I still tried Ghost line with no success.

As I gathered my books not sure if I would be going for fellowship, Ken walked up to me. He had left Mabel and she was glaring at me.

“Are you dodging me?”

“I had been busy Ken.”

“If you say so.”

“Can I take you out tonight?” he asked as soon as we were out of the class.

“I have fellowship today.”

“Can I join you?”

“Of course” but then I remembered Ghost.

“But not today Ken.”

I ran off before he could make me talk more. I entered the Faculty bus and had to wait for some minutes before fellowship started. I was off once they said the grace.

Ghost was on the loose and I could not let him kill my fellowship members. I felt his presence just before I got to Engineering but I could not locate him as usual. I stopped my movement and brought out my phone. I tried to resend the message but it did not go through. I dialed the line but it still said the number did not exist. I turned round hoping to see someone like him but instead, I saw someone going down, then two others. I could not hear the sounds of gunshots but four people were down.

I started running and as I ran, I just could not believe the D.P.O. I was mad at him, how could he just be sacrificing his

men like that? Did he not see my text or did he not know all his men he had sent to kill Ghost were dead?

As I got to the gate of my hostel, I felt him again. I turned round but I could not see something out of the ordinary.

“Please, I’m sorry, please, anything, I will give you what you asked for” I shouted.

If losing my virginity would save the men who D.P.O no longer valued, I would do that and beg God for forgiveness later.

I stood there waiting for my phone to blink but nothing.

“Please now, I’m begging and offering what you want, it’s all yours, just stop, please” I cried out squatting by the gate.

“Are you okay? Who are you talking to?”

I raised my head. He was one of the tenants, the one with the room adjacent my room who always fought with his girlfriend

he was co-habiting with. He was most likely an engineering student because of the blue coat and plank I always saw him with.

I stood up and entered the hostel without answering him. I continued my cries as soon as I entered my room. I had been expecting to feel feverish from the rain that poured on me but my body was okay, it was just my mind that was torn.

For the first time, I felt his presence throughout the night and in the morning. As I hurried for my lecture, I also witnessed another death close to Back Gate. People ran helter shelter but I ran into the school crying.

The lecturer said the president was now involved with the recent killings and had called on the IG to investigate and put a stop to it. But I was sure the IG knew what was going on and there would be many more deaths because they would never be able

to find Ghost. He had been surprised I could feel his presence which meant people did not know danger was around not to talk of locating the danger.

As I was coming out of my education class, I felt tensed but did not know why until I was blocked and forcefully pushed to the wall. My head hit the wall and I felt the stinging impact and before I could recover, a slap landed across my face. It was very painful.

“You think say I dey joke with you? You run. I still dey talk to your guy you run commot, you want make I give you the fuck up I plan for am?” Leader shouted.

There were four more guys surrounding him. Students walked by pretending they did not see a girl being harassed. I could still feel the sting of the slap when I spoke.

“I was saving your lives. I ran because you are not looking for a rival cultist, you are like a rat looking for a cat to fight with, he would just use you for feasting.”

But they started laughing like fools.

“Let me decide that.”

“It’s too late.”

“Meaning?”

“We have broken up and I can’t contact him again.”

“Search her.”

It was more than harassment and I felt repulsive as one of them dipped his hand in my pocket and brought out my phone. I had never felt so repulsive that I felt like throwing up.

“Search for Ghost.”

The guy with my phone nodded and I knew he was dialing the line but like before, a voice said the number did not exist.

“I told you we have broken up and I can’t contact him anymore.”

The leader took the phone from his boy and smashed it on the wall, scattering it. It was very close to my ear and the sound was deafening.

“You cannot fool me girl, I don’t see person like you and them nor reach me delete. Tell your guy say if he nor meet me for that uncompleted house near winners for Ekosodin this night, say na your dead body he go see within two days.”

I turned my face the other way to avoid the spit coming out of his mouth.



They left walking with an air of authority and power, thinking they ruled the crime world around school and Ekosodin.

Somehow their leader had saved their lives by smashing the phone because Ghost did not hear him. I wondered how many chances God would still be giving them before they finally met their doom.

The phone was damaged beyond repair. I gathered the broken pieces and decided to skip my other lectures and go home. I wanted to continue avoiding Ken, until I had rested and thought of what to do with my predicament.

As I entered Edo Street, I felt his presence same time I felt a bullet graze my hair, that was the second time in few days.

Almost immediately, numerous gunshots were fired. I ran towards my street as others took cover. I saw one drop dead in front of me and another, then another making me shift back but I

turned when I heard a gunshot too close to me. Someone was dead, another police officer I knew. I became frozen but found my legs when I saw another die not too far from me. I ran to my hostel amidst the shootings.

I could not cry as I entered my room, I had cried so much that there were no tears left. I was done crying, I was pissed off with Ghost and the D.P.O. I could not take the deaths anymore and I needed to end it. I could not kill myself but I knew who could kill me and I was going to make it happen.

(GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark) continues tomorrow.

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/WaMAM5jgA7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER ELEVEN

I should have thought of that earlier, I shouldn't have ran away from the line of fire. I should have stayed back and allowed a stray bullet from Ghost to kill me. I just could not understand why my body kept revolting against my thought, I kept running when death came close even though I really wanted to die, to be free from Ghost but no more. He had deceived me enough, there was no deal. He was just using me. The police officers were still going to be killed, he was just buying time.

I was ready but I could still feel his presence. I knew I could not just go out if he was still around. It was past eleven in the night when I stopped feeling his presence. He was gone and it was time for me to carry out my plans.

The night was clear and the moon must have settled its beef with the sky because it was full enough to see. I had only been to Winners' Chapel once, during my school clearance. I had promised one of their workers that I would pay a visit but I did not continue because I was already too used to orthodox churches.

I ran all the way to the church pausing only to inhale fresh air. I had to use Newton Street as route. I got there without encountering any of the night bandits. I tried to locate the uncompleted building but I did not see any. I walked a bit down the street stumbling in muds of water. I was going to scrub my feet when I get back, except I was not going back. I paused to think of what I was doing. I was mad and pissed off and I wanted to end everything but I did not really sit down to think about how I would provoke them to kill me.

But it was too late to rethink because I saw them. I was standing by the uncompleted building and they had sighted me. Fear gripped me as they walked towards me pointing their blinding sharp torch to my face.

“You miss road? Here na no go zone abi na you be our second vessel for night of passage?”

The guy was unfamiliar and I did not understand his question enough to answer.

“Wait, na she. Ghost girlfriend.”

I knew that one, he was a probating student.

“Ghost don show?” Leader asked coming out of the uncompleted building.

“Where am? Where Ghost?”

This was a wrong idea, the smell of cigar and cocaine was already permeating my nostrils. What was I thinking? My body was screaming for me to run but my mind told me to be brave, it would soon be over. I would soon be free from Ghost.

“He is not coming, I came to apologize on his...”

A slap landed on my face and I felt it on my forehead. It was the leader. But my mind continued telling me it would soon be over.

“You think say we dey joke? You think say this na Romeo and Juliet love? Shey you won sacrifice yourself abi? I go use you do example. Carry her go inside.”

I was already lifted even before he finished his statement. My mind told me to wait a little while. The smell of drugs, alcohol and sweat hit my nostrils as soon as the boy carrying me dropped me on the ground inside one of the rooms of the uncompleted building. I just knew I was foolish and my body

was right when I sighted one of the guys having sex with a girl by the corner of the room. There was no sign she was forced. A cold metal on my neck pulled my eyes away from the scene.

This was it, I closed my eyes for the shot that would end my miseries. I heard the sound of the gun being cocked, I had watched a lot of movies and read a lot of books to know that the next thing would be my death.

“Capon wait first. I know say you dey ves say this Ghost guy don dey make people feel say dem fit disobey you, but this one here nor go reach do for the initiation. Make we just let am go, she nor even fine. Why you go waste this new fine babe without tasting.”

I did not know who spoke but I knew what he said worked because the metal was no longer on my neck. Fear like I had never known gripped me. How did I forget that I was a girl?

How? I opened my eyes to see that the girl was already up and they were talking to her. I used that opportunity to run, I wanted to die not raped to death. I did not run far before I was caught. I struggled and kicked. The guy was not that powerful as Ghost. He lost balance and I would have escaped if another did not join him. They roughly dragged me back to the room and pushed me to the ground. One of them smacked me on the head but my fear made me not to feel the pain.

“Nor do, I want her fresh like that” Leader who I now knew was called Capon said coming close to me.

Without warning he grabbed my breast and there was nothing sexual and arousing about it. I slapped him and pushed him from me, then I stood up to run again but I was blocked by three of them. They carried me back to my position and I received



another slap from Capon. I tried to struggle but they were now four holding me down.

Of all the decisions I had ever made in my life, this was the most idiotic and foolish decision. Fueled by my anger at so many deaths because of me, I had decided to find someone who would kill me without thinking of how the person would decide to kill, without thinking about the fact that I was female. Dread had a taste, it was very bitter and it tore through the heart and chest.

“No, I will rather die” I screamed as the leader raised my top.

He paused midway and forced a dirty handkerchief into my mouth as I tried screaming again. I could taste so many horrible things from the handkerchief. I struggled again, using all my strength but I was no match for four of the boys holding my hands and legs. The ones holding my legs widened it, I was not

that exposed yet because I was on jean trousers. Capon went back to my shirt, his fingers grazed my bare stomach sending ice and chills.

I had read stories where victims described how repulsive they felt, some had written that it was the feeling one got from having tiny ants moving around their bodies but mine was different. It was like being touched by ice which could shock and make someone's teeth clatter. It was a terrible feeling. I struggled again and succeeded in freeing my right leg and kicking the guy holding it. Capon stood up and slapped him.

“Is it just one leg you cannot hold? You come replace am. You go be last on the row.”

“Nooo” I shouted but my screams were cut off by the cloth in my mouth.

Amidst my futile struggle, Capon succeeded in pulling my blouse to my neck. He unclipped my bra and grabbed one of my breast. It was icy and disgusting.

“We were concluding rights of passage for two new guys using one of their girlfriend as our final initiation but you showed up instead of Ghost, what better way to send a message to Ghost by all twenty four of us raping you till you can’t breathe. You foolish girl, you think say you fit come beg us, say na film we dey act?”

He grabbed my right breast and applied force and it was so painful.

“So succulent and soft and standing” Capon said unzipping my jeans.

I struggled but the guys were now putting their all to hold me down.

This was it? This was how my second miserable life would end. I had kept myself as Grandma said, I had stayed away from boys but I was about to be raped to death. For the first time since Sunday, I prayed. I wished Ghost would come, even if he was going to kill me, I just knew he would not have done it by raping me. But there was no way he would come. My phone was damaged and he had left believing I was asleep and he had no knowledge of what I had planned to do. There was no hope, my foolishness had contributed to the horrible way I was going to die. If only the cloth was not in my mouth I would have negotiated money with them, I had millions in my account and I would have offered them everything for them to just kill me instead of raping me to death. I cried and struggled as he started dragging my trousers down. I gathered all my strength and kicked at those holding my legs. It worked because they were not expecting it, I struggled to free myself from those holding

my hands but I felt a heavy smack on my head followed by a slap. I still could not feel the pain because the fear was still much.

Capon was no longer taking his time because he brought out a knife to cut out my trousers. There was no way he would not cut through skin. I watched in horror as the knife was brought to my stomach.

“You like it rough? I like rough.”

He was not planning on tearing my trousers, he was going to cut me as he raped me. He placed the knife on my breast. The cold metal sent waves of chills to my body. He pierced the knife a little on my left breast and I felt the sting, it was not a serious cut and it could heal without treatment but I knew he planned on doing more. He placed the tip of the knife on his lips and licked it.

“This is so much fun. Una feel am?”

They all started chanting Capon. I knew I was a sinner but this was not how I deserved to die. He pulled my trouser to my knees, exposing my red panties. He brought his nose to my pant and inhaled, then brought back the knife to my stomach. With one hand holding the knife which was placed on my navel, the other hand pulled on my panties.

This was it, no man had seen me in panties. Apart from my childhood when Ibrahim used to live with us, which would not be counted because it was my stage of innocence, I had never been this exposed.

I struggled and shifted my body away from his touch and it must have infuriated him because he raised the knife to cut me again and I knew it was not going to be like the last one. I closed my eyes, I could not watch but the pain never came.

I only heard a thud making me open my eyes. I had seen him many times, even though I had never seen his face, I had seen his stance and domineer but this one in the room was an entire different personality. I did not need anybody to tell me Capon was dead. I would have gotten a glimpse of what happened if I hadn't closed my eyes. He was holding something that looked like a long baton but it was glowing. Most movies I had watched, the savior always had a time where they talked with the enemy before attacking but it was not so. He was striking at them with a kind of speed and doggedness I could not place and he was very flexible.

None of them ran or even put up enough fight because they were not given the time to absorb the shock of his presence. Even the ones holding me were still holding me when he hit them with the baton. It was then those at the corner knew they were facing a

formidable opponent. They tried running but Ghost shot at them making them run back. I knew he did not miss, he wanted to keep them inside. They were remaining just three when one brought out a gun. He must have forgotten about the gun earlier. He never released a shot because Ghost stoned him with the baton electrocuting him like the others. He was on the other two even before the baton touched the one with gun. I wished I knew where he learnt his spontaneous movement. He knocked one down and caught the last one before he could escape through the door. He pulled him inside. He was the one who had carried me inside, who had smacked me. Ghost held his neck like he was going to slam him to the floor which would kill him instantly.

“Noo” I shouted.

I did not even know I had removed the handkerchief from my mouth. I understood the death of Capon but I just could not



watch another death. I did not know how my plea went through to Ghost because he punched him on his head knocking him out. Then he started moving close to me.

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER TWELVE

For some reasons I could not explain, I started shifting back. He was radiating a dangerous energy and it scared the shit out of me. He did not say a word to me but pulled down my blouse and pulled up my trousers. He lifted me and carried me

outside. I did not resist, I let him carry me to the bike. He placed me on the seat, climbed the bike, ignited it and drove off.

Even after he had stopped by the river, he did not talk to me. I watched him fix the tent wondering what to say. He did not give me any spectacle and he was still radiating danger. He came back to where I was standing, held my hands and pulled me to the tent. He made me to crawl inside then followed behind me. I turned to ask him to say something but he pulled me to him and covered my mouth with his.

He was different from the Ghost I knew. He kissed me like it was urgent, like he was tasty and needed to drink or else he would die. I had zero resistance because the moment his lips touched mine, the ice started melting and my bloodstream started heating up. I needed that feeling, it was melting my frozen body. This kiss was different, it felt like an ocean of

emotions. He moved his hand to my back but I wanted him to touch under my clothes, I was still feeling cold there. As if on cue, he pulled my blouse up and I raised my hands to let him. I had no bra and my breast was bare. I felt him standing stiff, staring at my breast. I followed his movement and saw blood on my breast. It was no longer flowing out but it was still there. He was pissed off but that was not what I needed, I needed the ice gone. I took his hand and placed it on my left breast and my body leapt with sensation and heat, heat that turned to liquid below, between my legs. He gently pushed me to the mat, then brought his lips back to mine. This time around, he took his time savoring my mouth while rubbing my breast. He pinched my nipple making me jerk with sensation. I needed more. I pushed my body to him then started rubbing his back making him groan and sending more sensations to my body. He left my mouth and starting trailing to my neck setting fire anywhere his lips

touched, the exact fire I needed to melt my ice and heat me up. I tensed when he got to my breast. I waited for what he would do. I felt like I was melting when he took my breast to his mouth. I never knew how cold I really was. I was frozen but his lips on my breast was warming me, I could never fully describe the sensation, it went way past my body, it was as if the fire was touching my soul. I jerked up when his hands rubbed between my legs. I wanted more, I wanted the clothes gone, I wanted him to fill me up but he did not, he removed his hands and rubbed my right breast making me pant for more. This was what romance felt like. This was what teasing felt like. I wanted something, there was something building inside me and I needed relieve or I would die. I grinded myself to him and my knees grazed his hardness. I was supposed to be afraid like last time, but my body told me that was the only thing that could remove the remaining ice and the same time, I heard my Grandma's

voice. I heard the Priest's voice about chastity, about the sin of immorality, then I heard Grandma's voice telling me there was joy in being chaste till marriage, telling me I could be the first to break the chain of wedlock in the family, then I heard my voice promising Grandma that I would remain a virgin till I get married not because she said so but because it was a big sin against God, the sin of fornication was sin against God and the body. I could see her smile at my promise. A promise I was about to break. My mind was screaming no but my mind did not understand my body, this body had just been soaked in ice and Ghost was the fastest way to get warm again. My body needed the fire, the feeling, the burning desire I was having needed to be quenched. My mind struggled with my body but my body won. I could not resist him anymore, I needed that hardness to fill up my emptiness, I would ask God for forgiveness later.

Suddenly, he stopped and looked at me and that was when I knew I was crying. He tried pulling away but I held his hands.

“I told you that it is dangerous to separate your mind from your body Ella.”

His voice was undoing me more, it was too husky and I could feel his struggle.

“Please.”

I did not even know what I was begging for, but I just did not want the ice to come back.

“You are crying Ella, it is obvious you don’t want this.”

He sat down but I found myself going on my knees and closing the gap. I grinded myself to him. I just could not understand, I could not stop crying yet I could not imagine allowing that ice to remain in my body. I was going mad.

“Just take me. Make love to me.”

“When you are crying and battling against your will?”

“Ignore my tears and just make me burn. Just touch me. Just listen to my body.”

He gently pulled me back to the mat but stayed by my side.

“Why are you crying? What part of your belief is resisting and why?”

He just did not understand I was not ready to talk, he just did not understand that I might die from the ice in my body if he did not remove it. I shifted closer to him and grinded my body against him, his hardness hitting my navel sending waves of heats and sensation making me push further. He pulled me away then raised me up and made me sit between his legs. I felt my blouse being passed through my head.

“No, don’t, you wanted this, you wanted to have sex with me.

I’m giving it to you. You are not forcing me.”

“Ssh Ella.”

I pushed my buttocks to hit his hardness and a groan escaped from his throat sending more liquid flame in-between my legs.

He held me still by holding my waist, then pushed the blouse to my neck. He removed his hands from my waist and forced me to wear my blouse.

“You don’t understand, Ghost I’m cold, very cold but your touch heats me up and removes the cold. I never wanted to admit it but I’ve never felt this cold.”

He did not talk but wrapped me in him.

“Your mind and your body needs to work together.”



“It’s because of the promise I made to my Grandma and my Christian background and the fact about who you are. But I just can’t explain it to you, I’m so cold, after he touched me and....”

Just thinking of it made me cold. Ghost responded by pulling me closer and heating me up with his body.

“I know Ella. I’m sorry I pushed you that far, I’m sorry I made you put yourself in danger. Sssh it’s okay. Breathe, just breathe. Follow my heartbeat and breathe.”

I did as he said and I discovered I could really follow his heartbeat.

“Good, better. It’s okay, he can’t hurt you anymore.”

He kissed my cheek, then my hair increasing my desires.

“I want to feel warm.”

“But we can’t because your mind is against it.”

“Since when did you care about my mind? I thought you said you will only listen to my body.”

“Not anymore Ella. You will regret it later and you will feel guilty, then shame. I would rather burn in hell than make you feel remorse all through your life. There is still time, I have all the time Ella. I want to make love to you when your mind it’s okay with your body.”

“Are you Ghost?”

I just could not understand the new him.

“Your body knows it’s me.”

He kissed my hair again. There was one question I needed to ask.

I was a virgin but I knew what was happening to me was not normal.

“Did you do something to my body? From that day you pushed me to the wall, my body keeps yearning for your presence and your touch. I’ve tried to fight it but failed. What the heck did you do to me?”

It was after I asked the question I remembered he was a killer and not someone I could just question. I became still, afraid of the repercussion.

“It’s there Ella, the answer is there, you just need to think deep and discover it yourself.”

His answer was as good as no answer.

“The reason why you don’t know it’s because of who you think I am. I know your religion is playing a role but I know it’s more of having feelings for an assassin.”

“I did not say I have feelings for you, it’s my body that burns for you.”

“It’s same thing Ella.”

I could not hold back my tears.

“This is so wrong, I should not be doing this, you have so many blood on your hands yet my body is yearning for you and you are telling me I have the answer. Don’t tell me the crap about some souls being linked together, I don’t believe in that and even if it’s so why must it be you. I don’t deserve this. I’ve not committed any crime to be punished like this.”

“That is part of the reason but not the major reason. Your body craves for me because we are linked together.”

“No because you’ve hypnotized me, this is not normal. I promise to keep to the deal, I’m sorry I set you up but can you set my body free?”

He became stiff when I mentioned the set up and I became afraid I just reminded him of my crime.

“What if I tell you I’m not the murderer you think I am?”

“I watched you kill those men close to engineering faculty.”

“Like I said, they are my targets.”

“They were police officers on undercover protecting me from people like you.”

“They are hired assassins paid to get the file from you but now they have been instructed to kill you.”

“If you think you can convince me you are the good guy because you saved me from those rapists then you’ve picked the wrong person.”

I shook as I mentioned rapists and he responded my holding me closer.

“Why do you think I’m lying?”

“Because nobody told me you are a killer, I saw it myself. There is no justification for killing.”

“Are you sure? You set me up to get me killed and someone would have pulled the trigger which could have killed me, won’t the person be a murderer?”

“That’s because they are police officers, they are permitted to shoot deadly criminals.”

As I answered, I felt something was wrong. He was supposed to be angry about what I did, he was supposed to still threaten me with death of the men sent to protect me but he spoke about it as if I bought him his dream gift. Something was wrong with Ghost.

“They are police officers, they shoot criminals who are threats. There is a huge difference” I continued.

“Are police force the only force permitted to shoot criminals? What if I tell you I have my permit too?”

“I won’t believe you, you are just a heartless killer. Thanks for saving me today but I know it was the file you were protecting.”

“Good, then know I’m incapable of hurting you and I won’t allow anybody hurt you.”

“You are hurting me, you will still hurt me. Killing those men is hurting me” I cried out.

He held me and did not say anything.

“Please Ghost, please stop killing them.”

“Ella no matter how you will beg me I am never going to let anyone hurt you. You are begging for the lives of those who are trying to kill you. I will protect you even against yourself.”

“Is the money that big?”

“It’s not about the money, this is personal. Everything became personal the moment I fell in love with you.”

I turned to look at him and he did not stop me. I wished I could see his face.

“You fell in love with me? A soulless killer just fell in love with me. My life can’t get any messier. Is this a joke? I thought you don’t have a soul?”

“Thanks for giving me one.”



“If you are really in love with me, can you free me from the deal without hurting me by killing them? You need to learn how to use your new soul and you need to learn that you can’t hurt someone you love. Let me teach you.”

“You are officially free from the deal.”

“Really? Like for real?”

“But hell no to not eliminating any threat to you. I love you so much that I won’t even let you hurt yourself. So I’m gonna be protecting this body against your mind.”

He kissed my cheek and that was when I knew I was no longer burning but the kiss brought back the desire. I tried to turn to get his mouth but he pulled away.

“Can you swim?”

“No no, you can’t avoid this topic. They are the good guys  
Ghost, you can’t kill them.”

“One step at a time Ella. That’s enough for this night. My soul is  
new remember. I just released you from the deal.”

“Hell no, the deal was no killing.”

“If I’m not offended.”

“What do you even mean by that?”

“If they are not a threat to you.”

I wanted to say more but I kept quiet, it was better to go slowly.

“How did you find me?”

“It’s a secret.”

“Are you not still mad that I set you up?”

He did not answer but looked at me.

“I’m mad and don’t make me go there. I’m still pissed off at your stupidity. How could you put yourself in danger? And tonight’s own was top notch. I wouldn’t have forgiven you if you had....”

He did not finish his statement. He was panting from anger and it was confusing me. Was he serious about falling in love with me? Or it was all an act to make me believe he was the protector.

“That’s enough, I need to cool down, and you also need to cool down. Let’s swim.”

“Do you know it’s night?”

But he had already pulled me out of the tent. He picked a small bag from his big back, then brought out a goggle, two of it. It had rope in it’s back like the one they used for swimming.

“It’s dangerous.”

He did not answer but brought out something that looked like a torch, the light part started shining while the end which had something like a small fan started spinning. He brought out about two more and pulled me along with him. He placed it on the water and I watched the gadgets sink. I quickly wore the goggle, and I was not surprised it was night vision.

“What’s it for?”

“That’s my underwater eyes.”

He was looking at that wrist watch as he spoke. He kept looking at it for some minutes.

“Nothing detected, there are no fishes in this river. That’s rare.”

“How does it work?”

“Let’s swim.”

“I can’t swim.”

His leg was already in the water. He paused and looked at me.

“You are from the riverine area Ella.”

“Thanks for pointing it out to me.”

“Why?”

“Because Grandma banned me from swimming. A child had drown a week after we arrived.”

“You are such an obedient granddaughter.”

I ignored his sarcasm and placed my foot in the water.

“Okay, then learn.”

I raised my head to ask him what he meant but I found myself underwater.

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER THIRTEEN

It was so cold, I shook from the chills the water gave me. Before I could struggle to come up to the surface he pulled me up.

“What was that for?” I shouted.

“You need to learn how to swim.”

He started pulling me further down the river till my feet could not touch the ground.

“It’s cold.”

“You will be warm soon.”

He pulled me to him, making my back rest on his chest.

I immediately started feeling warm, then heat from his masculine body. He placed his palm on my stomach and made me lie flat on it. It was doing more than heating me up.

“Concentrate Ella.”

I did not even hear what he had said. His voice was not helping.

I was now absolutely sure something was wrong with me.

“Stretch your toes and hit it on the surface of the water.”

I did as instructed.

“Good, have you ever ridden a bicycle before?”

I nodded.

“Now as your legs are still stretched, move it like you are riding a bicycle.”

I did as instructed. He spun me round as I moved my leg. He moved me away from the deep to where my feet could touch the ground.

“It’s a gradual and continuous process. Try do it on your own.”

I was facing him and my stomach could almost touch him, the male heat radiating from him was intoxicating. I found myself closing in the gap. He let me wrap my hands around his waist.

“I know I should not ask this, but do you know if my behavior is normal? I’m not like this, I feel ashamed confessing this but I feel cold all the time and being close to you warms me up.”

I had said it before realizing I was confessing to a criminal.

“Your body craves for what completes it.”



“Meaning?”

He did not answer but kissed my hair. He gently pulled me away.

“Break time is over. Let me see you practice what I taught you.”

I laid flat in the water, it was not deep and my head could still be out on the surface. I stretched my toes and flipped my legs like I was riding a bicycle. He made me to continue even after I begged him that I was tired.

“This is not how you treat someone you love” I shouted.

He was by the right further down the river, almost at the end of the open creek. There were so many bamboo trees and he was resting his back on one of them. It made me wonder how trees could survive in the river and how they were able to part the river into three. He ignored me and pretended he did not hear

what I said. After some minutes, I felt like I would never be able to walk on my legs. He swam to me.

“Good job, we will continue next time.”

But he was pulling me inside.

“Hey, this is the wrong way. You just said we will continue next time.”

“I meant your swimming lesson.”

I could no longer touch the ground and before I could sink, he raised me and placed his palm on my back making me face the sky.

“Watch Ella. The night is the most beautiful time of the day.”

I forced myself to stop focusing on the sensations from the hand under my back and studied the sky. There were numerous stars.

The one he had called satellite was the only thing moving. Some

of the stars were bigger and brighter than the others and some were twinkling. No wonder the twinkle twinkle little star poem.

The moon was not available but it did not change the beauty of the dark sky with shining tiny tiny lights.

“Can you hear the wind? Can you hear the silence? Can you hear the voice of the night creatures? When humans are silence, the ozone and nature repairs itself the little it can.”

I listened, I could actually hear the wind, the flow of water, the trees clapping their leaves and tiny branches bowing to the power of the wind. I could hear the night creatures living their part of the day, the whistling of birds, the crawl crawl language of the frog, the hooting of an owl, the orchestra of another flight of birds. He slowly spun me round as I stretched my hands and listened more. The stars were beautiful, they were not aggressive like the sun. Grandma had said every human could have one star

each and many will still remain. The most important sound of all was the silence of humans.

“It’s beautiful” I exhaled.

“This is what bandits and criminals don’t want humans to enjoy. We should not fear the night, it’s a time to come out and heal with nature.”

I ignored that he mentioned criminals, he was not going to ruin my bliss. I just enjoyed nature as he spun me round. There was something so soothing resting on the surface of a river while watching and listening to the beauty of nature. How was I so afraid that first night? He was right, there was nothing bad about the night, the night had never been the problem but humans. For a long time no one spoke, at one point I took a peek at him, he was watching the stars too. I wondered what he was thinking, maybe who he would kill next after I must have offended him.

“You are getting cold. Time up.”

He pulled me down and pulled me back to the bank of the river.

It was then I noticed I was getting cold.

“I guess you have a plan of drying me off, since you did not notice I have one clothe.”

He did not answer but pulled me back to the tent. He left and later came back with a heavy blanket and wrapped me up in it.

“Are you for real? I’m going to suffocate before it dries me up. Where on earth did you descend from, the cave?”

I watched his reaction to know if he was offended but I did not see any sign to indicate I said something wrong. He left the tent and came back with a big towel, he pulled the blanket away from me and started cleaning me with the towel.

“Seriously? How will this dry my clothes?”

He left the towel and left the tent again then came back with an equipment I did not know. He switched it on and within a minute, the tent started heating up. He brought it close to me. The heat it was emitting was too hot.

“Are you planning on burning me?”

He dropped the heater stuff, sat down and stretched his hands like, what-the-heck-do-you-want-me-to-do? I started laughing because he was looking funny.

“You know your clothes are wet too.”

He started pulling his clothes off. I should have closed my eyes but he took me by surprise. How could someone be lanky and muscled and sexy and attractive at the same time?

“What did I score?”

He had been silent for a long time but had to talk at that moment.

“Two out of ten.”

“I’ve always preferred your body to your mind. Your expression is saying wow, you scored eleven over ten. I know your body likes what it is seeing.”

I looked away and concentrated on drying myself while trying to remove the image of his half naked body from my mind.

“Don’t fight the memory of what you have seen.”

He was sitting down but his back was resting on my back. Even that slight touch heated me up.

“I don’t think I still have my control bar, it’s showing red. I want to hold you close to my chest but this will be better till I recharge.”

He was just too difficult to understand. How could a heartless killer be concerned about ruining my chastity? It just didn’t

make sense. Maybe, I was having my lucky day and I did not want to miss the chances it presented.

“Can I beg for something else?”

“I’m listening.”

“Can you spare me the day and can you not intervene like Dr. Bright’s case.”

“No.”

Just two words but powerful enough to shatter my hope. So much for thinking it was my lucky day.

“But it was really not fair to stab him there.”

“Stab him where Ella?”

“You know what I mean.”

“Say it and stop assuming I know what you mean.”



“Am I the one to tell you where you stabbed him?”

“Your Grandma did a lot on you.”

“You are trying to avoid the point I’m making. You pierced his ears.”

“That’s my mark on selected criminals that were not given the maximum punishment for their crimes. I give them that mark to remind them I’m always watching them.”

He mentioned criminals again, like he was not at the top of the chain of criminals.

“And the stabbing? Was that punishment not too much.”

“That man was lucky he did not meet my sister. That punishment is the lightest he could ever have. My sister would have castrated him.”

“You keep mentioning your sister like she is a boy. How is that possible?”

“Because she can fight.”

“Maybe one person but not what would have happened to me today.”

I felt cold talking about it but his laughter was a big distraction from the cold.

“Do you know the true reason behind rape of the female gender?”

I had read so many reasons people had stated as the cause of rape. Some said it was because of the way females were now dressing. Some said it was caused by being in the wrong place at the wrong time, like what happened to me. If I had been in my hostel, nothing would have happened.

“Because it’s easier to rape a girl. Physiological and biological structure contributed more.”

“Wrong Ella, you are very wrong.”

“Then why?”

“Because they can.”

“I was not really expecting something good from you. Are you now justifying rapists?”

I was getting angry, he just had to ruin my mode.

“No I’m not, I am just stating a simple fact. Aside for biology, do you think it’s easy for twenty five girls to force me down and force my consent?”

Twenty five armed trained men could not even kill him.

“You know it’s not possible.”

“Why do you think so?”

“Because you are a trained killer with no mercy and emotion, you are stronger than them.”

“Exactly Ella. We are saying the same thing. Rape occurs to adults because the men can force their way. A man can never rape someone stronger than him. The female gender is known to be weaker than the male but some females are stronger than the average man. My sister is one of them. What almost happened to you today can never happen to her.”

“You mean she would have fought off four boys holding her down.”

“I don’t think she would have allowed them get to that stage.”

“So she would have fought more than twenty guys?”

“Fight? Hell no, she would have beaten them to stupor while sipping her favorite drink or chewing chicken wings. They are not even qualified to have a death dance with her. Death dance are meant for those kind of men sent to kill me.”

“You know you are describing warrior princess? And it’s just a movie not real.”

But he laughed. I did not even want to find out what he meant by death dance.

“The point is no rapist born of a woman would try her. She look for them sometimes, especially when she is pissed off. And she finds at least one, especially at night. She is the Venus flytrap, beautiful, sexy and attractive but poison once taken without permission. My sister sees rape as murder and most rapist always derive pleasure in their victims’ fear, this is because of the fact that they have strength and control. But my sister sees it

as the coward's way out. Subduing someone weak and feeling powerful is the definition of a coward, I hate that."

I wanted to counter him but I could not, he had never forced me and had stopped when I wanted him to, it now explained everything. He was a criminal who derived more pleasure in defeating the strong. His actions had nothing to do with morality. But I knew he was over exaggerating his sister.

"So you have a sister who is like you, who does same job as you?"

"Yes."

"And how can you say your sister is sexy?"

"What is wrong with saying that? It's the truth."

I tried to think of an answer but could not, I just knew Grandma wouldn't have seen it as the proper word to use for a sibling."

“You know over confidence is also dangerous. She should be careful.”

“Thanks for your concern but I know what I said. She is very conscious of rape that she will never let that happen to her. I meant it when I told you she is sweet but poison. Even if she ever gets overpowered which will never happen, they won’t be able to rape her. I’m a bit at peace when she goes out for a mission because our technology is becoming our superpowers.”

“Like that alien spinning thing.”

He chuckled but did not answer.

“When you say mission, do you mean killing people?”

He did not answer.

“I really wish I’m powerful, I felt so weak and so powerless. I really tried to fight but they were so strong. I wish I have superpowers, I wish I was not that week.”

I did not know I was shaking until he pulled me to our normal position. It felt different from when he was putting on clothes. I was beginning to feel warm and fire and fresh desires. He shifted me back to our former position. I rested my back on his back and tried to breathe normal. We were silent for a while.

“Ella you need to help me get that file. These people don’t value human lives, they will continue sending criminals with a promise of huge reward to take you down. That file will stop this nonsense.”

“Human lives? You don’t also value human lives.”

“I know I have a long way to go in convincing you I’m the good guy, but it’s okay if you still believe what the DPO from your



tribe said. I'm capable of protecting both of us. They will keep coming and I will keep sending them to the underworld. There is enough space to house them there."

"So you want me to believe the DPO who has been like a father to me, is the one who wants me dead?"

He did not answer and I wanted to believe him. I wanted to believe he was the good guy, then I could allow myself to be consumed by my feelings for him but wishes were not horses and I was not ready to be deluded and tricked. I had read so many novels about that and if he thought he could deceive me, then he was in for a very big surprise.

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## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER FOURTEEN

For a long time, nobody spoke. I had so many questions on my mind, I wanted to really believe my body was not craving for a criminal, I wanted to believe there could be an explanation to the killings I saw him do, I wanted to know him more, to believe that he really had a family and he still had a soul in him.

“You said you are in love with me?”

He did not answer for a while.

“I’m irrevocably in love with you” he answered after some time.

“Then can I ask some personal questions.”

“I will answer any question that will not compromise my mission.”

“Mission being me?”

“Yes.”

“My question is very intimate and I’m just asking out of inquisitiveness.”

“Ask your question.”

“I know you are not a virgin but has it been long?”

“Wow that was out of the blue Ella. No wonder you did not want to ask.”

“So?”

“Since I was seventeen, my first experience.”

“How old are you.”

“I can’t answer that, it will compromise my mission.”

I just did not understand how telling me his age would compromise whatever he was calling a mission.

“Are you not seeing someone else now?”

“I’m seeing you.”

“So you have not slept with any girl since you fell in love with me?”

“Yes.”

“What happened to your first love?”

“I never had a first, you are my first.”

His words were making my heart leap, like something was rubbing it. I did not understand why I was believing his lie.

“You did not love the first girl you slept with?”

“Hell no, my first was a prostitute.”

That was shocking and unbelievable.

“You discovered she sleeps with different guys?”

“No, I knew she was a prostitute and I paid her.”

“You are weird. Is it that girls did not like you?”

“I had no time for girls, I had no plan to have sex, my sister initiated everything.”

“I don’t understand.”

“My sister and I are very close, although we fought a lot and still fight now, we are close and most times, she always slept in my room and she always dressed in my presence, so I have seen her half naked most times. But she started acting weird when we turned seventeen.”

“You guys are twins?”

“No, I’m older.”

I was confused but I wanted him to finish his story.

“So?”

“She would sleep on my bed wearing transparent night gowns. I could see her pant and bare breast, but I did not see it as anything until she asked me if I was normal. I was at first confused. She told me I did not have current and I was not male enough. I never knew she was trying to seduce me not because she loved me, she was trying to study biology of the male, crazy girl.”

It felt weird for someone to talk about his relationship with his sister that way, I did not have a big brother but I knew it was not right, something Grandma would see as an abomination.

“I know what you are thinking and you are wrong Ella. We are not related biologically, I came to become her brother when I was fifteen.”

That cleared everything.

“So?”

“I actually believed her, I thought something was wrong with me, so I went out that night to search for a prostitute. I saw one at a motel and I told her I wanted to sleep with a virgin prostitute and she told me it was my lucky day because she was a virgin prostitute... ”

My laughter made him to stop talking.

“I was not that dumb at seventeen” I said after I could control my laughter.

“Like I said, I was never interested with things like that, I was too involved with trainings and trying to meet up with my education and I never felt aroused, so how was I supposed to know a prostitute could not be a virgin?”

“So you paid more for sleeping with a virgin prostitute?”

“Yeah, she had to teach me a lot, but the important thing here is that my sister was wrong, I had current. When I got home, I told her the problem was with her, I even shared my experience with her and made her believe she was not attractive enough to make me aroused. This my crazy sister went to look for a prey. I did not see her in my room, so I had thought she was angry with me, not knowing she went out to act as a prostitute. I only knew she was not around when I went to her room to apologize. I was worried because no matter how we hated each other, I always felt protective of her because she was so wild. She came to her room at midnight very excited. She told me I was the problem because she saw what she was looking for when she pretended to be a prostitute. She said she was taken to a hotel by two males and she saw their erection just when she had only pulled her clothes and her pant was still intact. That was what my crazy sister was looking for. She said she preferred practical biology



of the male organs to theory. This girl told this men that they could keep their money that she had gotten what she was looking for. It takes a lot of control for a man to act normal when pushed to the brim and they had no control and she ended up knocking them unconscious. She did not end there, she stabbed them before leaving. Then reported to the hotel management that some men tried to rape her, they should go check on them.”

I should not laugh but I just could not hold it.

“Your family is crazy.”

“The good news is that we know we are crazy. I had to lecture her to never do that to a man but she said it doesn’t matter if she was naked as long as she has changed her mind, they should have respected themselves. That is why I told you rape occurs

because they can do it. Assuming she was not trained it would have been a different story.”

“But where were your parents when all this stuff were happening?”

“Her dad is always conscious of her but he had his first issue with his wife that night which continued till the next morning. I wanted to report her so her dad would enforce a stern command to stop her from carrying out more experiment. But they were arguing and you won’t believe how crazy their argument sounded.”

“What could be crazier than what you and your sister did?”

“Her dad was called by his family to get a new wife who would give him a son. He said he had no idea why he was called but saw a naked woman in the room he was asked to enter. He came back home to query my mum.”

“I thought you said you guys are not related.”

“We are not related but I see her mum as my mum and her dad as my instructor.”

The only thing I could think of was ‘weird.’

“So he was blaming your mum?”

“Yes, he was asking her what she did to him, where she kept the charm she used on him. He could not believe he did not have an erection in front of a beautiful naked lady, he said he even felt repulsive. He ran home thinking something was wrong with him, only to discover he was okay as soon as he saw her. He felt my mum was using something on him. He forgot he was somehow confessing that he saw a naked woman and na so quarrel start.”

I started laughing.

“You really grew up under a weird family.”

“And to top it up, my sister reported me stopping their quarrel and changing their focus to me, I reported her and it was after some talking, I discovered I was played and there was nothing like virgin prostitute, they had to give us sex education that day.”

“You had to waste your money.”

“I did not.”

“You said you paid her more.”

“Yes but I went to collect my money when I knew I was played.”

“And she gave you back?”

“I collected it back and added extra changes for damages, then I returned her pause with a note explaining what I did. It was a fair deal.”

I was laughing forgetting who he was. I just could not believe all what he was telling me was real.

“So your family runs an assassin creed.”

“No.”

“Then what?”

“We are the good guys.”

“You can call it all you want but it will not change who you are.”

He did not answer. After some minutes of silence, I started feeling sleepy.

“Can we go back? I want to sleep.”

“We still have time, sleep, I will be watching.”

He turned and pulled me to lie on his legs. I felt the wave of sleep overpowering me. I allowed the wave to carry me away and as I disappeared to oblivion I heard him talking.

“Emmanuella, I wish you will open your eyes and know who your true enemy is. You need to find that file and end this cause I have people I would want you to meet. I know what we do takes its toll on us but my family is now big and even though we are crazy, we are happy we have sane ones to return to. When this is over I will take you to see them, to see those who give us reason to protect the weak. I will take you to our new empire, you will be safe there and you will enjoy what life is supposed to be, love, laughter, family and oneness. Somehow, the women and the little creatures are changing us, Wolf’s pup, the twins and especially the latest addition to the family, she is the first of her kind, the first female ever to be born to the family of the

hunters and she is a beauty to behold, beauty that can give a troubled soul peace with just a sight. Those who rated the most beautiful baby on the internet have not seen her. She does not only have beauty but love radiates from her. I'm sure you will find a bit of solace there, you will meet her mother who had also lost everything like you. She is an epitome of peace and happiness. You will know it's possible to live again, it's possible to have that family you've lost. And they want to meet you, to help you live again. Just think of where that file is, then we will go there....”

I could no longer hear him but as I lost complete consciousness of my environment, I thought of what he had just said and it made me confirm he was deceiving me, playing with my emotions to make me see him as the good guy and my savior because the place and family he just described did not exist.

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

I woke up feeling his hands running inside my hair. I opened my eyes and saw him staring at me. The tension was very high and I felt like pulling up to take those inviting lips.

“A penny for your thought.”

His voice was so husky and I tried to inhale air before I suffocated.

“I’m waiting.”



There was no way I would tell him I wanted to feel his lips on mine. I quickly sat up. He started laughing making me feel he knew what I was thinking about.

“Your blushing says it all. Me too Ella.”

I did not have anything to counter him with and instead of lying I shifted away from him.

“It’s past 5:AM, we need to start moving.”

He was already removing the mat, the blanket and other stuffs.

He did not drive off immediately after dropping me by the gate of my hostel.

“Ella.”

I was already opening the gate. I turned to answer him.

He had a box in his hands which he was giving me.

“Your new phone, just put your SIM back, the DPO must be worried.”

There was mockery in his voice and I did not have the time to start another debate with him. I nodded and opened the gate.

“Ella” he called again making me to turn.

“I love you.”

I felt heat all over but more in my heart. I did not like the feelings his words were building in me so I entered my hostel.

As I entered my room, I couldn't stop wondering if I dreamt about a beautiful place with gyms, flowers, orchards, tunnel, beautiful houses with children and family who radiated love or if it was just an illusion of what I yearned for, a family I would never have. I inserted my SIM into my new phone, switched it on and followed the regular instructions that came with a new

phone. A message came in and it was from the DPO. He had sent it the day before.

‘Ella, I want to believe you have everything under control as you said. I’ve lost a lot of men and I will be withdrawing them.

Make sure you get the file and make sure he doesn’t get it.’

I quickly replied him.

‘Sir my phone was damaged, I got your message.’

I could not lie to him. I felt a big weight was lifted off my shoulder. My phone blinked before I could drop it.

‘Deal is not off, don’t even think about it.’

‘I am glad you have no one to blackmail me with.’

‘Think well.’

He was right, he could still blackmail me with my fellowship brethren and Ken.

‘I am not breaking the deal, don’t do anything.’

‘Good, don’t forget I love you.’

‘Stop saying that, you are spoiling the meaning of that word, you don’t blackmail who you love.’

‘I have never blackmailed you, you are the one who struck a deal with me to spare my targets’ life.’

‘Which you never did.’

‘I did, they would have all been dead by now. The ones who offended me are the dead ones.’

I remembered he had explained that those who offended him were threat to me but they were not. There was no need to engage in an argument with him. He could use the word all he wanted, because it would never affect me, but my mind was screaming ‘liar.’

Saturday went smoothly and I did not have any trouble when I went to school to read. I kept ignoring Ken's call. Off course whispers of what happened at the uncompleted building was going on. There were rumors the capon of a cult I did not want to mention was killed by a rival cult and all the other members present were seriously injured. Some said they could not defend themselves because they were ambushed and betrayed by one of their members, people were whispering about which cult group did the ambush and some were genuinely scared it was only the beginning because there would be retaliations and those living in Ekosodin should be careful. So many gossips and whispers made me not to concentrate on what I was reading and the worst part was the nine classes I had moved to read were the same with the cultist talks. I had to pack my books and go home.

Night came and I waited for Ghost to show up but no text, even when it was already past 12:AM. I was not looking at the time, I glimpsed it on my system. I had to send a message to him when the time hit 1:AM.

I had to take three minutes to construct a message that would not make him think I wanted him to see me.

‘I hope you won’t call me out again.’

‘Miss you too.’

‘I never said I’m missing you.’

‘I’m busy Ella, not tonight. Use the time to think of where your dad could have kept that file, then dream of me. I love you.’

And my heart had to still leap, my mind would soon find another body.

As I laid on my bed, Ibrahim on my arms, I tried to think of where my dad believed he could hide something only me could find and I only knew I slept off when the alarm woke me up by 6:00AM which was Sunday morning.

A text came when I was about leaving my room for church.

‘Did you dream of me?’

‘I hardly have nightmares.’

‘Love you too. Any news about the file?’

‘Nothing yet and I don’t love you.’

‘Have a nice day thinking of me.’

There was no need to reply him. Service was okay and they had now changed the topic to being faithful to the end no matter what it would cost. I still begged God for forgiveness and I also

added that God should make my body act like my mind when it came to Ghost.

Night came and he still did not show up, I wanted to deny the fact that I was not missing him but I could not. I felt cold throughout the night, not because the weather was cold but because my body was missing his warmth, even Ibrahim could not help. God did not answer my prayer.

I woke up late the next morning and I had to run all the way to class and as I struggled to get a seat at the back, I knew my last message to him was not completely true. Somehow my body did not want him to go. I could still hear him telling me he loved me.

“I’m not going to let you avoid me today.”

It was Ken and he was now the sixth and last person on my seat.

I did not even remember to get a seat where I was the last person.



I did not answer him, instead my eyes caught Mabel. She was looking at me from the front but there was something in her eyes, fear. She was afraid of me. Then I remembered Friday incident, they must have told her and she would not even be able to tell anyone that her cult friends tried to rape me and were spared to live by Ghost except their leader who was the only person Ghost had killed. I had no remorse for his death. Ghost's sister if she really existed was right, rape was like murder. She turned her head back to the front as soon as our eyes met.

“Ella, please tell me what I did.”

I turned to look at Ken, I was free to go out with him, Mabel and her gang would no more disturb me. From her eyes I could tell, I was hundred percent sure.

“I'm sorry, I was going through a lot of things.”

“I thought we are friends.”

“Even me too, but I was being pressured.”

“Ops, I’m sorry, you still should have told. I’m sorry I made you feel that.”

He did not get me and would never get me.

“I should apologize too.”

“So are we back?”

“Wait, let me check something.”

I quickly sent a message to Ghost.

‘I want to go watch a movie with Ken.’

There was no response.

“Friends” I replied and I was answered with a dimple smile.

“So we will be reading together after 8:00 class?”

I was not allowed to answer because Dr. Bright walked into the class with a plastered ear. The whole class went silent and I felt like hiding under the desk when his eyes caught mine and when some turned to follow his eyes. It felt like one million eyes were looking at me. I felt a hand on my hand. It was surprisingly not cold neither was it warm like Ghost. I shook my head to shake the feeling of his hands on my body out of my memory.

Without even saying good morning to the class or explaining his absence, he started teaching and I definitely did not concentrate.

As soon as the class ended and Dr. Bright was out of the class, Ken helped me pack my books and held my hands. Together we walked out of the class and I just knew the noise that started immediately we were at the door was about us. If only my body was normal I should fall in love with him for that action. He had diverted the attention of gossipers from my cult boyfriend to

Ken's girl. We went together to our next class and we had already secured a comfortable seat at the middle when the others started trooping in. The next lecturer was on time to prevent another chat with Ken.

“Good morning, news from the office of the Vice Chancellor.”

He made sure everyone was paying rapt attention to him before he continued.

“The Vice Chancellor has been informed that the recent shootings in the school was due to some criminals using UNIBEN as refuge, kidnappers to be specific, but we were not informed which side had the casualties but the good news is though I don't believe the story, I am not dumb...”

The class erupted in laughter and he only continued when everyone had calmed down.

“So, the good news is that it is over. The police have promised us that the culprits have been apprehended and students can go on with their activities in school without fear of being hit by a stray bullet.”

And they all started clapping. What a big lie. At least he did not believe it. The culprit was being satiated by a girl sitting amongst them.

“Okay now to the business of the day.”

For once I could concentrate, there was no fear that I had broken a rule and somebody was about to be killed by Ghost.

Just like the first lecture, Ken held my hands as we walked to read at the Orchard after getting fast food from Omega mobile restaurant by the car park close to my favorite seat.

I told Ken to explain what Dr. Bright taught and he was glad to. We went for our second to last lecture together and decided to use one more hour to read at one of the empty classroom at H series before the last class.

Just when we had sat down to read, some group of boys on red burst into the class. At first I thought they were looking for me but I was wrong. Their target was a guy reading in front of us. He was quite familiar, he had been the one to show me where I could pay my Faculty dues, in fact he followed me there. He told me his name was Emeka and he was a three hundred level historian. He must have known he was their target because he stood up to run. He was blocked and punched to the ground in front of the class. He immediately went on his knees.

“What else do you want from me? I wrote a letter and I’ve apologized.”

He was rubbing his palm together. One of them smacked him on his head making him fall to the ground.

“Na letter we dey talk about, shebi I tell you say make you leave that girl for me?”

“But I told you she is not my girlfriend, I came to school to study and graduate with a good grade. I know I shouldn’t have stood up to you when you were molesting her but she is not my girl...”

He was smacked again.

“Molest? To ask a girl say make she be my love na molest?”

“But she said she did not want and you were threatening her, I just don’t like seeing someone being oppressed, that’s why I reacted, I never knew you be boss na. I don beg, buy drink, write letter. What do you want again?”

Another boy smacked him again and the sound resonated in my ears.

“Don’t watch Ella” Ken said pulling my face away from the scene but I removed his hands.

“The girl say na you she want, how that one nor mean say she be your girlfriend?”

“How is that my fault? How that one come take concern me na, see I dey beg, I be the only son of my mother, please, free me let me have peace. I have done everything you asked. Haba.”

He was hit three times and I shrunk from the sound.

“Who you dey tell haba, you dey craze?” the one he called boss shouted.

His cult subjects started pulling him back. They tried reminding him they were in school.



“E be like say you never hear wetin we do Ako and him gang on Friday, no worry, the fuck up when you want dey come.”

He walked out, his subjects following behind him.

What a big liar, he was now claiming the one responsible for what happened on Friday.

I did not know when I left my seat and moved to join him at the front. I could see some angry swollen marks on both sides of his head.

“I’m so sorry. What can I do?”

He looked at me and smiled.

“I remember you, the girl who wanted the way to faculty secretariat, Ella right?”

He was struggling to hide his pain but I could see through him.

“Don’t worry, it’s like that, they like humiliating people who trampled on them but after some time they find another replacement.”

“But you are not a rival, you did nothing wrong.”

“They don’t see it like that, don’t worry. You are not supposed to be here. They may come back and you will be in trouble, and it will be bad because you are pretty.”

“I wish they will come back, I wish they see me kneeling close to you when they come back.”

“Ella you don’t understand, you need to leave, I mean it when I said you will be in trouble.”

But I understood him, I understood what he was saying. I really wanted that trouble, for once I wanted to be caught in the mess, then those waste in human form would understand what power

meant, they would understand how their victims felt and they would know that they were at the bottom of the crime chain.

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER SIXTEEN

I helped him arrange his books when I discovered he was limping. I watched him limp out of the class. Ken came to join me where I was standing.

“Ella you are so soft hearted. I wish I could help him but you have to be careful, they have eyes everywhere and it’s best to avoid them” Ken whispered to my ears.

I told him I was no longer interested in reading and when our last class together was over, he asked if I would go to a movie with him, it was same time my phone blinked.

‘See you this night love.’

In other words I could not go.

“I won’t be available Ken.”

“You’ve been dull since what happened to Emeka.”

“You know him?” I asked

“Yes na, who doesn’t, he is popular. You need to start knowing what is going on in your environment. The incident where he defended a girl Boss was asking out is very well known and I’m sure you are not aware that Ako’s cult group was attacked on Friday during their initiation night and he is dead and the others are still treating their wounds.”

If only he knew I was not just aware but present and witnessed what Ghost did to them.

“Rumor has it that Boss’ cult is responsible and everyone is dreading them right now. I am rich but even my wealth can only protect me a little. I am safe as long as I don’t step on their shoes and you should do the same cause girls are not exempted.”

I nodded so he would stop advising me.

As I walked back to my hostel, I could not stop thinking about Ghost’s imaginary sister and what he had imagined her to have done at seventeen. I wished I was that imaginary sister, I would have taught those guys some lessons right in that classroom, but people like that didn’t exist and it was a waste of time to wish I could fight. I also thought about the girl who Emeka had been trying to help. I wondered how scared she would be, then I wished Ghost was a good guy, I wished he would use his trainings to do good, not get rich by killing innocent policemen.

My phone blinked around 9:PM.

‘Come outside.’

It was definitely the river but I was wrong because there was no bike, just a tall figure wearing a face cap and a night vision goggle, a bag on his back. The night was dark and there was power outage. The light from stores did not get to my gate. Only someone standing by my hostel gate could see others. I really wanted to see the little I could about his face so I quickly switched on my phone torch. He did not block me but even removed his face cap. His face was not ugly, not handsome, not as I imagined it, and it looked somehow squeezed and wrong. He pulled under his jaw and it looked like he was peeling his skin, then gummed it back.

“Have you heard of silicone mask?”

Now it became clear.

“Jerk.”

I had said it before I could stop myself. I tensed waiting for him to decide the punishment.

“Stop fearing the wrong thing Ella. Let’s go.”

He held my hands.

“Go where?”

“Let’s just stroll.”

His hands felt so warm in my hands and it felt so right like my hand was in the right place. We strolled into my hostel street.

“So what suggestion have you come up with?”

“I don’t understand.”

His hand was distracting me.

“Ella, the file. This is very important.”

“I thought and I even had headache from thinking and there is no idea but I will try.”

“Try harder because there is something and people I need you to meet.”

“I thought the deal will be over once I can locate the file.”

“We will make another deal, cause I’m not letting you go. You mean a lot to me.”

I stopped walking and pulled my hands away.

“This is not what you do to someone you love, you don’t blackmail or threaten someone to love you.”

“I am not, your body loves and wants me. It’s your mind that needs to be fixed.”

“My mind is very much okay and I don’t..”



A gunshot stopped me. Ghost pulled me immediately to a big tree and pulled me down with him. He brought out something from his bag which he plugged to his ears. He pulled me close and I allowed him, I allowed myself to feel the warmth that came with being enclosed by him. I found myself wrapping my arms around his waist, I just could not explain why I yearned for the closeness. He allowed me and brought out his phone.

“Any alert?”

“What now?” I asked pulling away to look at him but he was not talking to me.

He pulled me back and I allowed him.

“Then where did the shot come from? I heard it clearly and it’s not more than two minutes’ run.”

He paused.

“Roger that.”

There was something familiar with his last words but I could not place it. He gently pulled me up with him. He did not say anything and if I were to guess, it must be some of his rivals. He started operating his wristwatch. I tried to look and surprisingly, he did not stop me. All I could see was a green circle that kept moving and blinking. He pulled his hand down and started pressing something on his goggle.

“Shit, damn it.”

He was angry, I could tell because he was breathing fast.

“What is it?”

He did not answer.

“Can you scan him to find any identification?”

He was not talking to me but to someone through what he had inserted in his ears which was powerful enough to also act as a mic. These gadgets were only seen in movies, but my mindset had been reset because I had seen more than I've seen in movies.

“Damn it, what the heck is wrong with them, why this madness?”

He paused.

“He just had to be wasted like that. Hell is my business Wild.”

I was not too surprised by the name, his own was Ghost, that should be their code name. But he made mention of wasted.

“Did you lose your men?”

I did not even know why I was concerned.

“I'm sorry Ella.”

I've heard that word many times to know what he meant. But I had no one close to me, no one close that his or her death would make Ghost tell me sorry except Ken.

“No no, Ken, what happened?”

I was already panting.

“It's not Ken.”

I turned because I could hear noises behind me. We were not far from the market and I could see crowd gathering at a distance, the noises grew and changed to wailing. Then I heard the name. People were screaming his name. They got him, he said they would leave him but they got him. I tried to run towards the crowd but I was pulled back.

“No, let me go, no” I screamed struggling to get free. But he held on.

“You don’t need to see him.”

“Let me go” I screamed.

“Sssh Ella, don’t attract the wrong person, take.”

He was giving me a goggle. I allowed him to wear it on my eyes.

The night became clear but for just few seconds because it changed to the crowd, like I was watching a movie with it. Then

I saw him, his skull was opened as he laid arms outstretched,

Emeka was dead. I pulled out the goggle and cried my eyes out.

I did not struggle when he pulled me back in his arms. I allowed

him. I could hear the wailing, people shouting his name and

telling him to wake up, some telling him he should not forget he

was the only son of his mother. But they were just wasting their

time because he was very dead.

“I heard what happened in the day, I just knew he must be the

same guy. I’m sorry, I know you wanted to help him. I’m sorry.”

He rubbed my back and allowed me sob.

“But why? He did nothing wrong, he was just standing up for a girl that was being bullied, he even had to back down and apologize, why?”

“The shot was very close, he knew who killed him and he was not running away. I’m eighty percent sure it was a part of an initiation, someone’s rites of passage and he was the sacrificial lamb. They also want to make a stand. I’m sorry.”

“Why are you sorry? Since when did you start caring? The boy who shot him is same as you, there is no difference.”

“Ella, I’m not a murderer, I eliminate them. I don’t kill innocents Ella. You need to open your eyes and see who your real enemies are. If I knew or had them on my trail, I would have prevented this from happening.”

I wanted to believe him but I had seen him kill police officers.

“If you are not the bad guy, how about getting justice for him.

How about making sure they don’t have the boldness to go for another target, how about making sure that girl is not harassed.

Please? Police will not do anything, they will not stop killing.

I’m a victim and I keep wondering about those who had no one to save them. Please give him justice.”

I could not believe I would ever want someone dead but in just four days, I was wishing for the death of someone for the second time. He did not answer, not that I was expecting him to. He was just protecting his interest and nothing outside meant anything to him.

“Roger that. Just track who is with his phone and track his last caller and last caller of the last caller. Take control of the eyes, let me take her home.”

I wish I understood what he was saying but I only knew he was taking me home and I did not resist as he held me on my shoulders.

For the first time, he followed me to my room. He made me sit down on my bed, told me to wear my goggle and inserted something in my ear.

“You can only hear, if you have a change of heart, pull everything off but I was already planning to visit them. You did not make me and you cannot make me stop. You must understand that. I don’t want you to feel guilty when this is over. I don’t even want you to watch but Wild has commanded me to allow you watch.”

“Who is Wild?” But he was already out of my room.

After some seconds, I stopped feeling his presence and my goggle started that movie thing again. It was as if something was



moving and I was moving with it, like it was flying and looking below. The night was clear. There was no sound. I touched the stuff in my right ear, it did not work. I let it be and sat still so I would not feel dizzy from the sensation of whatever was moving.

It got to one uncompleted building and started going down. It must have stopped by the window. I saw lots of boys sitting down on blocks. They were drinking and smoking, some had pistol on their laps. I recognised few of them. They were the ones who attacked Emeka. Another person joined them and almost immediately, I could hear what they were saying. He knelt down while they clapped and hailed him. There was pistol in his hand. The one Emeka had called Boss started pouring drink on his head as they hailed him.

Ghost was right, it must have been his first task to prove he was tough enough to be part of them. He was young, shouldn't be

more than eighteen, yet he could pull the trigger and shoot someone on the head. He brought out a phone and handed it to Boss who smashed it on the ground as they cheered on.

“You are now fully confirmed. Welcome to the most dreaded...”

He stopped talking. I was concentrating so much on him that I did not notice that alien thing was in the room.

“What is that Boss?” one of them questioned.

The one kneeling down turned to see for himself. Those with pistol pointed it at the alien stuff, including Emeka’s killer.

Ghost came in from one of the windows but I must be the one only one to have noticed him. They were all looking at the alien thing.

“I heard you claiming my work.”

He was very calm that I could almost feel fear. They turned to face him. From their stance they had no idea who to point the gun at. From those I could see their face, they were shocked Ghost entered without being noticed.

“Who are you?”

“Same question all the time.”

He crossed his legs, hands in his pocket, like he was waiting for a friend to join him for a stroll and guns were not being pointed at him.

“You must have heard of me from Ako, because I knew he was looking for me.”

“Ghost.”

“Correct.”

“So you are the Ghost guy, and you and your gang killed him and injured his boys.”

“Ako was looking for Ghost and he got him, you are not looking at Ghost. I’m just here to send someone to the underworld. Lucifer is waiting, and I must do it before the blood of the innocent guy dries up.”

“Today is your lucky day, no uninvited guest comes without permission. That’s my gift for killing Ako.”

“How dangerous are you?”

I wished I understood where he was going with that question.

“If you don’t leave here in the next ten seconds you will find out.”

“How many have you killed? How do I even believe you guys are dangerous as people see you?”

Shit! I knew what he was doing, he was taunting him to confess, he was also going to kill Boss. And he took the bait and started laughing followed by the others.

“I fucked up one guy in town just two days ago and you know what your fucking time is up” Boss said and fired but it was deflected, not that the alien stuff made the bullet magnet to it, it deflected it.

“What the fuck?” Boss shouted and started firing simultaneously. The others joined him. He took the gun of the new guy and fired at the alien stuff which was also deflected. Ghost brought out that glowing baton from his bag and sprung on them. He was very fast. He used karate, kung Fu and even acrobat to fight, no beat them. I was a movie freak and I had watched more of Asian movies before my zombie life started, so I had an idea of what Kung Fu and karate looked like. He was so difficult to follow

and he was just too flexible and if I had not seen those defined muscles, I would have believed he did not have a bone. They tried to fight back but the issue was that thing in his hands was like a teaser, just a touch was all it needed to shock them and send them vibrating on the ground. They were no match for him. One ran to him and almost stabbed him on his back but he dodged same time sending Boss the stabbers way and the knife went through Boss' chest. I closed my eyes from the sight. I could not watch.

It was easier to tell him to get justice but watching someone really die was another thing, I could only hear the noises they made as they vibrated from the shock. I did not want to see again.

“Sometimes God pardons criminals and give them a second chance because He is all knowing and sees their heart and

brainwashed mind, so I was taught. But if God allowed you to be in my arms after murdering an innocent soul, then it definitely means there is no second chance for you.”

I did not know when I opened my eyes. Ghost was holding the new guy close to him, his neck bent and a knife on his throat.

The others were still on the ground but from the way some were struggling to stand up, I just knew they were all still aware of their environment.

“Please” the boy pleaded.

He was shaking and so afraid. I wished I never asked for justice.

“Stop, Ghost don’t. Please let God punish him” I begged but there was no sign to show he heard me.

“Tell me how he died?”

“I called his line and told him to come out, that we were going to give him his last task and free him....please.”

“Continue.”

That calm voice was sending chills to my body.

“When he came out, I pointed the gun at his head and shot him, please, it was the work of the devil. I will never harm even a fly if you let me go.”

“What about the girl?”

I did not understand the diversion. He did not answer. Ghost pushed the knife to his throat.

“It was Boss, before I went to waste..sorry to kill Emeka, Boss forced the girl here and raped her, then he made me rape her too then two others, then sent her away.. I swear it’s the devil.”



I could not hold my tears, I felt like strangling him, how dare him blame the devil?

“Did he beg? When you had the gun on his head, did he beg?”

“I’m sorry.”

“Answer me.”

“Yes sir, he begged me, he said I should shoot his hand and he will not report me, it will be like he was running away and I did not get his head as instructed, I’m sorry, it was the work of the devil.”

“That’s why I’m sending you to meet him.”

Ghost slit his throat without warning and I closed my eyes but I could still hear the dying sound he made. I pulled out the stuff in my ears, I pulled the goggle away and just cried.

I must have become evil like Ghost because I was not crying for the two dead cultist, neither was I crying for Emeka's dead body. I was crying because justice had been served, the police would never solve the murder case, students might still be confused about Boss and the new guy's death, Emeka's mum would cry and place curses on his killers, but they will never fully know Emeka's killer was dead, they would never know Emeka got justice. I would be the only one aware and appeased that he didn't die in vain. I took Ibrahim and as I laid on the bed, I could not stop thinking about Ghost, I wanted to believe he was the good guy. Although nothing would change what I saw him do, I was going to give him the benefit of doubt.

(Two chapters will published simultaneously tomorrow)

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GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

I was back at the uncompleted building and Capon was trying to pull my trousers but I struggled to stop him. He got angry and stabbed me on my stomach. I felt a piercing pain and started screaming. I woke up sweating and feeling cold. I picked my phone and started dialing his number, it was when he had

picked the call and I heard his voice, I realized I really called his line.

“Ella say something, you are panting.”

“I can’t sleep, he was trying to rape me, I refused and he stabbed me.”

“Ssh Ella, it’s just a nightmare.”

“No, it felt real.”

“I’m sorry, I wish I’m there with you.”

It was same with me, I wished he was with me, I knew what he would have done and I would have felt safe and warm.

“I’m afraid.”

There was no answer and it made me panic.

“Don’t go, please.”

There was no answer.

“Are you there?”

“Ella, I have a brother who wants to help you. What you are going through is called a trauma. Your experience shocked and horrified you, maybe because you were not expecting it. Your body is yet to recover from the shock and it may continue if you don't get help. My brother can help you.”

“How?”

I was just getting to try trust him but to meet his brother was another thing.

“He will talk to you now, if you want.”

“But how will he help me on phone?”

“You just need to say yes and find out, please Ella.”

I just could not understand the new Ghost. His voice was so filled with concern.

“Okay, anything that will make me not to have another trauma.”

There was silence for a long time, then the call ended.

“No, no no.”

But before I could redial, my phone started ringing.

“Ella, sorry I cut the call. I needed to do something and call you back. Put that device in your ear.”

His voice always had a way of calming me. I searched for it on the floor and inserted it in my ears.

“Hi Ella.”

Ghost’s voice was masculine and deep but the voice I just heard was more than deep, like a baritone. Normally, that kind of

voice scared me but his own was sending waves of calm to my body, like I was being entranced.

“Hi.”

I wanted to ask him his name but I felt it was not necessary.

“My name is Wild and Ghost told me what happened but from his view point. I want to hear the full story from you.”

“I don’t know if it will be okay to go through that horrible moment again.”

“Where are you right now?”

“On my bed.”

“Are you lying down?”

“No.”

“Okay do as I say. Lie down and place your head on your pillow, make sure the pillow is placed a bit high. Drop your phone beside you.”

“Okay” I said after following his instructions.

“Make sure your eyes are not closed until I say so.”

“Okay.”

“Now let’s go through this together. You may be horrified as you tell me and you may want to stop but don’t. For you to be free, you must go through that moment and walk past it, okay?”

“Yes.”

“Tell me Ella, every single detail.”

I really did not know how going through what happened to me would help me, but his voice was very coercive that I found



myself talking. At a point, when I got to the part he cut my breast, I started panting but I continued till the end. I felt so cold.

“Thank you Ella, thanks for sharing. I have some questions. I ask, you answer.”

“Okay” I panted.

“Do you have lectures tomorrow?”

“Yes.”

“Did you meet any of them yesterday?”

“No, yes, the girl.”

“What happened?”

“She always harassed me and had slapped me once but for the first time she could not look at me in the eyes, she was afraid of me.”

“Apart from the girl who else?”

“None, rumor has it that they were injured and taking treatment.”

“So what are you going to do if you meet Capon tomorrow?”

“I don’t understand.”

“There is a tendency that he would try it again when he meets you.”

I should have known nothing would come out of it. I was speaking with a dumb person.

“I thought I told you Ghost killed him.”

“Are you sure?”

“I just told you I watched him die and students confirmed he is dead.”

“Think well, they must have been talking about someone else and he must have survived and he can come back to you.”

“Are you trying to scare me? I thought you were supposed to help me.”

“Don’t deviate Ella.”

“I am very sure he is dead, rumors don’t just fly like that. I remember some group of girls discussing that they saw Mabel crying and telling her friends that Ako is dead, that she was yet to believe it because he was her cousin. Is that enough proof?”

“So you are sure he can’t come back and hurt you again?”

I felt like throwing the device away.

“Yes, he won’t hurt me again.”

“Why?”

“Seriously?”

“Ella.”

“Because he is dead, as in D.E.A.D” I let out my frustration.

“And his boys?”

“They won’t dare, even Dr. Bright the reason behind this whole thing is afraid of me.”

“So you are sure they will never bother you again?”

“Oh my God, this is not working. How on earth did I agree to this? I should have remembered you guys are not normal and you are not humans, how else do you want me to tell you that they can’t hurt me again. They will even be afraid to come near me because they know what will happen to them. Please can you stop asking me same question? I have already told you many times that Ako is dead and his boys won’t bother me again.”

“Are you still afraid?”

“Afraid of who?”

“Ako and his cult boys.”

“Oh my gosh! No I am not.”

“Because they won’t hurt you again, because Ako is dead and the others are afraid of you?”

“Finally, yes Wild. Yes.”

“Good you can close your eyes now.”

And then it all made sense. I was no longer cold from the memory because I could actually remember it and I was not afraid, I could see Ako trying to pull my trousers and trying to stab me, but somehow, I was not afraid, it was like I was acting a script and I knew the ending. I knew Ako was going to die before the knife gets to me. There was no fear. He was dead, it

was just a memory. Ako was really dead, he would never hurt me again.

“Thanks. How did you do it?”

“I can’t tell you the secret of my job Ella.”

That voice again, it felt like waves of calm were rushing through me.

“Have you closed your eyes?”

“Yes.”

“Take a deep breathe. Breathe in, breathe out.”

I followed his instructions.

“Good, just breathe in, breathe out. What intrigues you Ella?”

“Nature.”

I did not need to think to answer, nature had always intrigued me.

“Me too, I love nature especially the jungle filled with deadly animals. Do you love that kind of nature?”

“Jeez, that’s Wild not nature.”

“That’s me.”

I started laughing.

“I don’t like wild nature.”

“Okay cancel Wild nature. If you have an opportunity to visit a natural tourist site which would you prefer?”

“Waterfalls.”

“Okay, let’s visit one.”

“How?”

“I will take you there, just make sure your eyes are closed and your head is resting on your pillow.”

His voice was making me feel entranced.

“Okay.”

“You are standing on a flat rock surrounded by water and tall trees with thick shrubs, green and fresh. There are noises of birds and crickets because it’s night but you can see everything because you are wearing a night vision goggle.”

He paused but continued few seconds later.

“You are not afraid because you know there is someone beside you, someone who will protect you. An owl hoots making you raise your head to locate it on the branches of one of the trees.

You don’t only see the owl but more rocks looking like steps and it’s not just rocks but foams of water flowing down from the



first step. You cannot see the source because shrubs and branches of trees have covered it. From that height, it flows endlessly to a large round rock where it splatters to the ground, which explains why the flat rock surrounding the tall round rock is a bit submerged in water wetting your feet. The sound of the waterfall is like music of a loud orchestra with clap, clap clap sound mixed to it.”

I could actually see, feel and hear what he was describing, it was so beautiful. I felt like touching the large round rock. I moved towards it and rubbed my hands on it’s roughness, the water splattered on me.

“Can you hear the music of the birds? Listen to the crickets, there is another unfamiliar noise, another night creature. Listen.”

I could hear it, like a cackling sound. It sounded so beautiful.

“You can sit down there Ella, let nature envelop you, just rest on that flat rock, feel and listen to nature.”

I found myself lying down on the flat rock, my clothes got soaked but it was okay, I felt so peaceful. I let the sound of the waterfall and the music of the night creatures take me to oblivion.

The alarm woke me up. I checked the time and jumped out of my bed. It was already 8:30 on Tuesday. How on earth did I sleep through five alarms? I had set it to repeat every thirty minutes except I stopped it. I ran all the way to class and was just entering when the lecturer entered. Ken waved at me. He was sitting at the middle of the rows of chairs.

“Thanks” I said sitting down on the space that was made available after he had removed his bag. He did not answer but kept staring at me.

“What?”

“You look different, you look refreshed and stunning.”

He was smiling as he spoke.

“Mr. Ken as much as we are discussing romance as a theme in one of the poems, I don’t think I want to see the practical in my class.”

The whole class started laughing, it was their hubby. I turned to face the front feeling embarrassed.

“Sorry Ma’am” Ken apologized.

“Let’s not repeat it again.”

“Yes ma’am.”

I kept receiving stares throughout the lecture making it so hard to concentrate. It was when the lecture was over, I remembered there had been no message from Ghost. I quickly brought out

my phone. I was wrong, there were numerous messages. I had never slept like that, never. Not even before my family were murdered, maybe when I was still young and when Ibrahim was still alive but this was a first deep sleep I could remember. I opened the message box, he had sent four messages. I scrolled to the first one.

‘Hope you slept well? I love you so much.’ That was 6:12AM

‘Wake up sleepy head. Love you.’ 7:01 AM.

‘Ella, you will miss your lecture. I apologize on behalf of my brother, he went too far.’ 8:02 AM.

‘Stop giving Ken hope, try correct the romance impression from the lecturer before you break his heart. Don’t forget I love you, love you my Ella. All mine. Don’t miss me too much, night will soon come.’

“Why are you laughing?”

I had almost forgotten about Ken.

“Sorry, a crazy friend.”

“Okay if you say so. So what are we reading?”

My phone blinked before I could answer Ken.

‘I agree with the crazy part but hell no, we are not friends.’

‘Then what are we?’

‘You are my one and forever love, I won’t force you to feel the same but remove that idea of a friend and find something else.

See you this night. Try focus on your book and try think less of me. I don’t want a dullard as my love.’

‘You wish’ but the message bounced back as not sent.

“Why do I feel so jealous of that guy? Are you sure you guys are just friends because you are blushing.”

“Let’s say he is an admirer like you.”

“So I have a competition.”

If Ghost saw him as one.

“But you know you are weird.”

“How?”

“You are not supposed to tell me that I you have another admirer.”

“I don’t understand.”

“That’s why I said you are weird.”

“Is it something good or bad?”

“I will say something very unique and it makes me fall in love with you over and over again.”

“I thought...”

“Hey, please don’t give me that face. Let’s just read.”

And so we read but stopped when someone mentioned Emeka. They were sitting behind us. I could not believe I had forgotten about him.

“Hey, Ella don’t please.”

He pulled me to him and allowed me cry.

“I’m sorry, I wanted to tell you but you were looking happy and I did not want to ruin it.”

He thought I was just hearing it for the first time.

“I’m sorry. I wish I could have helped him. I heard his mother arrived very early this morning and she is now in the hospital.

Boss is nowhere to be found. Rumor has it that he ran away.

Normally they always show up to make people are aware they are watching them in case they decide to talk to the police.

That's what I heard but this is the first time they are silent, no one has seen them or heard from them."

Because Boss and the boy who shot him were dead, they would never hear from them. Somehow, his cult members must have started the rumor that he had ran away. They would not want to admit he was dead because rumors like that wouldn't just fly.

Everyone knew when Ako was killed but none knew they were dead and they would never know. I wondered what they must have done to their bodies. They would remain missing forever. I wished there was a way to make his parents know that justice had been served. I had thought students would know after the news of Boss' death must have spread but that would never be.



“Are you going for the candle night?”

I turned to look at them. The girls were already leaving the hall.

“It’s at Hall 2 car park by 8:PM” Ken said.

“I know you will want to go.”

I nodded.

“Okay, should I come pick you up?”

“No, don’t worry I will find my way.”

“Do I really have a chance at your heart?”

I did not answer.

“Your silence says a lot but I’m not going to give up on you  
Ella.”

I still could not answer.

“I really like you as a friend but...”

“Don’t Ella, don’t say it. Not yet.”

“I don’t want you to get hurt Ken.”

“It’s my hurt, let me choose to get hurt, don’t also take away that choice from me, please Ella.”

I did not answer.

“I’m not saying you must answer now but just give me a chance please.”

I nodded.

“Thanks. I have an art class now.”

“Education class” I said standing up knowing fully well there would be no shooting.

As I got close to education faculty, my phone blinked.

‘You really want to go for the candle night?’

‘Yes’ I responded immediately.

‘Okay, but you will wait till I come for you, there is somewhere I want to take you to after the candle night.’

‘Where?’

‘It’s a surprise.’

‘Okay, but I hate surprises because I won’t concentrate.’

‘You are almost late for class. Don’t forget I love you.’

His words were doing a lot on me, I was becoming enclosed, encapsulated and enveloped by this man called Ghost.

(Don't forget to read chapter 18, it's also out.)

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(Please in chapter one: It's two years, seven months and two weeks not one year. It was a miscalculation error. Sorry.)

HOPE YOU'VE READ CHAPTER SEVENTEEN, JUST  
SCROLL DOWN IF YOU'VE NOT

For the first time in a long time, I could concentrate on my lectures. As I walked back home I got a call from Ken, he wanted to find out if I had change my mind, if I would allow him to take me to the candle night. I still gave him same answer.

I was excited but could not place why, I was supposed to be sad but I kept having a tingling sensation in my stomach. I had

no idea where he was taking me to but I was not afraid, I had not forgotten he was an assassin, just wanted to hear his side of the story. I checked the time, it was already 7:30 yet no text from Ghost. I sat down on my bed looking at the phone and wondering if I should text him. I remembered Wild, his brother. It felt so wrong and confusing that they were assassins. But I had seen him kill those police officers. Wild's voice was so full of power that it made one feel waves and waves of calm and tranquility. A message came from the DPO.

‘Ella, any news?’

‘Good evening Sir. No news yet but I'm sure I will soon find out.’

‘Okay, don't forget who your loyalty lies with.’

‘Okay Sir’ I replied him hoping I did not lie.

My phone blinked again.

‘You can come out love.’

That tingling again, it extended to my chest.

‘Can you stop calling me that?’

‘No love.’

I was outside in less than two minutes but he was not there by the gate. Suddenly, I felt him. It was like my body was empty and void, then his presence filled it up and made it whole and alive. I turned to try locate him but could not. My phone blinked.

‘I’m right beside you. You can move now.’

I wanted to reply him but saw I was running out of time. I started running to Back Gate, all the while feeling his presence.

I saw some group of people putting on black like me, each having a candle with them. I followed behind them and ignored

their arguments on whether Boss would come back after everything must have calmed down. That was all they argued till we got to Hall 2 Car Park.

It was crowded and the entrance to the hostel had lots of candles already burning. Students who came with more than one candles lighted them and placed one among the candles on the ground then held one. I had just one with me, I never knew they would arrange it like that. I could still feel him when my phone blinked but it was not him.

‘Where are you, come to the ebelobo tree.’

I struggled to push past the crowd and located Ken resting by the tree with lots of girls crowding him, there were also some guys.

He started walking to me as soon as he saw me.

“Glad you made it.”

I nodded. He took my hands as we walked to the funeral floor. I allowed him hoping Ghost was seeing me and would get jealous. My phone blinked.

‘You are a very bad actress, you need to meet my sister to learn acting. I am nowhere near jealous when you are mine.’

“Is it that guy again?”

I locked the phone and placed it by my side.

“That’s a yes.”

I could not answer because a music started playing and it was very loud, it suddenly stopped and someone took the mic.

“Ladies and gentlemen, great uniben students, my heart is too broken, my eyes have emptied its water, my voice is gone from being overused but even after all my organs have become weak, my mind still functions, it keeps asking me, will I be the next



victim? The cry of the wounded, the tears of the innocent. Who will hear our pleas, who will give us justice? Who will explain to a mother that her son will never come home? Such innocence, a life is worth nothing to them. I live in fear every day, afraid I must have stepped on someone's toe, afraid I will soon have a bullet in my skull, afraid the cold earth will keep me forgotten while my killers plan another victim. Who will plead our cause, who will grant him justice?"

He started crying making many to join him. I could not hold back my tears and I allowed Ken pull me to him.

Another person took the mic from the first boy.

"I don't have words to describe this fallen hero. Does it matter? Will it bring him back to life? My brother my friend who will give you justice? How can I tell you to rest in peace when your killers still roam the street? Don't you dare rest in peace, let

your innocent soul cry for vengeance, don't ever rest until they stop breathing, then you can rest in peace, Emeka don't rest in peace.....” He started crying and was replaced by another person.

“Ladies and gentlemen, great students of Uniben, let's send Emeka home with his favorite song.”

Almost immediately, ‘You raise me up’ started playing.

I cried and sang along with our candles raised high. As we sang the last part, students started screaming his name. Some ran to the where a big banner of his picture was hanging and started hugging it. It was so emotional and heart wrenching to watch. I was so sad even when I knew justice had been served, I could not fathom the pains of others who had no idea Boss and the guy who shot him were dead. Many could not stand, they went on

their knees, they all surrounded the candles on the ground and started chanting his name.

“Those are his course mates” Ken said.

His voice showed he must have cried too. The crowd was massive. The park was filled up to Hall 1. My phone blinked.

‘Come to me Ella.’

“I need to go.”

I started finding my way out of the crowd before Ken could question me. My phone blinked as soon as I got to the entrance gate of Hall 1.

‘Come to the tree opposite you.’

I walked to the tree but no one. I felt heat at my back and turned. I threw myself against him. He wrapped me in him that I could only breathe him.

“I’m sorry for your loss. I’m sorry I could not save him” he said  
kissing my hair.

I did not say anything, I just felt him.

“We need to go.”

“But where?”

“Don’t ruin my surprise Ella.”

He held my hand and we started walking towards the direction  
of the Library.

“Are we trekking? No bike?”

He did not answer but made me to stop walking. A car was by  
our side. It was black and flashy, I had no idea of the product.

“Hop in” Ghost said opening the driver’s seat.

I entered because I trusted him, it wouldn't have changed anything even if I did not trust him. He followed immediately.

“At your service” the man on the wheel spoke.

His voice was also masculine, I could not see his face or full size but he was not lanky nor huge just in-between.

“Okay dude” Ghost said.

I turned to look at him but grabbed him instead. We must have been flying because there was no way a car could run that fast. I held on to him and closed my eyes, then started confessing my sins in case we crashed and I died. But Ghost was laughing at my expense. I started breathing when the car was brought to a halt.

“Open your eyes Ella, we did not die, it was a smooth ride.”

I raised my head and looked at him.

“Please make sure you inform me when it’s going to be a rough ride, let me plan my funeral.

“Okay” he answered my sarcasm and opened the door.

I followed after him and stood frozen by the door when I saw we were at an open field and there was a helicopter in the middle.

“Let’s go.”

He held my hand but I pushed it back.

“Go where?”

“A surprise. Have you never flown in a helicopter before?”

“Yes, I use it to travel for my lectures every day.”

“Okay, so you won’t be afraid of this one.”

And with that, he raised me and placed me on his shoulder and started running towards the helicopter. I was too stunned to

protest and I only found my voice after he had dropped me on the seat.

“I was being sarcastic” I shouted.

“Okay” he answered but started belting me up.

“Okay? Okay and you are belting me up?”

He did not reply immediately but wore me a helmet.

“There is always a first for everything.”

He was through with me. He started belting himself up and I just did not know how to react but I knew immediately that voice spoke.

“Ready to have the ride of your life?”

“No no. He can fly a helicopter too? Please no, I want to come down. I change my mind about dying please.”

It all fell on deaf ears because he held me to my seat. My fate was sealed when the door closed and the helicopter went up.

I had never flown in a helicopter before, I had no idea how it felt like but I was sure it was not what I was experiencing. I could not tell if it was flying sideways or upside down. I just knew I was tumbling and tumbling and tumbling and I would soon die. I held on to Ghost and closed my eyes.

“Open your eyes, wear this goggle and see the beauty of the night” Ghost shouted to my ears.

“I’m okay with the ones I have seen.”

He responded by laughing. The ride must have lasted for centuries but at last it ended. I had cheated death twice in one night.



I held on to him and refused to come down even when the noise of the helicopter had stopped.

“It’s okay, it was another smooth ride.”

“What the heck is wrong with your family? Does the word normal exist in your dictionary?” I shouted raising my head up but it was not Ghost who answered.

“Ghost you did not tell her we are not normal?”

“She is yet to believe me.”

“Unbelievable” I shouted.

“Exactly what I just said. She does not believe me” Ghost said.

“Take me down right now.”

“Yes ma’am.”

He took me down and I discovered we were in another field, there was a car close by.

“Where are we?” I asked as we walked to the car. He had a bag on his back.

“Don’t ruin my surprise.”

I had already entered the car when I discovered his crazy brother was on the wheel again. I tried to open the door but it was shut and Ghost was not with me.

“Thanks for the ride, but I’m taking over from here.”

It was Ghost. I breathed a sigh of relief. He was the one going to drive.

“I should follow a brother to the end of his journey.”

“I know what you and others are planning. Tell Wolf mission failed, you are not going to sabotage my plan.”

“You know he still has all the time for a pay back, you are now the new focus, Wolf has passed the baton.”

“This is private Fast, nor spoil show for me na.”

“Shebi wen you dey taunt Wolf, you forget your own go come.”

I wished I understood what they were talking about.

“It was just a prank” Ghost said.

“Pickpocketing his wedding ring and making him look stupid on his wedding day was just a prank? Then Pup’s flowers? You delayed the wedding for an hour dude.”

“But that’s like two years ago now.”

“And you think the Wolf will forget? I hope my food did not join what is in your bag because I will bury you I swear.”

“You know you are compromising my mission right now?”

“The mission you have already compromised. Idiot. Shebi you go come home, we dey plan your fuck up for you... shit.”

“There is no shit here, I heard you loud and clear, five thousand box or you are missing the pot breaking ceremony and you won’t go near GG and AI.”

I had no idea what Ghost meant.

“Guy cool down, I am leaving.”

“Better” Ghost responded.

“But our show still dey on sha? You go still pickpocket GG and AI for a ride?”

“For sure, just nor try mess me up today.”

“Whatever.”

He opened the door, I tried to have a glimpsed of his face but could not because he had switched off the car's light and I was not wearing any night vision goggle.

As Ghost entered the driver's seat, I felt nostalgic of something, the right word was family. I could feel the oneness radiating from them. Somehow these criminals were one family and they even had wives. The world was not fair.

“Where are we?”

“Don't ruin..”

“My surprise” I helped him finish his statement.

“Who is Wolf and Pup?”

“My big brother and his daughter.”

We were already on the road.

“Wild, Ghost, Fast, Wolf and Pup. I understand Wild because he just have a wild way of doing things, I understand you because you are just like a Ghost, Fast is very obvious but Wolf and Pup? That is weird.”

He stopped the car and turned to look at me. I became afraid, I had forgotten who he was.

“Because he has the attributes of a Wolf and his daughter has similar attributes. Stop fearing the wrong thing.”

He ignited the car and continued to where I had no idea.

“Are you not afraid I will tell?”

“You already did. You already told him my name is Ghost, if he can track down my code name, then he will know the others. It’s better, he needs to know who he is up against and he needs to know he has no hope.”

“So I can ask who is GG and AI.”

“Nope.”

“What is the difference?”

“You will know them at the right time.”

I had lots of questions to ask, like was he really protecting me?

They sounded too different from criminals I had watched in movies.

He stopped the car for the second time. He came out of the driver's seat and opened my door for me.

I could not narrow down my environment. He opened the booth of the car and carried out his big bag plus the smaller bag. It looked like all those huge military bags American soldiers use to carry in movies when going on a mission. I turned to study my environment but my face was covered.

“I can’t let you ruin my surprise.”

He held my hands and I allowed him lead me to wherever he was going to. We must have walked for more than ten minutes before we stopped. At some points, he had to lift me. I could hear a familiar sound but could not place it. He pulled off the cloth and wore a spectacle on me.

“Open your eyes love.”

That word again. My stomach did not forget to respond to it. I gradually opened my eyes and I just could not believe the beauty before me.

“Welcome to Erin-Ijesha Waterfalls also known as Olumirin waterfalls, Osun State” Ghost said wrapping me from behind.

(Continues tomorrow)



It's also on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/WaMAM5jgA7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

So many thoughts ran through my head, like how on earth did we travel so fast to Osun state? Then I remembered Fast, his crazy brother. It was exactly the way I saw it, the way Wild described it. I pulled away from Ghost and ran excitedly to the flat rock and placed my hands on the rough edges of the tall round rock where the water was splashing on. I did not care about the chills that came with the water touching my hair and clothes. This was just bliss, I felt like crying but my body was faster than my mind because I was already crying. I removed my hands from the rock and raised my head to try locate the origin of the waterfall but Wild was right. Thick braches of fresh green

leaves where covering the source. The different voices of night creatures where alluring and soothing. I was lost in awe wishing life could be this peaceful. I was so jealous of nature, and the trees which would remain green because they would always be nourished by the water. The heavy sound of the waterfall was music to my ears. I was lost in nature and had almost forgotten Ghost.

“Emmanuella come join me here.”

I turned to see him resting on something that looked like a swing. It had four poles and four ropes at the edge of a mat which were tied to each pole making it hang above the ground. It was very large, enough for ten of me. He had with him the smaller bag he had carried with him from the helicopter. I quickly walked to him and he lifted me and placed me close to him.

“Like the surprise?”

“Yes, this is amazing and beautiful and...”

I remembered something,

“Wait why did you call me that?”

“Emmanuella?”

“Yes.”

“That’s your full name. What is wrong with calling your full name?”

“Nobody calls me that, I don’t like it.”

“Why?”

I wanted to tell him Ibrahim used to call me that and Grandma had stopped using my full name after his death, just only in my identity, but he would think I was being ridiculous so I shook my head.

“Okay Emmanuella, I won’t force you.”

“Can you just call me Ella?”

“Only if you tell me why.”

“Because it reminds me of Ibrahim, he used to call me my full name.”

He looked at me for a long time and I wondered what he was thinking about.

“I know it sounds ridiculous to you and I don’t expect you to understand.”

But he was still looking at me.

“What?”

“I don’t think it’s ridiculous, I’m just jealous.”

“Jealous of a dead guy?”

“Well for that part I’m happy.”

I just did not understand why he had to ruin my good mood. I was so pissed off, I tried to come down but he held me back.

“Let me go.”

“Only if you explain your anger.”

“I thought you now have a new soul, do you understand the meaning of empathy? How can you be happy Ibrahim is dead? Does it even matter to you that he means so much to me?”

“Yes Ella, I’m sorry he died but I also know Ghost will never have had a chance to your heart if Ibrahim is still alive and I prefer Ghost. My family never plays with truth and fact. The normal thing will be to tell you I’m so sorry and I wish he did not die but I will be lying that I’m not benefitting from his death. No matter how you want to see it, no matter how ugly the truth

sounds, it remains the truth. I won't be in your heart if Ibrahim is still alive because he still has a place in your heart even after being dead for a long time, it says a lot. But don't force me to lie that I'm not happy I have you. You are the best thing to ever happen to me."

I still wanted to be angry but there was no basis for it. I understood him and he was right. I did not want to start another lie that he was not already in my heart and I would feel the same way if I were him.

"Do you really love me?"

He pulled me to him and made me sit between his legs. I rested my head on his chest.

"You are the first girl outside my family I'm proposing love to. I don't joke with words because I was trained to know words are

significant and powerful. You are special to me and I wish you will see the real me.”

That made me raise my head to look at him.

“Well we can start with the face cover. Let me see you.”

“Not until we find that file, only then will I reveal my face.”

“What if we never find it?”

“I will give you some time to try think of somewhere the file could be and if you can’t we may need the help of Wild to access your memory.”

There was no doubt Wild would help but there were more pressing issues.

“You said you are not a killer and you don’t want to tell me who you are.”

“Like I said before, you can ask me any question and I will answer except it will compromise my mission.”

I rested back on his chest and let him wrap his hands on my stomach. I stared at the waterfall and tried sorting out what questions to ask first. I should have asked about who he was but I wanted to know more about his unique family. My mind screamed ‘liar.’ I was really afraid of the answer he would give.

“You said you have a sister, a mum and an instructor but you keep mentioning brothers, are they your blood brothers.”

“No.”

That was it, he did not elaborate.

“What about your real family?”

“I don’t have.”

I never expected that answer.



“What happened to them?”

“I lost them.”

Yet another confusing answer.

“So you moved in with your current mum after you lost your family?”

“No.”

“You are confusing me Ghost.”

“I am answering your question and I like it when you call my name.”

I took time to construct my next question.

“Where were you before you moved in with your current family?”

“On the streets.”

“How long?”

“For two years.”

I did a quick calculation.

“You were thirteen?”

“Smart girl.”

“So you had no house?”

“That’s what living on the streets mean?”

“How did you survive?”

“I was a pickpocket. Very good at it. I picked from the rich ones who will forget about their loss within few hours, then I ran some errands for some criminals.”

“That’s your new family?”

But he chuckled, I really loved the way it sounded.

“You still see us as criminals. Well no. Drug dealers, even arms dealers but I did not like it so I left that town to another place.”

“Then how did you meet them?”

“You mean my current nuclear family?”

I nodded.

“In one of the towns I moved to, I pickpocketed a Major’s wallet.

I took my treasure far away from the scene. As I savaged the wallet while sitting under a tree, I got hit by a walking stick.

Usually I am sensitive to my environment and I can sneak on someone and the person won’t feel a thing. How do I explain this?”

He paused.

“Okay, have you heard of the word autism?”

I nodded.

“Autism spectrum comes in different form, a particular group are hypersensitive to everything, the light is too bright, the noise is too loud and they can’t stand body contact. I’m like the opposite of that. I almost have lack of it. Somehow it affects my environment. I can stand close to someone, dip my hands in the person’s pocket and the person will never sense me. You are the first person ever to know when I’m around.”

“But I can’t locate you, it’s just a feeling.”

“That makes you unique, nobody feels my presence not even Wild.”

I turned to look at him. I had never seen Wild but I could write two foolscap pages about him being weird.

“For real?”

“I told you we are linked together. Your body knows, it’s just your mind.”

I wanted to argue with him but his story was more important.

“So?”

“It was an old woman I had never seen. She told me I was holding my destiny in my hands. She said this was it, the most important phase in my life and I must decide my fate from that moment. I was confused and I was still recovering from the shock that someone caught me unawares. She hit me with the stick again and told me to take the wallet back and apologize or spend the money and seal my doom. Then she walked away, just like that. I was concentrating on rubbing my head to reduce the pain that I did not see where she entered. I brought out the ID in the wallet. He was a Major and I just did not understand how he was connected to my destiny but there was a pull, a pull to take

the wallet back. Things didn't just happen without significance, even at thirteen I knew it was not ordinary and I had nothing to lose if I returned it. I felt like I had something important to do for the first time since I joined the street life and I loved challenges. The Major was gone when I went back to base but his wallet had all the information I needed to track him. I pickpocketed enough money and travelled to his base, then straight to his home. I easily sneaked into a study room in the house without being discovered, then I placed the wallet on his table. But as I was about to walk out, someone blocked me. A girl that looked about my age. She was with a sword and she attacked me without warning and if I was not unique in my own way, she would have killed me. I could not fight then but I had learned how to run and dodge and avoid being caught. That was what I did but it seemed to have infuriated her and it became messier when she knocked down one of her dad's artifacts. Then

this Major walked into the room, stood by the door arms folded and watched his daughter's attempt on my life like we were rehearsing for a movie shoot. I got tired of dodging because she was so good. I just accepted that it was my destiny to die that way. That was when the man called his daughter to stop. She told her dad I was a thief but I explained that I actually came to drop what I stole. This man did not say anything but kept watching me. A woman came to join us and I was expecting her to make the husband arrest me after the daughter repeated what she caught me doing but she did not. She ran to me and asked what happened which I explained. She started crying. She felt the world was not fair that I had no parents and I was surviving on my own. She took me to the parlor after lecturing her husband and daughter. That was how I came to stay with them. Major and her daughter refused to let me in but his wife stood her ground. He later agreed after saying I had talents. He made

me sign on some rules he wrote down. He said he would train me on how to hone my gift but I must update my education and I would be out of his house if I went below seventy percent in everything. I had a beautiful room, a woman who loved me and who saw me as her son. I was going to resume school and I was going to hone my gift and learn more about sneaking on people and I had an opportunity to one day become like him. I never made it below seventy percent and he was brutal with his trainings but I loved it, I always did everything to exceed the challenge for the day. As for my new sister, she was something else. She was okay with Major being my instructor but fought me every time I personalized her mum. We fought each other a lot but we still learnt to get along and I love her so much. She is wild, crazy but soft at the same time. That's how I became part of the family. Major taught me the difference between a gift and a phobia. He said everybody is supposed to become one with



their gift but also grow past their phobia. With his help I started understanding I can use my emotion to control my impact on people around me. It's one major reason I was not that interested in girls, because I hardly felt the need and desire until I met you. ”

I listened to everything and I was scared when he stopped talking. I wished I would not have to ask the most important question but I knew I could not avoid it for long.

“Major, military bag, you’ve also used military language once. Who are you?”

“I’ve asked you before if there are other forces with the license to shoot criminals but you chose to ignore the answer.”

“Are you a soldier?”

“No.”

“Air force?”

“No.”

“Navy?”

“No.”

“Then who?”

“How much do you know about armed forces all over the world?”

“Not much, but I know about US marines, I followed one film about the marine, I also know about US Naval SEAL, they are the number one ranked military in the world. I have read so many action novels about them. They are not much because their trainings are intense and they are trained to fight on land, sea and air. They carry out dangerous missions, especially those considered as a threat to the nation. I read a lot.”

“Then you know who and what I am.”

“Are you now saying you are a Naval SEAL officer?”

“I belong to the Special Force Unit known as The Circle. We are trained to fight on land, air and sea.”

It's also on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER TWENTY

I shook as I asked the most important question, a question I did not want the answer.

“Why are you around me?”

“We got an Intel of the file and we were also informed that the witness which is you, is in danger after the wife of your father’s employee was murdered on her way back from the police station after making a report of her discovery. The information came from one of us but not exactly my unit. I was sent to be your bodyguard and get the file because we believe many high ranked police officers will be implicated.”

“And those you killed, the ones the DPO said were on undercover?”

“They are top assassins, first they were to get the file from you but now they have just one instruction.”

“Which is?”

“Shoot to kill and my mission is to shoot anyone who will try to shoot you.”

I started feeling headache.

“No no, it’s not possible. The DPO will never harm me.”

“Why do you think so?”

“Because he is from my tribe.”

“There is one thing you should know Ella. I am not trying to convince you I’m the good guy because it makes it look like I’m lying. I work with truth and facts. I don’t care what the DPO told you, I won’t convince you he has been lying to you. You must listen to your inner mind and find out the truth for yourself.”

“Then why are you telling me, if you are not trying to win me over.”

“You asked and I answered and whether you believe me or not, I am going to keep you safe and make sure you look at the file yourself when you find it.”

“So you are saying the DPO wants me dead because he will not be able to get hold of the file which may implicate him.”

“I am saying, I am Ghost a member of The Circle, the best of the Special Force Unit. Mission is to protect Emmanuella Omakor and to make sure the file does not get into the wrong hands. But everything changed the moment I fell in love with you, now all bets are off because it’s now personal.”

“He can’t harm me, you must be mistaken.”

I just did not want to believe the DPO would want to harm me.

“Emmanuella relax, don’t think too much, you can continue to believe he is the good guy. I will do the other thinking for you” he whispered to me ears sending flames to my body.

“You know you just compromised your mission?” I asked after staring at the waterfall for a long time.

“How?”

“You told me about your unit.”

“I never said I am a secret service on an undercover mission.

There is nothing secret about my unit. It’s an open secret and I don’t care if you tell him, like I said you already did. He knows or has an idea about a Special unit in the special force and he knows he is running out of time.”

“I am not going to ask him, I...”

“Sssh it’s okay Emmanuella, stop panicking.”

I turned to look at him.

“I thought we’ve settled on the name calling.”

“I don’t like calling you Ella, I prefer Emmanuella. There are too many names with Ella as the short form. I don’t want to take away Ibrahim from your memory. In fact the best way to forget is to remember.”

“I don’t understand.”

He kissed my hair and pulled me closer.

“Tell me about Ibrahim.”

“Why do you want to know?”

“It looks like your memory about life was all about him. I want to know about your life with him, about your grandma. I want to know more about you.”



But the closeness was distracting me. I was beginning to feel heat and fire.

“Don’t worry, I can hold it, I still have one bar left.”

“Stop getting into my head.”

“I wish” His voice was too close to my ear and it was making me pant. I really needed something to distract me before I did something stupid.

“Ibrahim once told my grandma he was going to marry me when I grow up.”

“How much did you know about marriage then?”

“Not much, just knew that if he married me, I will live with him forever.”

“What did your grandma say?”

“She told him the story of Jacob, how he worked seven years for Rachel but got Leah, then had to work another seven years to get Rachel. Ibrahim told Grandma that fourteen years was even too small to work for me. He asked Grandma to give him work, that he will add two years to make it sixteen years. Grandma just laughed and told him she will think about it. I later went to meet Grandma, I told her to say yes because I wanted to live forever with Ibrahim. When Ibrahim got me my teddy bear, I gave him my hand bead. It belonged to my late mum. Her family had disowned her when she got pregnant and she had lived with Grandma till she delivered. She was the major reason Grandma went to the North. My dad ran away the day she gave birth after hearing she died as a result of complications. Grandma had to send her corpse home but she was rejected and she had to bury her at the village cemetery where they bury strangers. My dad had later constructed a house around her grave. Her family came

for me when I was twelve. They had lost their only son and last child. But my dad arrested them and sued them to court for attempted kidnapping. After much pleadings, he dropped the case after they promised to never come near me. I was in support of my dad, I also did not want anything to do with them. They later moved out of Ozoro. I miss them so much, my dad treasured me, my Grandma was my beacon..”

“I’m sorry for your lose. So sorry.”

He kissed my hair and wiped away the tears flowing from my eyes.

“Can I ask something?” I asked after some time.

“Okay.”

“Did you ever say something like first of her kind and twins and garden, swimming pool?”

“So you heard me.”

“So you mentioned that? I thought I was dreaming. What did you mean by first of her kind?”

“That I cannot answer Ella, not now Ella, until the file is found. I will take you to my extended family they can’t wait to meet you.”

“Should I be surprised they know about me?”

He did not answer.

“What if I don’t want you after I find the file?”

He did not answer.

“Are you sleeping?”

No answer.

I raised my head to look at him. He was staring at me.

“What?”

“You are a dream I never dared to dream about and I cannot believe I’m holding you in my arms. You make me believe in the impossible Emmanuella.”

“How did you jump from what we have been discussing?”

No answer, just stared at me.

“And stop calling me Emmanuella, I don’t like it.”

“I like the way it sounds.”

Ibrahim had said the same thing. I had given up correcting him after so many failed attempts to convince him to just call me Ella.

“Please Ghost, it brings up so many memories I don’t want to remember.”

“Tell me about them.”

I was staring at his lips and it was pulling my lips towards it. I turned and rested my head on his chest. I wondered how far I could hold out.

“You are the closest I have ever been with a male but I was like this with Ibrahim during my age of innocence?”

“How?”

“Ibrahim used to sleep on the parlor floor which was actually my grandma’s store while I slept with Grandma in her room but I always sneaked out once Grandma started snoring. I would join Ibrahim on the mat. He always said the mat was too strong for my body so he would rest on the wall and I always sat in between his legs and I would sleep off on his chest. Grandma would shout and complain that I was disturbing Ibrahim but I never stopped. Some days, he would tell me different stories till I sleep off....”

I was not allowed to finish my story because he bent his head and covered my lips with his and I surrendered to the flame. His kiss was deep and it felt like he was touching my heart because I felt it there. I wanted more, I turned and placed my hands on his chest but he stopped and turned me back.

“This is torture, Ella we need to find that file, I don’t know how long I can hold off keeping my hands off you.”

His voice was very husky and he was breathing fast. He gently pulled me away from him and jumped down from the swing. He walked round the place avoiding getting splashed by the water.

He was not just the only one, I was burning and I wanted the heat to burn out, if it had only been my will I would have broken my promise to Grandma. He was too gentlemanlike to be an assassin. Just the thought that he might be right was making me panic. I would be heartbroken if the DPO really wanted me dead,

yet I also wanted him to be the person he told me he was. My life couldn't be more complicated. He said he would show me his face and take me to his family once the file had been found and there was the issue of the burning feeling. The deal I made with Grandma was to remain a virgin till I got married.

“A penny for your thought.”

He climbed back on the swing and pulled me back to him. I closed my eyes ashamed of what I was thinking, there was no way I was going to tell him.

“You are seriously blushing, are you thinking dirty.”

“No I am not” I answered immediately.

“Then tell me.”

“Nice try. I don't want to.”

But I really wanted to know.



“Please, I promise not to be judgmental.”

I closed my eyes.

“What happens after I meet your family?”

“Marriage.”

He said it like he did not understand my question. I turned to look at him.

“That’s the only way I can make love to you.”

“You think marriage is all about sex?”

“I think now is not a good time to discuss about sex. Let’s eat.”

That was the first time I was agreeing with him hundred percent.

I could literally smell the tension in the air.

He brought out a flask from his bag.

“Is it yam porridge?”

“You really liked the last one. That is the only food he can cook.”

“Who?”

“Beast.”

At first I thought he was calling me a beast but then I remembered his abnormal family.

“Because he acts like a beast?”

“You got it.”

I did not wait for him to permit me before I started eating. I even took the spoon from his hands. It was just so delicious.

“Isn’t that too harsh a name?”

I asked in between mouth full. He did not answer, I opened my eyes and saw him staring at me. It sent heat waves to my stomach.

“The name symbolizes king of the beast, that’s the lion.”

He started eating and I was now the one staring at his lips.

“Eat Emmanuella.”

That name again, I refused to be pissed off and ate.

“You want to get under the fall before we leave?”

He was already down and had his hands outstretched to lift me down. I let him pull me down but did not pull away from him.

The tension was just so much. He bent his head and I knew I would not be able to resist. He raised his head almost when his lips was about to touch mine. He pulled me to his chest. As I inhaled that powerful masculine scent, I wondered if the place was open for tourist to come anytime they want without a guard or ticket. There was no sign of any human other than us. Who knew what he had done to make that possible.

“How on earth did Jason survive four years without exploding?”

I raised my head to look at him.

“Who is Jason?”

He did not answer, but bent down and picked a heavy stone.

Before I could ask him what he wanted to do with the stone, he sent it flying towards a bird close to us. The bird was able to dodge it to my relief. But it flew high and disappeared from sight.

“What the heck was that for? Why stoning the innocent bird?

Are you allergic to nature?” I shouted.

He did not answer but pulled me close to the waterfall. I felt elated as we got drenched while he spun me like we were dancing.

He stopped spinning me and pressed something on his wristwatch, one of my favorite wish song 'Forever and for Always' by Shania Twain started playing. I used to play it wishing Ibrahim was still alive and wishing I was married to him.

“How did you know I love this song?” I screamed in excitement.

“You always play this song. I will ask why later. But can I?”

He stretched his hand and I grabbed it almost immediately.

There was no way I was not dreaming, it was too good to be real.

I laughed, cried, danced and allowed him wrap me in him from behind heating me up with his masculine heat amidst the cold waterfall splashing on us.

“I am going to keep you forever Ella” he whispered to my ears after the music had played thrice.

He switched to ‘When you kiss me.’ He was really following on what I was playing on my phone. He was exploiting all my fantasies of what I would have done with Ibrahim. He just held me close and moved sideways according to the tune of the music. I relaxed my head on his chest and closed my eyes. Anytime the singer mentioned kiss me, he kissed my hair, sometimes my cheek.

I had never felt so happy in a long time but my happiness ended immediately he told me his brother was waiting to fly us back to Benin. And it was one hell of a flight in which I barely survived. And just before we left the helicopter his brother called me.

“I hope you had a fun ride with me? I am at your service anytime. Just tell Ghost to contact me.”

I wished I knew how my face looked like because Ghost was laughing so hard.

As I entered my room by 5:23AM, my clothes not completely dried, I got a message from the DPO.

‘Don’t forget he is dangerous and a top assassin. I’m working on getting his identity but he is popular and always known to do anything to get the job done, don’t fall for any of his tricks.

Make sure he doesn’t get the file. Take care of yourself for me.’

Two chapters coming tomorrow

Check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/MMTvsGW3A7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

I did not want to think about the DPO's text message. I needed to sleep and prepare for my classes. But I could not sleep, I kept thinking about my adventure with Ghost, somehow I knew I was already lost, I was already encapsulated by him and I was in love with him. I was even missing him and I felt like calling him to come hold me close because Ibrahim was no longer working. I should feel bad but I just could not. I never knew love was that powerful, I never knew love could take away sleep from someone's eyes. My phone blinked.

‘Missing you already.’

I did not reply because he would know I was not sleeping and he would know I was thinking about him. My phone blinked again.

‘You read my message, meaning you are still awake thinking about me, you can't let love distract your studies, you have lectures soon.’



I started laughing but stopped when I saw the time. It was already 7:00AM. The curtain had prevented me from knowing stores were already opening for the day. I rushed to take a shower.

Dr. Bright was already in class when I got to the door. I joined the rest student waiting outside. He turned to send us away but paused when he saw me. He told everyone late to get inside. Ken waved at me and as I joined him, I just could not imagine what else Ghost had done to the poor lecturer. I remembered our conversation. I had never heard of any Special Force Unit of the Nigerian military, yet he said he belonged to a special unit known as the Circle. Then his childhood spent surviving on the streets, it made me remember Ibrahim had walked three days under rain and sunshine and hunger before he had arrived at his uncle's place. He once told me if he had known I was the

treasure he was going to meet, he would have ran all the way with joy. I remembered the story he told me about the night his family was attacked and the mysterious thing that had happened to him. He said it was real and I had believed him....

“Ella.”

It was Ken. I turned to look at him.

“Did you even listen to Dr. Bright’s lecture?”

The answer was a big no, I had been carried away.

“Jeez, it’s all over your face.”

“You mean?”

He did not answer, he just stared at me and I saw the hurt in his eyes. I watched him pack his notes and I also watched him leave the hall. I ran after him and caught up with him on the first floor at A series.

“Ken I’m sorry.”

“Ella you don’t owe me an apology, you gave me a hint but I thought I could still change your mind. I know there is no hope for me.”

“What about the part of being friends?”

“It’s gonna be difficult Ella. My feelings for you are genuine and I need time, being around you hurts.”

I watched him walk away and I felt guilty. My phone blinked.

‘I think I might like him.’

‘Because you won?’

‘Hurray! I need to tell my brothers and sisters, I won. Party time.

Finally!’

I could not hold my laughter, those coming down from the stairs looked at me with suspicion.

‘It was a question, stop deceiving yourself.’ But the message bounced back as not sent.

As I walked to my next lecture I wished he was joking about telling his family that I said yes. Somehow, I wanted the kind of family he had. That was why I was messed up, what I wished for was also what I did not wish for. I felt a pang of guilt anytime I saw Ken. My course mates were already whispering about our breakup. I felt his presence during my last lecture and my mind and body felt filled up. I felt so elated, this was what love felt like.

As I walked out of the hall, I got a text from him.

‘Can’t wait for my working time.’

I ignored the fast beating of my heart and took a cab to All Saints’ Chapel. I felt him throughout service and it felt like I was committing sin. I had to beg God for forgiveness.

He was still there even after I had entered my hostel. I only knew I was very hungry when I entered my room. I could not believe I had not taken anything. He had been to my room because everything was properly arranged. I sent a message to him.

‘You are distracting me.’

‘Same here.’

“Why are you invading my privacy?”

‘Why is your room always scattered?’

I shook my head and entered my kitchen to prepare jollof rice.

There was no need arguing with him.

My phone blinked at exactly 8:30PM.

‘I’m waiting love. Come with extra clothes.’

I was never going to get use to my heart leaping in response to that word. He was on the bike with his big load.

“Time to continue your lesson. You look hot, are you trying to seduce me?”

I did not answer, I just joined him.

“I like your shyness Emmanuella.”

“Let’s go.”

As he fixed the tent I entered the river, it felt so cold and I had to use my will to force my body not to retreat. I got to where the water was touching my knees but before I could go further he stopped me.

“Ella don’t. I need to check the water and you don’t have your goggle.”

I was already out before he finished talking, I could not believe I forgot the danger that might be in the water. He came to join me at the bank and gave me my goggle. After sending what he had called his eyes to the river, he pulled me to him.

“You scare so easily Emmanuella.”

“When are you going to stop calling me that?”

“Never, get used to it.”

“You don’t do things the person you loved don’t want.”

“The water is safe, time for another lesson” and with that, he pulled me to the deep.

For what felt like forever, he taught me, I practiced and by the time he called for a break I could at least swim a little. The tension was much but he chose to ignore it while I struggled to ignore it. He told me to change before I got cold.

“Where?”

“I won’t watch.”

I looked at him but he was already swimming towards the third creek, then he disappeared from sight. I quickly took the waterproof with my clothes and ran behind the tent to change. It was when I was through changing I remembered the tent was transparent, I turned to see if he kept to his promise, he was really a gentleman. I tried to find a way to enter the tent but could not so I had to wait for him to swim back to the shore.

He pressed something in his wristwatch as he got close to the tent. I wanted to ask him what that wrist watch was made of but I froze. He was pulling off his shirt. Then his trousers. I turned and ran inside panting. He joined me without putting on another clothes. Just another trousers.

“Can you put on your clothes please?”



“Does it bother you?”

This was not the time to pretend.

“Yes and normal guys pull their clothes before swimming then put it on after swimming.”

“Why do you not want to believe I am not normal guys?”

His chest was distracting me. There was a scar at the side of his left ribs.

“What happened?”

“I don’t understand.”

I moved close to him and placed my hand there, then raised my head to tell him I was asking about the scar but paused. We were too close and our lips were just an inch away from each other.

For the first time, I was the one who took his lips. I felt a shock as I touched his bare back, the shock wave went through my

whole system. I became lost with lust. I pushed him to the ground and deepened the kiss. The contact felt like a need, a necessity. It was more intense because I was resting on his bare chest while savoring the sweetness from kissing him. I felt another shock when he grabbed my cheek with both hands deepening the kiss. I started running my hands across, his hair, his shoulder and down. He seized my hand as I got to his waist.

“Ella, if your hand moves beyond where it is now, I’m not going to stop, there is no bar left. You need to also help me. Let’s keep your promise to Grandma.”

His voice was sending heat to my system. I gathered all my will and pulled away. I laid down by his side and tried to calm my fast breathing.

“I can’t believe I’m doing this. After all the forgiveness I asked God today. I even asked Him to help me get over this burning desire, but it’s getting worse.”

There was no need keeping it away from him. He did not answer, he was also panting.

“Distract me Ella.”

“Hey I’m the one who needs the distraction.”

“Tell me about your childhood.”

“Nothing there to tell, it all passed with time just good memories of Ibrahim is all I have stored to keep forever.”

“Then tell me about them.”

“I only have few good ones but mixed with bad events.”

“Tell me.”

“You won’t believe me.”

“I will believe you and it will distract me.”

He was right about the distraction because what I was about to tell him was mystic. It was the story Ibrahim told me. He said something mysterious had happened the day his house was invaded by bandits.

“There was this time Ibrahim told me about how he was saved the night his family were killed. I had sneaked out of our room as usual and because he was already used to it, he was waiting for me. He told me that he had three big brothers and one sister. He was the last born. Something mysterious happened to him that night.”

I knew he was already distracted because he was no longer breathing fast and he was very stiff.

“Tell me.”

“He said his family had always been Christians, his dad became a Christian even before he married his mum. He had relocated to a Christian community away from his nuclear family. He said his dad was even a cleric and they were just back from the church and it was not that dark when the bandits broke into their house. Most village houses in the north are not that strong and it was not difficult to break in. They started cutting them with cutlass amidst their screaming. They called them infidel and praised Allah” I paused.

“Continue.”

“You won’t believe what I will tell you and you will ruin everything, I believed Ibrahim and I want to keep it that way.”

“I said I will believe you.”

“Okay, I’m going to hold you to that.”

“Tell me.”

“He said none of them attacked him, he said he was screaming but none struck him. His dad was the first to die and he saw a man on white and his clothes was sparkling and almost blinding and he could not see his face. He said the man was standing by his side with a shining sword. He thought the man would fight off the bandits but he did not. He watched in horror as they butchered all his family and waited for his turn which never came instead, the man placed his palm in front of his eyes and it was a small TV. He saw someone on black on top of the roof. The man was picking people up with a rope, they were carrying guns and weapons like the people murdering his family but the man on the roof was not afraid. He just picked them one by one and slaughtered them. Then the image disappeared. He turned to

look at his slain family but the man carried him out and told him to run but he tried to run back to the room. The man seized him and placed his palm on his face and again, the small TV appeared and he saw his family on white, they had beautiful crowns on their head and they were all happy. Then the image disappeared. He begged the man to take him to them but the man told him only death would make him join them. He said his voice was like thunder and it scared him. He told the man he wanted to die like them but the man said it was not yet time and he had so many assignments and he must fulfill his destiny, then the man disappeared. He said the bandits were attacking a neighbor's house when the man left. They even ran past him like he did not exist. He heard a powerful voice to run and he saw himself running. He told me the reason he kept crying when he arrived at his uncle's house was not because of their death but because they left him alone and wore fine clothes and crown

without remembering him. They could not even beg for him to join them.”

He did not say anything after I had finished my story, he was still very stiff. I never wanted to think of that story because it would ruin my childhood about Ibrahim. I had believed him so much then because I was still a kid. I knew he created those stories to make me stop feeling bad for him because I kept telling him sorry that his mother and father were no more. After he told me that story, I felt happy that his family were happy somewhere else and they left him for me. His plan worked because I never asked him how death looked like because I had been told in school that it was horrible, but his story made me feel happy for his family.

“I said it. I knew you will find it funny.”



He did not answer and I did not blame him. I wouldn't have believed if I was told something like that at that moment.

“Thanks for the distraction. My battery is half charged” he spoke after a long period of silence.

“Then can we talk about after?”

“After what?”

“After I find the file.”

“I told you the next thing is marriage.”

“And I told you marriage is not all about sex.”

“What else?”

“Are you seriously asking me that?”

“You are the one saying marriage is not all about sex, you must have an idea.”

“Someone falls in love, date, propose, get married, sex, children, learn how to tolerate each other.”

“Okay?”

“Okay? Just okay?”

“What do you want me to say?”

I did not even know.

“It’s weird Ghost. I cannot just marry you.”

“Why?”

“Because I don’t know you.”

“And I said you will once we find the file.”

“I will still have to decide after that.”

“Okay.”

“Your okay sounds like you already know the answer.”

He chuckled making me aware of him.

“Tell me about your scar.”

“I was once hit by a bullet.”

“I thought you are invisible.”

“Then you won’t be seeing me right now.”

“You know what I mean.”

“I was betrayed and ambushed during one of my missions.”

“I thought you guys are family.”

“The Circle is one family, it used to be a sub unit of the Special Force. They usually paired us with someone from the other units of the Special Force. I could have gotten away but there were people waiting to be rescued and I was not going to leave them. I fought and applied all my trainings. I was pissed off and it helped me.”

“How?”

“I never knew there was a bullet in my ribs until I had eliminated all my targets. It’s a common trait in my family. My backup arrived on time to save me from dying.”

“You have doctors?”

“My sister is a doctor. That was the day she officially allowed me to personalize her mum. She realized that we were not really invisible because we were still recovering from the death of a brother and sister in-law.”

“He also got ambushed?”

“Yes but not by people like the ones I fought. They were trained men, specifically from Special Force. They had given him the wrong code and he had actually eliminated all of them but he was shot by one of us who had gone rogue.”

“Like AWOL.”

“Yes. But Jason made sure he sent him to escort my brother to the underworld.”

“What about your sister-in-law?”

He did not answer for a long time.

“She was killed by a drug dealer who wanted to scare my brother away from his territory.”

“I’m sorry.”

“You don’t need to. My brother sent the whole clan into extinction. She got justice.”

I could almost feel the pain in his voice. I found myself holding his hands. He was deliberately showing me the other side of him.

“I’m sorry. God bless our soldiers fighting to keep civilians safe.”

“Wow.”

“What?”

I did not see anything wrong with what I said.

“Although I was not forcing you to believe me and I thought I did not care that you did not believe I was the good guy, it feels so good you now believe me. It means a lot to me.”

“I’ve tried not to believe you but you are different from the way I’ve watched assassins behave in movies, it’s just that I can’t come to terms that the DPO is the enemy.”

“I’ve told you not to hate him yet until you discover the truth for yourself. Okay?”

I nodded. He was too cool to be lying. I remembered a question that had been on my lips.

“Who is Jason? It sounds off from the normal names in your family.”

“Code or nicknames are as a result of our personalities. When we can’t find a suitable name for someone, we just leave it at their original name. Don’t ask me further.”

And I wanted to ask more.

“I think he is the first person I want to meet, he sounds normal” but he started coughing confusing me.

Don't forget to check it out on wattpad

<https://my.w.tt/tFIHOu5jP7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

If you have not read chapter twenty one just click on the page and scroll down

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

“What?” I shouted. I just did not understand what I had said wrong.

“Jason is married and happily married. So forget about him.”

“I did not even think that way, stop being...” I paused, I could not find the right word to use.

“Being what?”

“Jealous I guess. Stop being insecure, I want to meet him because he sounds closer to the average human, the average guy on the street” and he started coughing again.

“I am more normal than Jason.”

It was my turn to laugh.

“You? Even though Wild is something else. He is more normal than you and that fast guy.”

He was no longer coughing he was laughing very hard.



“My family must hear this. I am the most normal man in my family. Why on earth do you believe Wild is anywhere near normal. Seriously?”

“He has a deep voice and though his love for nature is wild, he made me feel calm, like I was having waves and waves of peace and he helped me get over my trauma.”

He stared at me.

“What?”

“And I make you feel?”

“Fear, dread, terror from the first encounter until I got to know you.”

“Whatever you think you felt double it and replace me with Wild.”

“Trying to make yourself look like the normal guy, won’t work.

Wild is more human than you.”

“As long as you are on the right side of life you don’t need to worry about any of us including Wild but if you are caught on the wrong side of life, that waves and waves of calm can be waves and waves of terror.”

I immediately understood him. He made me feel what he wanted me to feel with just his voice.

“Shit, you look scared.”

He sat up and pulled me to him.

“Are you sure I will survive meeting your family?”

But he smiled at me.

“What?”

“Two yes in one day. What a day?”

I shook my head.

“I did not.”

“Yes you did. You want to meet my family.”

“No I was saying...”

I could not continue. I closed my eyes and rested my head on his shoulders.

“I’m lost Ghost. I feel empty when you are not around. My mind have been battling with my body but it seems you were right. It was because I thought you a killer. But what I want so badly is to find that file and unravel the truth. I want to meet your family.”

“Ouch.”

I raised my head afraid. He was holding his chest and falling on the mat.

“What is wrong?” I panicked thinking about all kinds of things, like he was having a heart attack.

“My heart.”

And I was right. I had no idea what to do.

“What should I do? How can I help?”

He took my hand and placed it on his heart.

“Just keep your hand here for a while. You set it on fire the moment you accepted you want to meet my family.”

I pulled my hand and punched him.

“You just scared the shit out of me. Not funny” but he was laughing.

“And it does not automatically mean I want to marry you. I want to start by knowing you. Jerk.”

“My heart is burning again. I can’t wait to tell them you said yes.”

“I am done with you. Can we go now?”

“Why? You don’t want me to see you blushing?”

I could not tell him the reason, it was a feminine stuff. I could feel my monthly visitor as Grandma called it. I could feel it was coming.

“Emmanuella.”

I closed my eyes.

“Please we need to go back, it’s very important.”

“Only if you tell me why. Try it, you will discover it’s fun having someone you can tell anything.”

“I’m..” I thought of a way to put it, it was so embarrassing but I knew he would never leave the tent if I did not talk.

“I’m seeing my period, it just started.”

He did not say anything making me open my eyes. He was staring at me.

“I told you I have a crazy sister, I am very acquainted to what you are talking about. Sometimes we played games and the loser would serve the other for a day. She had sent me to go and buy pad. That was the worst embarrassing moment of my life. The lady had looked at me for some seconds, then she asked me if I knew what it meant. I avoided that area for a month and I never played that game again. She even told me I was lucky because she would have asked me to go get a condom while on boxers.”

I was not supposed to laugh at his embarrassing story but I did.

“Your sister is really crazy.”

“She knows that. And we all know that. Rule number one, stay away from her during her forty seconds madness. The only one to stand her all the time is also crazy. They fit each other.”

“To think you want me to meet them. Can we go now” I said after I could control my laughter.

“They are wonderful people Ella, especially the women including my sister. She will never go gaga on you. They are even forming their own club and it always drive Beast and Jason crazy because their meeting could be lethal to them, Wolf not exempted. They are lovely Ella, you won’t see the other side of them because you are a civilian, not a criminal. You will also meet our cute little creatures, they always brighten our day. Just find that file and you will see for yourself.”

No matter how I wanted to pretend, I really loved this side of Ghost. He looked like a normal human not someone who could

disarm and kill with ease. I tried to leave the tent but he pulled me to him, we were so close and the heat was back.

“Yes, I think we should go before I do something stupid” he said gently pulling me away.

As I came down from the bike he called me.

“Emmauella, do you want Wild to help with the file?”

I even wanted to ask him so I quickly nodded.

“Okay, I will call you but for now take this.”

He was giving me a hand band.

“What is it for?”

“It has my heart, whenever you feel you are in danger and you need me, just press the middle showing something round okay?”

“But it’s pink.”



“I can’t give you red, pink is less suspicious. Don’t forget I love you” and with that, he drove off.

I entered my room feeling overwhelmed with excitement. My phone started ringing few minutes after I climbed on my bed to sleep. It was the DPO. I had almost forgotten about him.

“Ella.”

“Sir, Good evening sir.”

I greeted him using Isoko.

“Any news about the file?”

“No Sir.”

“I have information on the ghost guy.”

I did not answer, something told me it was not going to be good.

He continued.

“I can’t send his picture because there is no picture to send. I am not going to say I am sure but he is a soldier.”

I breathed a sigh of relief, it could mean there had been some miscommunication on both sides.

“But he is not working for the military. From the little information I got, he is working for Senator Mohammed and he is a Hausa soldier. I am eighty percent sure he is the man Musa talked about. He is all about the file and he will silent you once he gets the file.”

I shook my head.

“No it’s not true, he does not have their accent.”

“He is a trained Special Force soldier, you have no idea how deadly they are and how their best are made to conceal their identity. You..”

I cut the call. I did not want to believe him but my mind told me he might be saying the truth. He never told me his tribe. I was sure he must have listened to our conversation, I waited for him to call and defend himself but he did not. I had to dial his line.

“Tell me it’s not true.”

“Which part do you want me to deny?”

“Tell me it’s not true. Tell me you are not Hausa. Tell me” I shouted.

“You never asked me that question before and you are sounding like it’s a crime to be Hausa. I am half Hausa, half Fulani and I am proud of my identity.”

“How dare you?”

“Emmanuella, you..”

“Don’t you dare call my name. All these while, I had been romantic with someone from a tribe I hate. You fooled me.”

“So you suddenly hate me because of my tribe. Ella...”

“Is it true? Were you the soldier assigned to watch my parents? Were you the soldier who worked with their killers and watched them butcher my family?”

There was no answer. His silence was deafening.

“Oh my God.”

I saw myself on the bed.

“Ella you need to rest. I will come so we can talk. I think I have some explanations to do.”

“Just answer me” I shouted.

“Ella I told you truth is very important to us. I did not watch your parents die, neither did I work with their killers and Musa

never mentioned a soldier. You were deceived because you did not follow the news and the trial, if you did, you would have known little about me. I wished I got there on time to save them but I got there late...”

I cut the call. My heart could no longer take it. At the end I became a victim of the characters in some novels I’d read, only this one was real. I had been yearning for the person responsible for my family’s brutal murder. I could not believe I betrayed them. My mind had been right. I hated my body. I rushed into the bathroom crying. I scrubbed and scrubbed hoping to remove his touch from my system. I hated myself so much that I wanted to die. After scrubbing my skin raw, I staggered to my writings on the wall. I was the world award winning fool, jerk, asshole, idiot. Not only did I fall in love with the person from the tribe I hated most, I had a romantic relationship with the main culprit

responsible for so many deaths. I felt headache and pains in my heart. I staggered to my bed and grabbed Ibrahim, then I cried and cried.

I did not know how long I was crying but there was a sudden power supply making the room bright. That was when I saw it, debris of foam from Ibrahim. I had squeezed it so tight. I looked at it with shock and fear that Ibrahim was disappearing. I raised the cloth to check if I could fix it. Then I saw where the debris were falling from. It looked intentionally torn and roughly sewed with needle and thread. I did not remember ever tearing it and the only name that came to mind was Ghost. I felt so mad. I picked the debris and tried to force them back in but my finger touched something strong. There was something inside. I became inquisitive and opened it more, then dipped two fingers inside. I pulled out the strong object and I was stunned with

what I was holding in my hand. It was a flash drive. My father had said he was going to hide the file where I would be the only one that could find it. I never imagined he meant Ibrahim. He had hidden it inside Ibrahim when I had gone to the market, no wonder I had met him inside my room. This was the evidence Ghost so wanted. I was going to make every one of them pay for their crimes. I quickly searched for my Nokia torchlight phone and I was happy it worked. I quickly dialed the DPO's line.

“Sir, I have the file.”

“How?”

“Does it matter, he will be here before I tell you the full story.”

“Oh I almost forgot. I will call my men to get it now.”

“I thought you withdrew them?”

“Yes from following you, but some needed to be around for this purpose. Run quickly to that building.”

“Is there no other place?”

I did not want to go there.

“I understand but that’s the only place they will know to come fast. Your hostel is too open and it may be dangerous...”

“I got it sir. I will be there in five minutes.”

I cut the call and quickly wore my clothes and pad. As I got to the door, my phone blinked. I wanted to ignore him but I found myself checking the message.

“Ella please I’m begging you in the name of God, don’t go out. Don’t. Please. He is lying.”

I dropped the phone and my phone blinked again after I had locked my door. I ran all the way to the place and there was no



one there. I felt dread, might be because of the events that happened there. I saw someone flashing a torch.

“Are you there Ella” a voice called.

I walked towards them. They were five. It was when I saw them I remembered I should have checked the file before contacting the DPO, but it was too late because Ghost was coming and there was no way I was going to allow him take the file. I did not care if he killed me, as long as the file did not get to him, I would gladly die.

“Here it is” I said giving the file to the one who spoke.

My back was almost touching the wall of the building. I turned to start going back but heard the sound of a gun being cocked. I turned to see the one I gave the file pointing a gun at me. I thought I was dreaming.

“What is going on?”

“Thanks for the file and goodbye.”

I opened my mouth to tell him he was pointing the gun at the wrong person but it was too late. Everything happened in a blur. He fired at me but I was not the one that felt the impact of the bullet, someone else took the bullet, Ghost.

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

Everything happened in a blur and it was not like in movies where it would be in slow motion, it was real. The bullet never touched me but hit Ghost. As the bullet hit him, he was firing at the man who shot at me and at the others. Another bullet hit him before he could take down the last of the five men. All this happened in less than ten seconds. It was horror, I was too

shocked to react. I only knew I was not having a nightmare when he stumbled to the ground with blood gushing out of his stomach. I screamed in horror as his back hit the ground. I thought he was invisible, I wanted to wake up.

“No” I screamed placing my palms on his stomach hoping to stop the bleeding. I should have looked at the file. The man from my tribe had been the one after my life and the man from the tribe I hated had been the one protecting me.

“No, God please” I cried out.

“Emmanuella” He had to struggle to pronounce my name, it explained a lot. He raised his hand to touch my face.

“I thought I would not get to you on time, I can’t fail the second time, I’m happy...”

The pause was enough message.

“No please, don’t do this to me. I’m sorry, please. Somebody help me” I screamed.

“I’m sorry I could not save...”

“Stop talking, don’t talk, please don’t” I cried out.

His hand on my face felt making me taste dread.

“No, no, somebody help me” I screamed.

I heard the sound of a vehicle coming, then I saw the headlight and I was a bit hopeful they would be able to save him because his breathing was too faint but I heard numerous gunshots the moment they started coming out of the car. They were being shot by a sniper. One targeted us but the bullet missed by few inches. I heard the loud noise of a helicopter same time I heard a bike. It was chaos and I did not know which side was for Ghost. The helicopter flew low and something was dropped very close

to us. It was that alien stuff Ghost had used at the river. I turned my attention to the battle around the new comers. They were targeting us but the bullet never came near us. Whoever was shooting at them as a sniper was too good, he was picking them out one by one. More vehicles arrived and it made it clear that whatever was in that file was lethal. The fact that they were determined to get the file by all means explained a lot. I screamed for help same time I saw them dropping from the helicopter. One was a female and she was on jeans trousers. She was firing as she dropped from the helicopter. I screamed for help again and turned my attention to Ghost. His eyes were closed and his breathing was almost not there.

“Please don’t leave me. Please. I won’t survive it. God please help me. God please forgive my foolishness and help me” I was already mourning afraid that he would be gone forever.

I felt someone was around and raised my head to look at the person. It was the girl, she had a bag on her back. She also had a square torch which was illuminating around us and which was also showing the terrible wound on Ghost stomach. My hand was still on his stomach but his cloth and the ground was still getting soaked with his blood. She removed my hands from his stomach but froze when she saw how deep the bullets tore through his stomach. It told me a lot.

“Please, please save him” I pleaded.

But she was still frozen, if she was the sister he had described, she was not behaving like her because she was so afraid.

Gunshots were so numerous and I had no idea which side was losing, all I wanted was for Ghost to live. Someone else joined her. He was huge and had the aura of authority.

“Doc” his voice was a baritone and it carried command.

The girl did not answer but started shaking her head.

“Doc, he is still breathing, start doing something now.”

“I can’t, Wild he is dying” she stammered.

Someone else joined us.

“Shit. What the heck, I can almost not feel his heartbeat. Why the pause?” he shouted placing his hand on Ghost’s heart.

The gun battle was still on. Wild started operating a wristwatch like that of Ghost’s wristwatch. A bird flew very close.

“Hadiya tell me what to do right now” he commanded taking the bag away from a frozen Doc. He started bringing out instruments they used in the operating room.

“Shit, fast, he is almost at the point of no return” the second man said.

“She too is freaking out. Jason stop current operation and connect me now to Pastor Sam’s wife” Wild said.

“It’s too late, no this is not happening, no” Doc found her voice. They ignored her.

“Wild...” the second man said putting pressure on Ghost’s heart.

“Ghost listen to me. We are not losing anyone now. I refuse you to stop breathing, she is here, she is still alive. You promised your mum you are bringing her. You promised AI’s mum, GG and their mum that someone is coming to see them. Pup too is waiting for you. We have pot breaking ceremony today. Of all days not today, not now. You can’t leave her now. Stay” the force in his voice felt like waves of vibration all over my body. I felt it like he was talking to me, and I felt like staying exactly at my position.

“Wolf just be the machine. Let me know when he is almost off.”



“For now he is still faint, not getting better or worse” Wolf answered.

“Thanks Dr. Sam. What should I do?” Wild asked.

The bird was looking at the wound. Another huge guy joined them. That was when I realized the gun battle had stopped.

“He needs blood” Wild said injecting the area he was shot.

“I’m O positive” the second guy said.

“No Wolf, you need to monitor him for me.”

“I’m here, we share same blood ground” the other huge guy said.

They were so calm, I wished I could be as calm as they were.

Wild brought out what looked like a scissors but before he could do anything, I saw myself flying. I hit the ground and saw stars.

It was the girl.

“You killed my brother” she shouted bringing out a knife.

She raised it to stab me and the only thing I could think of within that split second was finally, she was going to help end my misery. But the knife never touched me because she was flipped away by someone. I could not believe that the first thing that came to my mind when I saw the man who pulled her away was how handsome he looked. He was neither huge, lanky nor in-between. He just had the perfect body structure.

He pinned her to the ground but she fought him off. She even attacked him but he blocked every attack then flipped her again to the ground and used his body to pin her by staying on top of her.

“Mark get off me now” she shouted.

“Sabrina what is wrong with you? Don’t you know his is still fighting because of her? When did you become so weak that you can’t treat your brother?”

“There is no hope for Saheed, there is...” she started crying.

“Sabrina, don’t do this to Ghost, don’t give up on him already.

You know medicine is half a joke. His will be stronger than his body. I don’t give a fuck what medicine is saying right now, he just needs you and your mum to not give up on him. And you can’t hurt the girl he took a bullet for? What has come over you?” Mark shouted.

Mentioning me must have pissed her off because she flipped Mark away and attacked me but Mark was in time to stop her.

She started fighting him same time shouting she was going to kill me. Mark thought he was helping me but he was not. There was no way I would survive without him. It made me turn to check what was going on. The huge guy’s back was blocking my view.

“Ella I need to concentrate and he needs to know you are safe, get up and run to your hostel, now” Wild commanded.

I found myself running to my hostel and it was almost when I got to the gate I knew I had obeyed him against my will. I did not want to leave him but Wild said Ghost needed to know I was safe from Sabrina. There was still hope because I could still feel him, there was still that awareness of him.

As I got to my gate praying to God to save him, I felt empty and it happened so sudden that it knocked me to the ground. Almost immediately, I could not feel him anymore. He was gone. I opened my mouth and screamed.

<https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

I was an empty shell until I felt his presence. It came with fear, terror and dread of a man I could not see but could only feel. He was always watching me. During the day he was the man in my shadow, at night he became my shadow, a ghost who terrorized my night and followed my every step. I could not get away from him, I could not outrun the terror, the shadow, the pull, the burning desire, the dangerous feelings that came with him. So I let it burn. I let the terror, the dangerous feeling to linger, to take me, to wrap me, to lead me to a place where I could feel his touch, beyond my imaginations. I forgot the danger, the fear of his real personality, a ghost. Then he was gone, just as he came. I never knew him, I never saw his face but he left this emptiness, this longing, this yearning to be

watched again, to fear again, to feel another touch of a ghost,  
the-shadow-in-the-dark.

But it would never be, because he was gone forever not  
because he chose to, but because I killed him. I was the cause of  
his disappearance. I was the architect of my emptiness, it kept  
gnawing at me, an endless bottomless nothing. It was worse than  
my Zombie state. I had thought I would be better off with time,  
at least I would be back to my zombie state but it was now a  
month and I was getting worse.

That night, I had screamed my voice out. The man who had  
opened the gate for me the first time, had come outside to ask  
me what was going on. He must have been shocked when he  
saw blood on my hands. I had pushed past him and staggered to  
my room. First thing I did was to call the DPO but the line was

not available. I later checked Ghost last message which confirmed my stupidity.

‘At least check the file before going out, please I am coming, please don’t get hurt.’

That was the message I never read, the message I refused to read because I was pissed off, pissed off because he was a man from the tribe I hated. I had tried Ghost’s line but it no longer exist.

The ear gadget never worked. It became my routine, I tried the line every morning and every evening but that voice kept saying the line did not exist almost like it was telling me, the man I was trying to contact did not exist.

I did not go to school the next day. I stayed throughout in my room trying his line and wishing I was dreaming. Ken had called me that night but I did not pick. Same with the next day. He came to my room at night and swore to break in if I did not open.

He saw how messed up I looked and was speechless for a long time. Then he mentioned the battle that happened and how it was all over the news that two senators, three big time business men, four high ranked military personal and five high ranked police officers had been behind the shootings. He told me that they were looking for a witness who had the evidence of their crimes of numerous murders, illegal arms dealings, drug and human trafficking. I did not allow him to finish when I rushed out of my room with my ATM. I did not go to Ring Road. There was an electronic shop along Edo Street.

I was buying a plasma TV when Ken met up with me. He was looking confused but I did not say a word to him. I told the man I needed a generator and DSTV. He helped me contact DSTV office. I bought all the electronics I needed and waited for the



DSTV man. Ken told me to stay there, he was going to get his car.

Ken did not ask me anything as we entered my room. He helped the electrician fix my TV and connect the generator. It was not hard because the last person who used my room before I moved in had generator. I told the electrician to connect a switch outside for those who wanted to charge, that would save me from letting people invade my privacy.

Ken just watched me throughout and still watched me watching the television, switching over to different news channels. It was true, it was the topic for discussion, even international news were having a field day. Some showed some video recovered from the file but blurred it because of the gruesome sight. It showed a family being murdered and the DPO was the main shooter. He was not a DPO then, he was

promoted during the trial of Umaru, Abdul and Musa. I started crying and allowed Ken pull me close. He tried to turn off the TV, thinking I was watching my family's murder but I stopped him, I needed to follow the full story. I did not know how The Circle did it but my name, my face, my identity as even a student was never mentioned. They kept saying a witness with the evidence of their crime was being protected by a Special Force soldier when he was shot while fighting off the assassins, nothing to indicate he was alive or dead. Somehow, I had that insane believe that he was still alive. That was how crazy I had become. All the culprits had been apprehended and the president had sworn to make sure their trials were swift. Ken once again tried to stop me from watching but I refused. The reason I was in a mess was because I tried to run away from reality. I switched to another channel exactly when they were discussing about a soldier who had withhold the assassins from getting hold of the

witness and the evidence. I switched off the TV before they could go any further, before they could announce his death. I did not hold back my tears. I was the architect of my own misfortune.

I needed someone to talk, to confess my atrocities, to tell how I had tried to end Ghost two times, and how I succeeded in the last one. Ken was the only one available so I told him everything, I told him everything I did to the soldier who was sent to protect me. I told him how I fell in love with him and how I got mad when I discovered he was Hausa Fulani. I expected him to judge me but he did not help issue because he also started crying. He could not believe I was the witness they were reading about. He kept apologizing instead of accusing me.

He stayed throughout the night and left the next morning with a promise to come back. He did come back that night and

the next night. We never spoke, he was just there to force me eat my food.

I needed to do something, I needed to find out about the lies the DPO had told me. I had to skip lectures and found myself at the school library. I had my library card but never used it until that day. I went straight to the newspaper section and started searching for news from the period my family were murdered. It took me time but I found them. I packed them down and sat down, then started reading. I searched for the trials and Musa's confession. Then I found it. The DPO had lied to me from the beginning. There was nothing like a soldier working with them in his confession instead, he mentioned that he met with a Being called Messenger of death. He said the night he and his men had slaughtered two families, Omakor and Farouk, they were attacked by someone they could not see. His men kept

disappearing. He said he had a glimpse of one being pulled to the roof with a magic rope. He said he could not see the man and when the man had showed his presence, he just knew he was seeing an angry Being. The man had given him a lifeline on how to get mercy from Allah because those he killed would never enter paradise. He said only confession would save him because the people he had been deceived to kill by Abdul were pure souls. According to Musa, he was willing to pay for his sins, he was happy Allah granted him mercy to be a true martyr. He even pleaded for forgiveness. I did not need anyone to tell me he was talking about Ghost. I remembered his last statements, he had said he could not fail a second time. He must have gotten there late and he had avenged their death immediately. I sat there and cried my eyes out. Students and workers came to ask me what was going on but I quickly pushed the newspapers back and ran out.

As I ran back to my hostel, I thought about Halima. I had also read about how she was kidnapped after her family were murdered by same Umaru. Her dad had worked for Umaru like my dad. My dad was Umaru's lawyer. She was given to one Chief Esegie who had abused her for more than fourteen years. I could not even finish that story. Her picture was not shown, according to the newspapers it was for her safety. I wondered how she had survived and what her current state would look like. It would not be easy for someone locked out of the world for that long. Animals were better than some humans, it was just unbelievable that someone could be that heartless. I had thought there was no tribe as heartless as Hausa and Fulani but Chief Esegie did not sound like them. I remembered Ghost asking me why I could not just hate the criminals, he had asked me why I had to hate the whole tribe and I had no good answer and it cost me a lot. Now I understood why God did not answer my prayers

when Ghost was shot. Hatred was like murder. Fueled by my hatred for a tribe, I took actions without considering the options available. The reason why I had listened to the DPO had nothing to do with his statement that he could be the soldier who watched my family die, it just had to do with the fact that he was Hausa. If I had listened to him and not allow my emotions to rule me, he would have been alive, stupid me.

He had been right all the time because the friend I did not know became more dangerous than the enemy I knew. Suicide was not an option, although my body wanted me to end the emptiness, my mind was now stronger. It was not only strong but my mind had betrayed me, the same mind that screamed for me to end it with Ghost screamed for me to live and enjoy the misery I created for myself.

It was past a month but no news from him, not that I was expecting any news, it was just my body that hoped against hope. Exam was starting the next day, I was ready because I did nothing else but read. Ken said I was like the living dead and he just could not get to me except when we read together. There was nothing he did not do to try make me look normal but life was now black and grey.

I wrote well in my first paper but declined when Ken offered to take me out for lunch. I told him I needed to go somewhere alone. He allowed me after I swore I was not going to commit suicide. At first, he did not believe me but allowed me when I told him I did not deserve the luxury of suicide.

I took a bus to Main Gate, then to ring road. I went to Bob Izua Motor Park and walked down the street. I saw them, Hausa children begging for alms. Some of them were holding their



blind father or mother as they begged. There were also Niger Fulanis that had long hairs and were mixed colored. Neither black nor white. I studied them and allowed my body pull me to one of them. She was looking so dirty and she was crying. Her long hair which was braided into two long rolls was stained and mixed with dust. I squatted close to her.

“Hi.”

She turned and grabbed my shirt. I had always hit their hand and pushed them off sending curses their way but for the first time, I let her.

“Please give me money, money for my brother, he dey sick.”

“How old are you?” I asked.

“Nine.”

“Can you take me to your brother?”

I needed to see for myself, I was never going to allow my emotions rule me again. Even though some of them were genuinely in need, many saw begging as a business and they even made money more than the average private school teachers. I knew that because there was a time I was going back to school after getting something from Ring Road. It was getting dark and the beggars were becoming more desperate. One almost tore my clothes. I had to drop my bag to push her away. She found another target who told her she did not have change, the girl said she had change. I could not believe the swell in her apron was money. She packed out money and gave the young surprised girl four hundred and fifty naira change. The girl ran away leaving her helper in shock. So I just did not want to be fooled.

She obliged and I followed her to a street. I was sure we were no longer in Ring Road. I started having a second thought when I saw her crossing a heap of dirt.

“Come, he is here” she waved at me still crying.

I had to close my nose and struggled not to throw up as I crossed the heap of dirt and entered into an old dilapidated caravan.

Someone was lying down on what look like an old dirty mat. I was expecting someone big but I saw a little boy. He was coughing.

“Where is your mother?”

“I don’t have parents.”

“Who brought you here?”

“My big brother.”

“Where is he and how can someone live here?”

“He is working wheelbarrow work to find money to buy drugs.”

I could not hold my tears, I started crying and only knew I was supposed to be the adult when the child coughed again.

“Okay, let’s take him to the hospital” I said trying to carry the child but he screamed, afraid of me.

The sister had to carry him. I stopped a taxi as soon as we were back at Ring Road. The man said he did not want his cab to get dirty and he only allowed us when I offered to pay double.

He took us to Stella Obasanjo hospital where the boy was treated. They refused us at first, they said it was not an NGO hospital but changed when I dropped bundles of cash to show I would pay anything. As the Doctor checked him out at the emergency ward, I called Ken to join me. We waited outside with people looking at the girl as dirt. I hated that look. Those

who did not even have up to a hundred thousand in their account felt they were better than us.

“What’s your name?”

“Jamila.”

“Jamila your brother will be fine, okay?”

She nodded. She was really looking bad and had a terrible body odor that needed to be fixed. I was called by one of the nurses.

The one I had given money to help me run and pay for anything.

She said a doctor wanted to see me. The doctor told me the child was suffering from malnutrition and malaria and probably

typhoid. They had conducted test and had already put him on

drip for malaria. I nodded. He said he would probably be there

for the day and he needed food and clean body. I also nodded.

With the help of the nurse with my money, Jamila was able to clean her brother but there was no clothes. The bedspread was used to cover him. That was when Ken joined us at the emergency ward. I explained what happened and begged him to watch him while I went out to get some needed stuffs for them. Ken was just the right friend someone could lean on.

Jamila was allowed to use the bathroom, God must have touched their heart after they saw Ken. Some nurses had no shame, they kept flanking him like they were his bodyguard. She still had to put on her dirty clothes and her hair was not yet washed.

I bought a gown for her to change into, I made sure the sales girl at the boutique saw her size before leaving. She was the only one to answer us among five boutiques we visited. I took

her to a salon and paid for her hair to be washed and braided all back, then went to shop for clothes for them.

When I came back to the salon, they were about to make her hair.

The hairdresser explained that it took her three washings before the hair got clean. Then people were admiring the air which was touching her waist. I just told her to pack the hair into pony tail because there was no time. I had exams to write the next day.

The transformation was breathtaking. She looked like a colored, the daughter of a rich man. She ran to me and gave me a bear hug, I had to beg her to release me.

As we left the salon, Jamila told me she wanted to look for her brother because he might be worried if he did not find them. So we went in search of her brother and we were lucky it took only twenty minutes. He was not like Jamila, he looked like the average Fulani, very lanky, tall and tanned, not that colored but

had pointed nose which was a common trait. I told him to go drop the wheelbarrow and follow us. He did not argue because he could see Jamila had changed. He said he was nineteen and they were orphans.

By the time they discharged Malik, Jamila's little brother around 10:PM, I was already tired and stressed out. I was very happy when Ken told me I had mixed up the timetable, that our next paper was not the next day. Ken almost made me cry when he said he was taking them to his house. I followed him to his house at BDPA for the first time. It was a three bedroom flat, well decorated and furnished. He said his parents bought the house as soon as he got admission. He said he was going to be staying there for a long time because he still had plans to switch to Law and he was already managing two new filling stations his parents recently opened in Benin. He was just twenty two yet



had so many responsibilities to take care of. He had no neighbor and it was fenced round. Jamila's brother was just looking dumb when Ken showed him where he and his two year little brother would be staying. As for Jamila, she got a room to herself.

He started crying when he realized he was not dreaming. Ken left to switch on the generator as Jamila and her brother cried tears of joy. I joined them to cry, I wished I could fall in love with Ken.

Ken made Jamila's big brother to take a bath and put on his cloth. It looked larger on him but he promised to get him new clothes. I had to ask Ken why he was helping them.

"Seriously I wish I know why. I just could not take the way you guys were being treated at the hospital. I felt for the little child and I don't know. Maybe because I can help, because I saw a

little life in you for the first time in more than a month. That's a good sign."

"What of your parents?"

"I don't know what they will say, but I will call my mum tomorrow. The two rooms are empty and they can take care of themselves without pestering me. One day at a time Ella."

"Thank you." I threw myself against him and he must have been shocked because he took time before placing his hands on my back.

I raised my head to see Jamila and his brother looking at us. I knew what I did would never give me redemption and I did not even want redemption.

"What's your name?" I asked her brother.

"Saheed."

I remembered that was Ghost's real name. That was the name his sister had called him. I started crying.

<https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

I had been so tired that I slept off as soon as Ken dropped me at my hostel and I had woken up by 12:PM the next day, the longest sleep I had after Ghost's death. The first thing I did was to call Ken who told me to find a way to get to his house. I quickly took a shower and took a cab straight to his house at 21st street.

His mum and dad were around. He said he called her that night and first thing they did was to book a flight to Benin. From the

little I had watched from Nigeria movies before I switched over to Asian movies, I concluded I was in trouble and they were going to send Saheed and his siblings back to the street but I was wrong. Ken's mum was dressing up Malik when I entered the parlor after Ken had tried to convince me his parents did not bite. He was looking so tiny but he was smiling, his cough still there. Jamila and Saheed were also smiling confusing me. And when Ken introduced me as Ella, his close friend, his mother playfully attacked me as the girl her son could not stop talking about. His dad was having a chat with Saheed. I got to know that the three siblings were flying back to Lagos with them so Ken could concentrate and so they could start school. I sat down surprised about their actions, it was completely different from what I had been made to believe rich parents acted. They always had one son and treated everyone as trash, then that son always fell in love with a poor girl who his parents would refused and so on.

Nigerian movies had been deceiving me. Ken's parents, were very receptive. They spoke Yoruba with Ken and Ken was always hugging his mum. A kind of family I would never have. They told me to take care of Ken and they also assured me Malik would be taken care of by their doctor as soon as they get back to Lagos. Saheed and Jamila almost choked me with hugs and Ken had to rescue me. I had to stay back while Ken followed them back to the airport.

Ken did not allow me go back but forced me to read for our next paper. Ken told me he hardly had friends growing up because the average people believed he was proud because his parents were rich not knowing his dad treated him like a house boy. His dad was an engineer and made him join the painters to paint their house and he forced him to go to his palm plantation with laborers and paid him same amount with them. He never

allowed him to drive his car till he turned twenty. He said his father struggled when he was young and he wanted his son to know that life had many sides. It was only his mum who had it smooth, she was from a rich family. His father refused him from going to a private university. He had to write Jamb twice, (the exam one had to write before entering Nigerian universities) before he was given English and Literature Arts. All I could tell him was his family was rare.

The days passed by, all looking the same, grey and black. It became worse the day I wrote my final paper because Ken was travelling home. His parents had some business for him to run within the break. He begged me to follow him that his mum would be happy to see me but I refused. He travelled after I promised him I would not hurt myself but kept calling me five times in a day. A week after he had travelled, he forced me to

open a Facebook account to be exchanging pictures, then I also had to download Whatsapp. He sent me a video of his new family swimming in their swimming pool each sitting on a floater. He was spinning Jamila as she screamed from excitement while Saheed was helping Malik to swim. He told me the good news, that his parents were in love with the three siblings and they were going to officially adopt them. I asked him if he was not bothered he was no longer the only heir and he had told me he was never interested in his father's wealth from the beginning. His father had installed in him a passion to create his own wealth. It gave me joy to watch them so excited and happy. Even Malik was looking fleshy.

I had nothing to do but to live through my emptiness each day. Going home was not an option, I stayed back and read texts for the second semester. That was the only thing that distracted me a

bit. It became worse each day and I felt enclosed in nothingness. Ibrahim was no longer working and at a point, I felt Ghost never happened, I felt it was all a mirage but my emptiness and gnawing endless loneliness was enough proof that he existed. But that too was disappearing causing me to fear.

It was on Friday when I decided to visit that river, to make sure I kept the memory of his existence, to make sure I felt that constant void in my heart, I did not deserve to heal. I brought out the band he gave me and wore it. He had said I should press the round stuff if I missed him. I missed him a lot. I applied pressure and I watched the band open to something that looked like a watch but with tiny buttons that had a Nokia torch settings. I looked at it for a long time wondering what to do with it. I decided to type.



‘I miss you and life is meaningless without you’ I saw a send button and pressed it.

I sat down waiting, I had no idea what I was even waiting for. After waiting for more than an hour without any response, I started my journey to Ekosodin River.

Ghost had always taken me there at night so I had no idea how to locate it on my own, I asked around and got directions. As I walked, I saw hills in front of me, some were grassland while some were settlements, it was so beautiful, nature was beautiful. I felt like I was breathing for the first time. I watched the way the hills became taller as I got close. I would have loved to explore it and watch the stars with Ghost, the emptiness and void came back as I remembered Ghost. I continued my journey and had to continue asking for directions till I got to a secluded area. There were no more settlements, just a few farmlands and

wild trees and grasses. I became tensed as I followed the footpath, I became confused when I had to choose between too many paths. Some group of boys came out of another path. I asked them the direction to the stream which they pointed out. I followed it straight and was overwhelmed when I burst out to the open and the stream. It was different in the day and there were boys swimming. They were students who stayed back after their exams. Two indigenous girls were just through with washing their clothes, they left few minutes later. Another girl was sitting on a fallen bamboo tree at the hill by my left. Down the hill were some group of boys smoking and watching those swimming. They had somehow constructed the bamboo to serve as chairs and so many bamboo trees were serving as shades. One of the boys swimming asked me to join them but I smiled and just played with my legs.

“Is this your first time lady?” one of them shouted, he was resting his back by my right at the bamboo trees that were submerged in the river which contributed to the parting of the straight creek to two reminding me of the time Ghost did the same while I practiced what he had taught me. The second creek which was by my right before the bamboo trees was foaming and flowing angrily.

“That area is for the gods, nobody enters there, many have drown there” the boy continued.

“I am Kome, what’s your name?”

“Are you Isoko?” I asked.

“Yes” he answered in Isoko.

I told him I just came to watch the river in Isoko. His friends started hailing him and calling him bad guy. I felt shy and

looked away concentrating on the second creek he said belonged to the gods. I turned to locate where Ghost used to build the tent. I felt that emptiness and I wished I could feel pain.

“Why don’t you try do something, you cannot just come and watch.”

I turned to look at the speaker.

“My name is Osama.”

I nodded. I wanted to try out what Ghost had thought me so I pulled off my top and gave it to the girl, with my phone and the hand band. I was putting on singlet and it was covering me well.

“Are you going to swim with your bra?” the girl asked. There was a boy sitting close to him. I felt embarrassed.

“Don’t be shy. It’s a normal thing.”

I removed my bra and gave it to the girl, then I turned to climb down.

“Just jump” Kome shouted but it felt high to me, so I ignored him and gently climbed down then attempted swimming but it was like I had forgotten everything Ghost taught me. Kome swam to me.

“Can I teach you?”

I looked at him. He was not looking that bad.

“I don’t think I want to learn, I would prefer to watch the sky while lying on my back.”

“Okay, let me help you.”

He stretched his hands towards me and I allowed him. But I told him to stop, ran back and called Ken. I took a selfie and sent it

to him. I wanted him to know I was okay. I went back to join Kome.

“Your boyfriend?” I shook my head.

He pulled me to where my feet could no longer touch the ground, then stretched his palm for me to lie on.

I felt a bit elated as I watched the cloud. It was not sunny because the cloud was thick and heavy like it was about to rain.

Guys started hailing Kome as he spun me round but slowly. I was supposed to be excited but it was not there, I only felt a piercing pain in my heart, something I had never felt before. I rubbed my heart and allowed the pain, it was the cost of my actions.

“You are crying. Are you okay?”

I shook my head and told him to take me back to the bank which he did.

“Can I have your number?” he asked as I climbed back to take my stuffs.

“Maybe next time.”

“O boy how far na. No market?” I heard one of them asking as I packed my things and thanked the girl. They all started laughing but Kome ignored them.

“You never told me your name” Kome shouted in Isoko.

At least I could give him that.

“You can call me Ella.”

“That’s a beautiful name. I hope you will keep to your promise next time and your hair is beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

I looked for where to put on my bra and sighted bamboo trees not too far from the river. I ran there and quickly wore my bra and top but removed my singlet. Just when I had tucked my singlet into my small bag, I heard a voice.

“Girl howfa na?”

I turned and noticed two things. The guy was unfamiliar from the faces I had seen swimming and the swimmers were all hurrying out of the river and dressing to leave. I saw the back of the girl who had held my bag for me. She was running like she was being chased by a wild animal.

“I dey talk to you.”

I turned back my attention to the guy. He was on a yellow T-shirt with different blue and white foreign inscriptions. His jean was blue and old and sagged. But the disturbing part was his



eyes. It was red and I could smell cocaine and cigar from his clothes. He had a round and dark face.

“Hi” I responded zipping my bag.

I saw Kome and Osama with the other guys walking past me.

“Kome wait for me” I shouted.

“Did you come with them?” the guy on yellow asked.

“No, but I’m going with them.”

“Chill, let them go, we go escort you go back. My friends say make you come greet them.”

“I don’t understand what you mean but I don’t want to. Thanks for the offer though, but I’m going with Kome.”

I tried to leave but he blocked me.

“See this girl oh, you nor dey even look my way, I dey talk to you and you dey misbehave. You want them to suffer?”

He pointed at Kome and friends.

“Oya start going now, if you nor want fuck up, disappear right now” he shouted at Kome and friends.

“Bros we nor want trouble, we go wait for am for front” Osama said.

“You dey craze? I say disappear, this guy? You, I don mark you. I nor won tell una again. Vamoose now.”

I saw the fear in their eyes and the apology as they started running leaving me alone to face the guy on yellow.

“Come, we nor go waste time. My oga won just greet you, we want to know you.”

I could see he was already high and it would become messier if I refused. I just needed to apply wisdom. It was a river and it was broad daylight. Indigenes would soon come to wash or fetch water.

“Just to greet?”

“Is that not what I have been saying, just dey here dey form stubborn, I nor like stubborn people. I’m not even forcing you.”

There was no need to tell him what he was doing was seen as force by the law. I followed him to the far side of the hill and met four more guys. The smell of hard drugs was too high and thick that I coughed and covered my nose.

“See am, she for dey form stubborn before because she dey think say those boys go protect am” the guy on yellow said to another guy who had no clothes but a sagged trousers. The others were staring at me and I could see lust in their eyes and it

made me panic. I turned and discovered nobody was coming down the river.

“Good afternoon. I was told I have to come and greet you.”

The guy on yellow grabbed me from behind as I spoke and I turned and pushed him away. He looked like he wanted to slap me but was stopped by the half-naked guy.

“I tell you to touch am? You dey craze?” he said slapping the guy on yellow who apologized.

“Sorry for his behavior. How are you?”

“I am fine, can I go now?”

“Why are you so much in a hurry? I want us to be friends, you look scared.”

I looked at him, I wanted to slap him.

“Of course I am supposed to look scared. You bullied guys I was supposed to go back with and forced me to come and greet you. What were you expecting, for me to be happy? And please I can’t breathe, whatever you are smoking is disturbing me.”

They all started laughing.

“The girl fine, come smart join” one of them said. He was just on boxers.

“Can I go now?”

“Don’t worry, you will soon go, just come sit down and have little chat with us. All of you stop smoking, she hates it.”

He held my hand to take me to their sitting place but the ice was so sudden that I pushed his hand away.

“No, he said I’m just supposed to come and greet and that’s all. I don’t want to sit down.”

“Is it because I’m giving you a VIP treatment. What is wrong with asking you to come sit down and chat? You were okay with another guy few minutes ago.”

“And that is none of your business. I was okay with him but not with you and you don’t use force to make friends.”

“See I’m getting tired. Just come sit down and give me your phone number then you can go.”

“But I don’t want to. My answer is no.”

“Then you are not ready to go. I hate stubborn girls. Simple instructions. What is wrong with you? Don’t you know it’s a privilege to be my girlfriend?”

I was also tired.

“I don’t want to sit down, I don’t want to give you my number and I will never be your girlfriend. I am done here.”

I turned to walk out but was pulled by my blouse, the force sending me to his bare chest which was sweaty and disgusting. He started pulling me towards a small path. Fear gripped me because I understood the implication and I knew there was no Ghost this time.

“Let me go” I shouted and struggled to pull free.

He covered my mouth with his palm and I bit him. He slapped me.

“I go teach you respect and no one will come to your aid.”

The others were already on me to render help and I felt this was the end. They were going to rape and kill me in broad daylight. If only they would just kill me but rape was another thing. They were trying to lift me to the secluded area when someone came.

“Oh my gosh! Finally. I thought I had missed my way. Wow, this is so beautiful.”

That voice sounded familiar. I turned alongside the guys. She had burst out from a path that would not lead back to Ekosodin. I never believed Ghost when he talked about his sister but seeing her clearly was something else. She was damn beautiful. She was on high heel boots and a long siphon red gown that was split almost to her waist on both sides revealing a red bikini pant. The front of the gown was a bit exposed, revealing her busty breast. She wore farmers weaved hat and a sunshade, then a red back bag. She removed the cap and sunshade and wiped her forehead like she was wiping out sweat. It was very obvious she was Fulani like those from Niger. She was very light skinned like the colored but her face showed it all. She had that pointed nose, full forehead and eyes that were neither small nor big. She



reminded me of Jamila. I always saw them like the Chinese who had same face. Her hair was touching her waist. Someone could actually mistake her as a white lady from a distance but would later change it to a colored except those that were conversant with her tribe. I had not studied her that night but I had that idea that she would look like a man because of the way Ghost kept describing her but she was all feminine, endowed front and back and it looked like she knew it. I felt ugly. I was dark, not too tall and slim. She was tall, average body for a sexy female and beautiful. I had no idea what why she was at the river, then I remembered the hand band.

She rushed close to us smiling. She got to the edge of the hill and stared at the river. They had already released me all salivating while looking at her.

“Oyibo you miss road?”

“Hi, I’m Sabrina, what do you mean by that?”

And she was using American accent. I might have mistaken her but Mark had called Ghost’s sister Sabrina.

“We are asking if you are lost?” the half-naked guy asked after giving a stern facial warning to the guy on yellow.

“Oh no. I have heard of Ekosodin River and I’ve always wanted to see it. It took me some time but I finally located it. It looks inviting. Is it safe to swim?” That accent again, it was confusing me.

She did not wait for them to answer before pulling off her gown to reveal her red hot swimsuit. I had mistaken it for a bikini pant. She turned to look at us. I had already shifted away from them and they did not mind.

“Yes or no?”

“What did you say?” half-naked guy asked scratching his head. I looked down and regretted looking. I could see the bulge in the boxers of the other three. Half-naked guy and yellow shirt guy where the only ones on trousers.

“I was asking if it is safe to swim.”

She turned and showed them her endowed buttocks shaking it like she was warming up to swim. Then I understood what she was doing. Ghost had said something like that before. She was baiting them. No wonder he said I was a terrible actress. She was good because those guys were already incensed with lust. Don't forget to read chapter twenty six it's also out.

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark) Hope you've read chapter twenty five?

## CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

They started moving close to her like they were being controlled by an external force.

“Oyibo are you alone? Nobody followed you?” half-naked guy asked.

She turned to look at them revealing part of her breast.

“I can take care of myself. Why will someone follow me? This is a free world. Guys you’ve not answered me if the water is safe cause I really want to swim.”

“The water is not safe Oyibo.”

“Ouch, that is disappointing to hear.”

She turned back to stare at the water and Half-naked guy slapped her buttocks. I had been completely ignored and Sabrina

acted like I was not there. She turned to look at the guys who were now very close to her.

“What was that for? That is sexual harassment. I think I should leave, since I can’t swim because the water is not safe.”

But they blocked her path. I turned to see if anyone was coming to the river but nobody.

“Excuse me, I want to go” she said looking like she was scared. I was beginning to believe she was not acting and she was not the same Sabrina.

“You know you are beautiful, you are not supposed to walk without escort. We know a short cut to town. We will escort you.”

“Oh really! No problem. Wow I get escorts” she said excitedly.

They looked at each other and nodded. Half-naked guy pointed at a direction and she followed them but stopped when they got to the large trees of bamboo which was acting as a wall. It would prevent anyone coming to the river from seeing the other side of the bamboo trees, a perfect spot to rape her, it was also where they were taking me to.

“I don’t feel this is the right path. I don’t need any escort, I change my mind. I am going to swim.”

She turned to walk back to her former position but she was obstructed by two of the guys.

“No. I get better solution” Half-naked guy stopped them from using force on her. He brought out a pistol from his pocket.

“What the heck...”

“Shut up, just shut up. If you don’t want me to blow your head up, just quietly follow me. My guy won’t be able to block people from coming to the river for that long and I am never going to miss this opportunity.”

I became afraid and worried, no one was invisible to a bullet. Even Ghost had been shot. Her back bag was still on her back and her gown was hanging on her shoulder. I had no idea what to do, they were not even looking my way. The bulge in their trousers was disgusting to look at. She looked at them but she was no longer acting, only the guys did not notice the change.

“You are planning to rape me by threatening to shoot me if I don’t cooperate?”

“Very clever.”

“I don’t want to follow you and put that gun down. You don’t know the meaning of courtesy? If you want me, you ask not force.”

“I don’t want to ask, I don’t have time, move, now.”

“And my answer is no. I am free and can go wherever I want. You have no right to take over a place and threaten whoever you want because you possess the cheapest pistol available in the market. Excuse me.”

She pushed the two people blocking her path. Half-naked guy cocked the gun. It was obvious he was not going to fire but use it as threat because he was too lustful to just kill her but it was as if Sabrina was waiting for it. I could not fathom how she did it because she summersaulted kicking the gun away from Half-naked with her booth, same time knocking two down before her feet touched the ground without stumbling. She did not notice



she was wearing a high boot and it could make her loose balance because she knocked the remaining two guys down with same boot. It happened so fast, like less than eight seconds. She did not pause to take a breath before she hit half naked guy then stepped on his groin with her boot same time twisting the boot on him. The piercing scream was horrible. I never knew a man could scream that way. She did not even glance his way but leapt on two of the guys already standing up and running to pick a knife on the bamboo chair. I was amazed how she pulled the hand of the first one she got to, then crossed her right leg on his neck, and then cracked it. He went limp and sprawled lifeless on the ground. The other picked the knife and waved it at her. She rushed at him, seized his hand midway, elbowed his arm, then sent her left pointed boot to his groin. The knife fell from the guy's hand and as he bent from the pain, Sabrina flipped him to the ground but before she could crush his groin, the yellow shirt

guy pointed the gun at her. Beside him was the last guy who was just standing up his hands on his head.

“Cowards.”

She tapped her wrist watch, it looked like they all had that device.

“Leave him and I will let you live” Yellow shirt shouted.

“Or shoot and die.”

She said crushing her boob on his groin provoking another animalistic scream. The yellow guy fired but it was diverted. He looked shocked. He stared at the pistol and tried firing again but Sabrina was just too fast, she was on him. She seized the gun and bent his hand. The pistol was now pointing at the yellow guy’s chest. He joined his left hand to help regain control but

Sabrina was having no issue overpowering him with just one hand.

“You have no idea about martial art or any fighting skills, you just have a stupid believe that being a man makes you stronger than the female and being a gang makes you stronger than your peers and you depend solely on drugs and cheap weapons to keep you in power.”

The last one that had been holding his head must have decided she was not human because the fear in his eyes was contagious. He had picked a stick but threw it away, then started running.

The only truth DPO had told me was how deadly Ghost and his unit were because she was out with a rope from under her bag. I had watched people hook and catch someone by just throwing a rope but seeing it in real life was another thing. That rope was not ordinary. I only knew it was a rope when it came out of a

baton-like gadget, it curved around the guy preventing him from running away. She must have pressed something in the baton that produced the rope because he started convulsing, falling to the ground as he shook.

“Okay, I was saying?” she asked the guy who was still struggling to overpower her hand.

“Please.”

But her response was to hit him on his groin with that sharp pointed boot. His scream was more of fear of what was coming next than the pain he felt. She used both hands to hold the gun but she did not fire, she knocked it out and bent his wrist. I heard the crack from where I was standing and his scream was deafening. She still stepped on his groin increasing his screams. The others were still groaning, struggling to stand up but falling back from the severe pain except from the one that was still

knocked out cold. The one she had attacked with the rope was standing up when she attacked him. She knocked him down and still stepped on his groin.

Their scream must have attracted the person sent to prevent people from coming to the river.

“Wetin dey happen, I...” he paused trying to comprehend the scene before him.

“Welcome to the party” Sabrina said bringing out a pistol from her bag and pointing it at him. He raised his hands up in surrender, staring at the gun and glancing at his groaning friends.

“Come over and sit down let’s talk.”

“I am not with them, I swear.”

“Sssh, one more word and you will become impotent for a long time like them.”

The guy started walking close, shaking with fear. Sabrina pointed for him to pull all his friends to sit down under the bamboo trees close to where I was standing. I wondered why she completely ignored me.

“What did I miss?” The voice came from the river.

I turned and saw him. He was like a river god like in movies rising out to the surface of the river. The handsome fair guy Sabrina had called Mark. He was not wearing any top, I could see his perfectly shaped muscled body. He had a bag on his back. He looked my way and I quickly turned when our eyes met.

“I definitely came late. But what was all that groaning and shouting for. I hate lazy guys.”

“Mark stay out of my business” Sabrina said.

“You are my business.”

He went underwater. I tried to locate him but could not.

“Keep quiet, your cries will soon attract locals and by then I would be gone, just make sure you tell them what you did.”

She brought out a very sharp knife from her pocket. I remembered what Ghost said she did to rapist.

“Please” the new guy said.

“Ssh, I believe you were not schooled about good behavior. It is important for you to know that when a girl says no, she means no. Okay I won’t argue with you that in some cases they mean yes, that’s is for girls you are acquainted with and it’s better to believe she means no, but for this particular case, she said no.

She said she did not want to sit down with you and she meant no.

Only cowards show their strength to the weak. What were you planning to do with her? I castrate rapist...”

“Please..” they chorused and repeated, all looking scared.

I wondered the kind of pain they were having that they could no longer fight. The other was still unconscious but they were still five.

“Sssh, of all the cowards I have met, you guys are the dumbest.

How on earth will you decide to rape a strange lady, looking different from the normal girls you see in broad daylight? And you were really going to rape me. Unbelievable. This is why you should stop taking drugs, it gives you a false impression of yourselves. You need to stop harassing people and feeling powerful because you are nothing.”

“Yes ma” one of them shouted.

“I have been instructed to allow you go without castrating you that is if she forgives you guys.”



She pointed at me. She actually knew I was there but was just ignoring me. They turned to look at me. First thing I noticed was the fear. These men were all powerful and in control just few minutes ago. I never knew they could scare easily. They started pleading. One tried to hold his manhood but removed his hand groaning. They were already terribly injured. I was not sure they would be able to function in the next three months.

“Ella should I? Although some would need surgery to get back in shape but I can make it permanent.”

I was distracted from answering by Mark. He was on the surface but moving towards the dangerous creek.

“No, it’s dangerous. They said it has taken a lot of people”

I said.

He turned to look at me. I just did not know why I spoke.

“Water moves from a higher level to a lower level, it becomes what you call dangerous when there is a sudden great depth or depths causing the waves and foam. That alone can drown someone because the person descends to the depth and will not be able to come to the surface except he is floating that’s after death. But if there is a goddess or god that lives there, I better pay a visit” and with that, he disappeared into the wave. I became afraid for him.

“Lady they are waiting” Sabrina called.

They started begging me. I shook my head.

“Meaning?”

“Don’t castrate them.”

They started thanking me. I just did not want to see blood and the fear in their eyes was enough trauma for them. I turned to try locate Mark but he was nowhere in sight.

“I don’t give a damn how you are going to pack your balls along with, get out before I change my mind. And you carry your comrade with you.”

They started thanking us but Mark came up to the surface to stop them.

“Wait, don’t move yet” he said swimming to the hill side. He climbed up. He was on trousers.

“I did not meet any god, but that hole is deep, it’s dangerous.”

But he had entered and came out like he went for a walk. They really fitted each other as Ghost said.

“And you guys. Just let me clear you before you go.”

He brought out a tab from his bag and looked at it for some time, then put it back in his bag. He went close to half-naked guy.

“What pleasure do you derive from rape? You are not ugly, you can take time to woo a girl. I just don’t get it.”

“Please sir we will never do it again.”

“That’s her business but my business is her and you messed up badly. You don’t know she is red Venus flytrap? You are not to touch but only to admire?”

I had no idea what he meant and why he was targeting the half-naked guy.

“You touched her.” He punched him, held his right hand and bent it. He was very fast, like in a second. He punched the guy’s mouth before he could scream.

“Any noise and you die.”

And he was damn serious. I remembered he was the one who had slapped her buttocks. Sabrina did not intervene, she turned and looked at me and I felt like running.

“The way you are feeling now is same way your victims felt. Now out” Mark said.

I could not watch the way they tried staggering out because I was shifting backwards.

“You are a fool, idiot and I have no idea what Ghost saw in you. How dare you use that hand band?”

My back hit a bamboo tree. I was afraid but I wanted to find out if he was alive. If she wanted to kill me, at least I wanted to know what happened to Ghost.

“Is he dead?”

I felt a piercing pain in my chest as I asked my question. She was on me almost immediately. She pushed me to the ground and I could feel the anger emanating from her. Mark was on her to prevent her from striking me.

“Sabrina, Wild was not joking with his instructions” Mark said to her ears.

“Give me the hand band.”

I opened my bag and brought out the hand band. She snatched it away from my hands.

“I had in mind to strangle you no matter the consequences but after seeing the misery in your eyes, I change my mind. I wish you become more miserable than you already are. You have no damn idea the trauma he went through when he could not get to your family on time, my mum had to place him on induced sleep, you idiot. You don’t deserve death, live and enjoy the misery

you created with your foolishness. You will never be part of my family, you caused it with your stupidity. Get lost.”

“At least tell me if he is alive or dead” I cried but she rushed at me.

Mark held her and told me to run. I did not want to, I wanted to stay, to provoke her to kill me but my mind and my body rejected that idea. She was right, I needed to live in the misery I created.

Also on wattpad <https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

I did not go back to my hostel. I just walked aimlessly around Ekosodin. Sabrina's words kept ringing in my head. I wished I could take back time to when he told me about himself, I wished I could take back time to when I discovered the flash drive, I would have looked through it, I wouldn't have allowed my emotions to rule me. I heard someone speaking Hausa making me to stop my endless walk. I had entered Newton Street without knowing, I was on the street to Winners' Chapel. There was a small kiosk by my right and a Hausa man was talking on his phone. I entered the kiosk without purpose. The man ended the call and asked me what I wanted to buy. I asked him for a sprite drink, then sat down on his wooden chair to drink. I asked him for his State in Hausa and he was really shocked that I could speak Hausa. Grandma who had once lived in the north before going there with my mother, always spoke Hausa to me, especially when she did not want neighbors to



know what she was saying and I always had conversations with them before the incident.

We discussed for long and he even refused to collect money from me. He called me his new found sister. I asked him if he knew the meaning of Saheed because it was not Hausa name, should be Arabic. He told me it meant lucky.

I stayed there for long and I had no idea my body was burning until I tried standing up and fell. He rushed at me and shouted when he checked my temperature. I told him I was fine that it was just stress. I tried standing up again but he prevented me from falling. He said I needed to get to Health Centre which I protested against. I told him I just needed to relax and I would be fine. I sat down, my head bent for some minutes. I tried standing up and I was happy I did not fall. I said my goodbye

but saw myself falling just after taking few steps away from the kiosk.

I woke up with a drip on my left hand. I was at the University Health Service Centre. A nurse was checking the drip.

“Thank God you are awake. Young lady, how can you allow your temperature to run more than forty? You are lucky a Good Samaritan helped you.”

I turned to see that I was at their emergency ward, and the only one on a bed. I asked the nurse to help me call the Good Samaritan after she said the test result of my blood sample was not yet out. It was the Hausa man. He said he saw my school ID in my bag, if not, they had refused to take me in. I was very grateful to him because I had to. But in truth, I wished there was no Good Samaritan because I would have been with Ghost. He said someone named Ken had been calling my line and I needed

to call him. I thanked him and had to beg him to go back to his store that I was in good hands. If only I had tried hating on the criminals, not the whole tribe.

I called Ken and he was acting like an angry father. He believed I had been deceiving him that I was fine and refused to be convinced I had been okay before I went to the river. I did not tell him the incident that happened at the river, it must have caused the rise in my temperature. He even gave the phone to his mum who told me to find my way to Lagos as soon as I got discharged. I promised to think about it.

It was around 6:PM before I was discharged after finding nothing in my blood sample. The doctor told me to take a long rest and eat fruits. I called Ken as soon as I entered my hostel. He called two hours later to make sure I had taken fruits and food and the drug they gave me.

I had no idea of time but I woke up because my body felt like it was being microwaved. It came with serious headache and cold. I could not even stand up to get a wrapper to cover up. I had kept my phone on my reading table and there was no way Ken would have flown down immediately. I shook from cold and fever. This was it, nature had taken its course and my emptiness was about to end. I had no idea what the other world looked like. I started confessing all my sins hoping God would forgive me. I did not want to go to hell. I closed my eyes waiting for death to take me away from my torment.

Suddenly, I started feeling warm. The feeling of being microwaved started reducing, it was replaced by a good heat that removed the cold, it made me to stop shaking. It came with a kind of scent, a very familiar masculine scent. I pushed closer to that warmth and I felt my body being wrapped in him.

“It is okay Emmanuella. I’m here, come back to me.”

That was a voice I would only hear if I was dead. I never knew death felt so wonderful. I did not want to open my eyes because I was afraid I would find my soul somewhere far from his warmth. I wanted to be wrapped in him forever. He did not say another word but rubbed my back and kissed my hair. If I had known death would be this sweet, I would have found a way to die earlier. At a point, something told me I might be dreaming causing fear and panic.

“Sssh, Emmanuella, open your eyes. Please.”

“No, I don’t want to” I panicked.

“Why?”

“Because you will disappear. I won’t survive it. I am going to hold you and close my eyes forever.”

“I am going nowhere Ella. You are shaking so badly. I might need to take you to our hospital. Please help me. I’m real.”

But I shook my head. That was how dreams like that normally happened. Once I open my eyes, he would be gone.

“No, please, don’t tell me to open my eyes, please stay, don’t go. I’m sorry, please don’t leave me. Life is meaningless without you, an endless bottomless dark pit. Please don’t tell me to open my eyes, I want to stay with you forever” I cried and continued crying.

“Ssh, okay. You can close your eyes. Don’t open it, if it makes you believe I will stay.”

“Thank you, thank you.”

I felt relaxed immediately, I was going to stay there with him forever.

“I love you Emmanuella” he said kissing my hair.

He was really going to allow me stay. I was going to be trapped with him forever. I could never wish for more.

I woke up to sunlight permeating through my window. I did not remember raising my curtain but there was a bigger issue. I was awake, I did not die and he was all a dream. I checked my temperature by placing my hands on my neck and it was surprisingly back to normal. I started crying. He promised he would not leave me. This was another kind of torture. It had felt so real. Nemesis was dealing with me by showing me a glimpse of what I could never have, by allowing me to feel a bit relieved that I was going to die but recovering all of a sudden after torturing me with his presence. I felt so helpless and hopeless.

“You are definitely not beautiful when you cry, nothing cute about it.”

I froze afraid to turn and discover I had hallucinated his voice.

“I said it, now you look better.”

I had to turn, I had to confirm my insanity. He was real. He was sitting on my plastic chair, legs crossed, his hand on his jaw with elbow placed on his knee and he was staring at me. He was on black T-shirt and black jeans, his regular clothes. I had never seen him on anything else. He was same with that silicone face the night Emeka was shot. I started panting as I sat up slowly afraid he was the fragment of my imagination, afraid he would disappear. He did not move, just stared at me. I touched the hand holding his wrist and held something solid, there was hope because he had not yet disappeared. I slowly touched his neck and felt his pulse. He was still there and there was pulse to indicate he was real. I remembered where he was shot and tried



lifting his T-shirt but he seized my hand making me gasp because his reaction was so sudden.

“This is called sexual harassment. You touched my hand I did not say anything, you moved to my neck, I still did not say anything now you want to naked me. You can continue if you want me to do the same to you. He stretched his hands sideways.

“I’m waiting...”

I threw myself against him, crying and screaming his name.

“That is not what I meant. I was...just forget it.”

He held me rubbing my back and allowed me to cry.

“I can’t believe this, this is a dream, I must still be dreaming. It’s not possible. You can’t be alive. It’s not possible.”

“Impossible is literally not in our dictionary. Wild and Major tore it out. Can you explain that word?”

But I cried more.

“But how? How are you alive? I saw the wound, your stomach was torn and there was so much blood and your sister said you were dead, how?” I cried.

“My will is stronger than my body, that was a big advantage because I refused to leave and Wild’s command powered up my will. I just could not leave you a virgin. I just could not imagine Ken or someone else having what is mine.”

I pulled away and looked at him. I was shocked and short for words.

“You have to make a joke out of everything?”

“I seriously don’t understand why you guys keep taking my words as jokes, what is the joke here?”

“You survived that horrible bullet wound because you could not leave me a virgin and because you did not want someone else to have me.”

“And where is the joke there? I am damn serious, that was all that kept occupying my mind. There was no way I was going to die after skipping and waiting for the right time, I needed to reap the fruit of my labor. It gave me reason to fight or should I lie to you?”

I started laughing. I had to hold my stomach and wipe the tears from my eyes due to laughter.

“To think there must be something normal about you.”

“Absolutely nothing normal about me and being normal would have killed me.”

I threw myself against him again and resumed my tears, then pulled back.

“Please can I see it?”

“Doubting Thomas.”

“Please, it’s too good to be real.”

“Only if I see yours after.”

“Ghost like seriously?”

But he stood up from the chair and climbed my bed. He used his hands as pillow and stretched his legs.

“I want to sleep. You gave me a sleepless night. I’m still recovering” he said closing his eyes.

I stared at him, then pinched my arm, then pinched my cheek, then watched him again, then touched his neck, then slapped my cheek, then took my phone and snapped him just in case, then

looked at him again, then touched his hands, then tried climbing the bed but stopped. My phone was ringing. It was Ken. He was so surprised that my voice was sounding healthy. I tiptoed outside and told him he was alive. I had just explained everything to him including his reasons for not dying when I remembered Ghost was his rival. But Ken was laughing so hard. I did not understand what was wrong until the repeated Ghost's reason and I joined him to laugh. He said his heart was literally tearing but he was happy I would at least live. He said it was better than my death which he was always afraid of but I could hear the hurt in his voice. I started apologizing but he stopped me and told me he had some businesses to attend to.

I ran back inside, afraid I must have stayed too long and he had disappeared. He was still there.

“It was a waste of time going outside cause I heard everything and I owe Ken a lot, a debt I may never be able to pay.”

His eyes were still closed. I slowly climbed the bed. He pretended like he did not notice until I started moving his top.

“You have finally changed your mind about your promise to Grandma?”

“I just want to see, please.”

He opened his eyes and stared at me for long. Then, he raised his T-Shirt himself. I had an appendix operation when I was sixteen and the mark was still there but Ghost’s own was looking more swollen and glaring and long and many, like up to five different stitches like someone sowing a cloth torn from different sides. It was still a bit milk color not yet skin color. I placed my finger on one of the stitches, the most glaring and longest. I started tracing it, tears already flowing from my eyes.

“Does it hurt?”

He did not answer, he just stared at me. I bent my head and kissed it making him jerk. I felt the shock too, it electrified my body and sent liquid flame to my unmentionable part. I raised my head to apologize but he suddenly pulled me to him making me rest on top of him. He claimed my lips without warning and I surrendered to the flame.

Same way he suddenly claimed my lips was same way he stopped pulling me gently away from him. I heard him swearing making me more inflamed. I gave myself brain and climbed down from the bed while struggling to stable my fast breathing. His stomach was still open and the scars were staring at me.

“I’m sorry, you are supposed to be mad and pissed off, I don’t deserve your presence, I’m sorry.”

I started crying, I felt all kinds of emotions I could not explain. He pulled me back to the bed and placed my faced on his neck while rubbing my back.

“I’m more grateful Emmanuella. I thought I would be late, if I had taken the time to pick my other gadgets I would have been late. At that moment, every second was important. I was happy I was right on time. I wouldn’t have been able to take it if you were shot, if I was a second late. I could not safe your family and I am sorry Emmanuella.”

“No, don’t make it about you, I’m the one at fault. I read the story, you were the one Musa called the messenger of death. I should have read and followed up on everything, I shouldn’t have listened to the DPO. It was all my fault. You were the one who gave them justice.”

“I was the one who couldn’t safe them.”



“Just stop it, please. I’m the one apologizing here. Just be normal and accept I’m at fault. Your sister told me, she said you were placed on induced sleep. You suffered too, I’m sorry. I should have checked the file, I should have been mad at the bandits not the whole tribe. I’m sorry” I cried.

“Okay, so how do I do it?”

I raised my head.

“Do what?”

“Act like I’m normal for once, cause I have never been normal, you have to show me.”

“You should at least accept I was wrong, then forgive me.”

“I accept you are wrong and I forgive you. Gosh being normal sucks.”

I could not hold my laughter. He was real.

“Can I see your face now?”

“No.”

I raised my head to look at him.

“Why?”

“Marry me Emmanuella.”

That was not how a normal human being proposed but he was not normal.

“I can’t marry who I don’t know.”

“Okay, then tonight” he said standing up.

“You will show me your real face tonight?”

“No, something else.”

“I don’t understand” but he had already opened the door.

I just did not understand what he meant, he just left me hanging.

I stood up and opened the door but did not see him, I only felt his presence.

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GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

I ran down to the gate but did not see him, I stopped feeling his presence as soon as entered my room making me to panic. I took my phone and sent him a message.

‘I can’t feel you.’

I was so relieved when my phone blinked almost immediately.

‘Cause I’m far away and you are panicking. I love you  
Emmanuella.’

He was right, I never noticed it until his message. I could not  
feel his presence anytime I panicked.

I read the message for a long time fearing it would disappear. I  
checked the time and it was just past 9:00 AM. It was going to  
be a long wait.

I went to the kitchen to wash but it was neat and sparkling. It  
was then I noticed my room was also clean. I opened my  
wardrobe and it was neatly arranged and my bag was zipped. I  
became afraid to enter my bathroom, it was not clean and I  
would not be able to write about the other stuffs. I slowly  
opened the door and breathed a sigh of relief, he did not enter  
the bathroom. I immediately started cleaning the bathroom and it  
took me thirty minutes to make it sparkling clean.

Then I went to wash all my dirty clothes. I called Ken after but he did not pick. I sent him a message begging him to pick his call but he still did not pick. I sent him a video begging him to talk to me, I did not want to lose him. I just did not understand how the mind worked, there was no way I would chose him over Ghost but I still felt hurt that he was not talking to me.

I ate, watched films but the first time, I watched something other than Zombie movies. I watched the first two Fast and Furious and cried because I had read online that Paul Walker was dead but I also knew it was because I had lost a friend. I kept looking at the time wishing it to run faster. I did not want to text Ghost because I was afraid it would not go, I just wanted to wait for the dark.

My phone started ringing around 6:00PM, I rushed at it thinking it was Ghost but it was Ken, I was even more excited as I picked the call. There was no sound from his side.

“Hi Ken” I said after waiting for him to speak which he did not.

There was still no answer.

“Ken please talk to me.”

“Ella, I don’t understand why you are still calling me. It’s better if we go our separate ways.”

“But I told you my heart belongs to him, I told you I want you as a friend.”

“And I respected your decisions but you have to also understand me Ella. I love you with all my heart and I’m hurt not angry with you.”

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry I used you.”

“You did not Ella. What hurts me more is I can’t be angry with you. I’m no match for Ghost, I was with you throughout your living dead mood and I understand...”

“Wait I never told you his name.”

He did not answer.

“Ken.”

“I spoke with him... you are not supposed to know, he called me and we talked.”

“Talked about what?”

“It’s guy’s talk Ella. I’m sorry I made you feel bad but that was not my intention. You have no reason to feel bad but it does not change the fact that you are the first girl I fell in love with and I lost to a better guy.”

“So are we still friends?”

I could hardly breathe waiting for his reply.

“Yes Ella, I will try my best. Friends.”

“Thank you Ken, thank you.”

“Take care of yourself. I warned him not to mess up, I will be watching. I will call you later.”

“Okay.”

He cut the call and I felt tears run down from eyes. I wished I knew what they talked about, I was definitely going to ask Ghost.

My phone blinked at 8:00PM.

‘I’m waiting outside.’

I was ready and standing by the door. It took me less than a minute to get to the gate. He was on the bike looking tall and sexy like he always did. I was just so excited, I ran and threw myself against him.



“Can you be like this forever, I like the new you” he said.

“I’m just happy to see you” I climbed the bike and held his waist, resting my face on his back.

“I would like to go somewhere with you one day.”

“Where?” he asked but his voice was husky.

“The hill, I never knew there is a hill until I went to the river, it was so beautiful...”I paused.

I remembered what happened at the river. He did not respond but ignited the bike and sped off. I closed my eyes and enjoyed the warmth of being close to him and thinking of the best way to thank God for bringing him back to me. The ride was not smooth at all. He kept bumping on what I did not know, not the way it felt when we had always gone to the river. He halted the bike making me raise my head. It was not too dark because the

moon and stars were in attendance. I could see my environment without a torch. We were not at the river, we were rather very close to the hill. I looked at him and his silicone mask. He was operating his goggle.

“Okay, I got the path” he said before I could ask where we were going to.

He was such a romantic guy, he was taking me to the hill.

“Thank you” I said hugging his back.

“I hope you will feel the same when I hug you back. I don’t remember telling you I’ve lost my current.”

I started laughing knowing fully well what he meant. He ignited the bike and I closed my eyes again and held him very tight as I felt the bike rising. It was like we were going to fall. I started panicking and felt relieved when the bike stopped.

“Okay you can come down now” I raised my head.

“Wow. Wow wow” I shouted jumping down.

“Take.”

I grabbed the goggle and raised my head after putting it on. The sky was so beautiful and it was like I was on top of a mountain overlooking the valley. We were not on settlements. Just some grasses that were sparsely spaced and not too bushy. I turned round as I looked up with my hands outstretched.

“You will soon start staggering if you continue turning.”

I stopped and looked at him. He was setting the tent. My eyes caught the river. I could see the river from where I was standing. I was enveloped with nature.

I followed him in after he had set the tent.

“Shoot, what is the something else. I am not going to marry you except I see your face.” I had been waiting patiently for night to come to know.

He did not answer but stared at me.

“Stop staring and me like that.”

We were sitting facing each other.

“Like what.”

“Like you want to pounce on me.”

“You have no idea of the thoughts going through my head Ella, pounce on you is too light a word.”

I felt heat all over my body. I hoped I survived the night without breaking my promise to grandma. I bent my head feeling shy that he must have seen my reaction to his statement.

“I want to make you legally mine Ella. Marry me.”

“Things doesn’t work like that Saheed, your sister called you Saheed.”

“How do things work?” He ignored the name I called him and focused on the first thing I said.

“I need to see your face first, let’s start with that.”

“I want to show you my face but I can’t.”

“Why?”

“Because you need to learn how to use your gift.”

“I don’t understand.”

“My Kung Fu master once told us about an ancient Chinese belief. He said an invisible red thread connects those who are destined to meet, regardless of time, place, or circumstance. The thread may stretch or tangle, but will never break. Most times, they recognize each other when they meet. Ella we are

connected by that invisible thread and your body recognised me immediately we met. Your body is powerful and you need to see it as a gift and learn how to use it.”

“Are you saying I’m not normal?”

“Every human being has a distinctive feature, some are minor while some are major but only a few percent discover that thing that makes them unique and a fewer percent see it as a gift, while most disregard it. Your body is very powerful and it has a voice, you need to learn how to listen to it.”

“So you want me to accept your marriage proposal and marry you without seeing who I’m marrying?”

“No, I want you to allow your body speak, accept the proposal based on what your body says and you will see me. You need to trust your body and I promise you will be happy you did.”

“I don’t want to lie or pretend to you. My body is already screaming yes, my body even wants to be enclosed by you. I feel we are right now far from each other and my body cannot imagine a life without you, but it sounds scary. I have to accept to marry who I can’t see, what if you are ugly?”

But he started laughing.

“So you are no longer about the tribe but my face. If you see me and discover I’m not as handsome as Ken, then I can wear a mask and you can pretend you never saw me, but can you just listen to your body, trust that your body knows you will accept my real face. Emmanuella, you need to use this gift.”

“I don’t know, it’s scary.”

“That’s why I have to introduce you to my world. I want to let you see how my world looks like, see it and decide if you can

live there, that should be enough to convince you and remove your fears.”

“How? You are taking me to meet your family? I don’t think that’s a good idea. They hate me.”

“No they don’t.”

“They do Ghost, your sister will never accept me, she...”

He pulled me to him and made me sit between his legs.

“I know, somehow, I was aware of what was happening around my environment. I was relieved when Wild told you to run. I wouldn’t have survived if she had hurt you. I’m sorry for her behavior, she is also very protective of me.”

“I hope you did not quarrel with her?”

“No. We quarrel a lot but not concerning something like this.”



I did not know the answer to expect but I just did not like his answer.

“So you would have been okay if she had killed me?”

“No, I would have not survived to start with. The reason I fought to stay alive was because of you Emmanuella. Everyone has a way of reacting to situations. I’m happy Mark stopped her.”

“She came to the river yesterday...”

“I also know that. I read your message and it was same for me. Life was meaningless without you. I am happy you sent that message because it was what prompted Wild to send them to check up on you. I was not allowed to move out, even now they are still concerned that I left. I only survived because I could still monitor your activities.”

“How?”

“Your phone and my eyes in the sky?”

“What’s that?”

“Emmanuella, the important thing is that they were there in time to save you. I would have made their death painful if they had touched you.”

He had ignored my question again.

“But you don’t get it. She almost attacked me again and she crushed the little hope I was hanging on.”

“I know Emmanuella, she was still angry because I wanted to come when you sent that message. I was restrained and they were sent instead of me. She was pissed off because I’m still not hundred percent back but they all gave up restraining me after you landed at your school health service and after I told them

how much you mean to me. I had kept it away from them because I wanted to tell them on the day I will introduce you.”

“I don’t understand what you mean by how much I mean to you.”

But he still ignored me.

“My sister wants to meet you and apologize and give you back your hand band.”

“I don’t believe you.”

He kissed my hair.

“Tell me more about yourself.”

“No, you said you were going to introduce me to your family, today is about you.”

“I know what I said, but first tell me more about your dream.”

I paused to gather my thoughts.

“I just had only one dream and still have it, just a bit confused if I will still pursue it.”

“Tell me.”

“Ibrahim wanted to become a lawyer and help the poor by defending them in court. After he died, it became my dream to fulfill his dream. I wrote Jamb thrice but always got another course. I had to accept the last one because I wanted something to distract me, but with the mind to switch to law. But I’m feeling it’s time to let Ibrahim go.”

“Why?”

“Are you seriously asking why?”

“Yes, cause I don’t know.”

“It’s because I met you, you filled my emptiness more than Ibrahim. I have not yet decided but that was my dream, I have no other...”

I paused.

“Now I want to be with, just confused about the part where you are still a stranger.”

He did not reply but brought out a big tablet from his legendary back bag. He inserted something into both my ears.

“It sounds better with two ears.”

He played a video and gave me the tab to hold.

“Meet my family and my world. I am about to show you my weakness, I will rather show you my face than show you my world when I’m not sure if you will want to be part of it. But I’m doing this because you have to know the only reason I don’t

want to show you my face is because you must learn to allow your body speak. This is like revealing my nakedness to you, I'm giving you the only weapon you can use to kill me Emmanuella.”

He had paused the video when he was talking. He played it again.

The first thing I saw was what looked like a hospital room.

“That’s one year and some months ago. The arrival of AI, the first of her kind.”

The room was large but the masculine filled room was making it look crowded. I could see their faces, unlike that night when events clouded my sight. There was a lady resting her back on the bed. One of the huge men was carrying the baby

“That’s the dad.”

I turned to look at him.

“This huge man is married to this lady?”

He chuckled.

“Beast you have been staring at her for like thirty minutes, what’s up?”

I was sure that was Wild.

“Yes he is Wild.”

He was different from Beast. Beast was fair but Wild was dark.

They were all surrounding the baby. I tried to locate Ghost, he must have forgotten he was there but I was disappointed, his face was blurred.

“Well done.”

“Thank you” he replied my sarcasm.

“She is mine right?”

Beast also had a baritone voice but it sounded emotional.

“No, she fell from the sky.”

It was the dark and beautiful lady on the bed who replied him.

She was Hausa. Her face said it all.

It was as if the camera was placed to oversee the room but shifted like someone was videoing them. I wonder how they did it.

“Beast can I?”

“Fast” Ghost said before I could ask.

I was right, he was neither huge nor lanky, muscled and in-between, his brown T-shirt clung to his muscled chest. He was the only one with little beards. He was also dark.

“Don’t touch her” Beast warned.



“Wild do something, which kind wahala be this?” Ghost said.

(Don’t forget twenty nine and thirty have also been published)

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

Hope you’ve read chapter twenty eight, if not, just scroll down and read before reading twenty nine.

## CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

The door opened and a man, a lady and a girl who should be around eight or nine years entered. The man was a bit bigger than Fast, he and the lady were dark in complexion but the girl was fair.

“Baby AI is here” the girl shouted running to the crowded area.

“Hey stop there. Not even gotten to our turn. Stay on the line Pup” Mark said.

“Mark” I said.

“I don’t like the way you just said his name.”

“If you are not as handsome as him, forget it, I will switch to him.”

“That’s when you will have issue with my sister.”

I wanted to answer him but I was more captivated with the video playing before me because Beast placed his last finger on the tiny girl’s hand. I could see her now. She was damn attractive, I felt like taking her away from the screen.

“Hello Abigail Ifeoma, you just became the first female to be born in the history of the hunter’s lineage. You are the first of your kind, the most precious gift I never dreamt of having.

Welcome to my world princess.”

I was not the only one shocked when the baby who looked like she was asleep opened her eyes to look at who was speaking, she grabbed his fingers and I felt it from the video. Tears started coming out of big guy eyes.

“He always talked to her as a boy every day. He discussed how he was going to train him on how to fight and control his strength because he is very strong. Even though we kept saying it was a girl, we all believed it was a boy because his family has never had a female, we even confirmed it from the oldest person in his clan. We were so shocked to hear it was a she. Fast had to fly us down immediately only to get there and we are not allowed to carry her because Beast kept staring at her.”

I listened to Ghost as I watched the tears fall from his face. The door opened and a man and woman came in. The man had two boys on his shoulder.

“You guys came too soon” the lady said.

“The one with a black band is Geoffrey Ifeanyi, the second one with blue band is George Ebuka, simply GG.”

“They are so cute. It’s not right for two fair and pretty people to marry. That’s corruption.”

But Ghost laughed.

“What is going on?” the girl asked.

“Her name is Cindy and that guy is Jason, the one you think is more normal than me.”

“And I was correct.”

“I am not going to argue with you. Just watch.”

“Exactly what I wanted to ask but seeing Beast crying is more interesting.”

“That’s Wolf and his Wife is Mena” Ghost said.

“The one you stole his wedding ring?”

“He said nothing can ever prevent his wedding from starting on time.”

“And you have to pickpocket the ring.”

“Which I’m still apologizing for, he just have anger in his blood.

“But his daughter is fair.”

“Not Mena’s daughter and it’s a very long story.”

Somehow I could relate. I knew how I came into this world.

“Major can you use your power to tell Beast he has exhausted his time? Wild has failed us. Mum do something. I want to carry AI” Sabrina said.

“That’s Hadiya” Ghost said.

I did not need him to tell me Hadiya was his mum and Major his instructor. Hadiya was sitting on a chair close to the lady on the bed. She was laughing. There was a very striking resemblance between Sabrina and Hadiya, only difference was Sabrina looked a younger version of Hadiya. Hadiya was wearing hijab. She was the Fulani while Major should be Hausa. He was dark.

“And stop watching Beast be this emotional? Please exercise patience because what I’m seeing now is priceless. Beast crying, unbelievable. Even Ahmed did not cry like this” Hadiya said.

It was then I realized the lady on the bed was also crying and Hadiya was cleaning her face. I just knew there must be something more to the tears.

“Okay, time up Beast. Look. Your wife is also crying” Wild said carrying the baby from his hand and he did not resist this time.

He went to meet his wife and wrapped her with his big body.

There were so many things to capture with my eyes.

“Hey sweetheart, I hope you are ready to keep Beast on his heels?” Wild said touching her cheek.

She just stared at Wild with her pretty big eyes. She was fair but too early to conclude on her color. She was so cute with her potty cheek and pointed nose.

“My turn?” Fast said but Wild shifted away.

“Okay Wild pass her” Major said carrying the baby from Wild. He had their accent.

GG were already down, they could walk. They were moving to the crowd. I noticed Geoffrey had hand gloves on both hands.

“They are almost nine months in this video” Ghost said.

Fast picked George up and raised him to see the baby as she was being passed round.

“Hey I want to see AI too” Pup said.

“Her name is Pearl.”

I nodded. She was trying to push her dad who was obstructing her.

Jason picked Geoffrey and raised him high to look at the baby.

Ghost was the one with her. I felt like taking the baby from him.

Fast brought George very close to AI and George held her hand, then started laughing.

“You are now big brother George, no more a baby, we have a new baby now.”

He held her hand again and refused to let go.



“You think Geoffrey will want to hold her too?” Wild asked Jason.

Cindy carried the baby from Ghost who did not want to let go.

“Jason let Geoffrey” Cindy said going close to Jason.

Jason looked at Cindy, then nodded. That was when I noticed that all the others had been talking, except for Jason. I was yet to hear his voice. He pulled the right hand glove off Geoffrey.

Geoffrey had an android phone on the other hand.

“Geoffrey, see, baby. You want to hold her? Hold her” Cindy said taking the baby closer but Geoffrey shrunk away.

“Jason why don’t you carry her” Cindy said but Jason looked like he was told to dip his hand in a bucket of broken sharp glasses.

“Just try, I’m here, you can hug me after” Cindy encouraged.

I was expecting Ghost to explain like he had been doing but he remained silent. In fact everybody became silent, all watching Jason. Even Mena who was whispering something to Pearl stopped. I saw Ghost wearing a hand glove. He went to carry Geoffrey. Geoffrey did not resist, he just smiled like his identical brother. They were just little clones of their dad.

“Jason come on” Cindy encouraged.

Jason pulled off the hand glove in his hands and carried the baby. She was wrapped in a white baby blanket looking all cute. He stared at her like he was looking at a rare stone. He slowly held her hand but there was nothing unique about it. I was thinking he had superpowers with his hand. But there was shock on his face and others too. Jason held her other hand and touched her cheek.

“Oh my God” he spoke for the first time.

“Nothing?” Cindy asked surprise showing on her face.

“It feels like I’m holding GG, and my heart is also leaping.

Wow” he said kissing her hand and carrying her to sit on a chair close to the bed.

“Wow, welcome AI, you are really first of your kind” Jason said touching her cheek while the baby stared at him.

Nobody had spoken yet.

“Ghost bring Geoffrey” Jason said.

Ghost brought Geoffrey close to the chair.

“Geoffrey see, you can touch her. See, no gloves, I’m okay. It’s baby. You are a big brother” Jason said demonstrating.

Geoffrey really understood him. He had refused when his mum told him to but he was stretching his naked hand to hold AI’s hand. He held her hand and smiled. I smiled without knowing

why I was smiling. The noise started with all kinds of exclamations. Ghost dropped Geoffrey same time Fast dropped George close to the chair. The twins gathered the baby. George kissed her cheek, while Geoffrey held her hand like he was holding a precious gift.

“Wow, this is unbelievable, I’m so happy” Jason said.

“You want to find out if AI made it permanent?” Wolf asked coming to meet them.

Pearl was already there holding her other hand. AI was staring at Geoffrey while he smiled at her.

“No” Jason answered.

“Okay, it’s my turn” Wolf said but Jason stopped him.

“After thirty minutes” Jason said and they started laughing. The video stopped.

“No, I am not through” I protested.

“Not through with what?”

He was laughing, my face must be looking funny.

“I’m not true with the video.”

“But that’s the end now.”

“What’s wrong with Jason?”

“There is nothing wrong with him, he is abnormal like us.”

“Okay what is abnormal about him?”

“He is partially autistic.”

“He doesn’t look like one. There is a way they look. I’ve watched many autistic films.”

“That’s is why he is autism is partial. He just doesn’t look like them, that was why his parents, even though both were doctors could not figure out why he always screamed.”

“Were?”

“They are late.”

“But not all have contact issue.”

“That is what I said before. But he has contact issue, he hates bright colors and noise.”

“But he is married.”

“Yeah, somehow he found the one threaded to him. He is better now. He can talk unlike before when he spoke once in months and just a word. As long as his miracle, Cindy is around, he can talk but not touch. He can also hold his twins without feeling the wrong sensation but that was all till AI was born. At first, he

believed Wolf and held Hadiya's hand. Next thing, we saw him grabbing Cindy. Cindy had to use her hand to rub the hand he used to contact Hadiya. His case is very rare, and his group hardly have a normal life but Major made him into a lethal weapon. He met him when he paid a visit to his school in search of computer gurus. He was able to convince him to join the military when he discovered Jason could easily hit a target. He subjected him to a lot."

"What of Geoffrey?"

"Another weird and rare case. Normally autism according to researches, shows itself from around eighteen months, some two years, some later than that and it is not heredity. But you know medicine sometimes is a scam. Medicine cannot explain me or Mark who can stay underwater for long without coming to the surface."

I remembered what he had done at the river.

“Wolf is hyper alert, that is, his sixth sense is overdrive. He senses danger from afar, he can sense emotions and use it to read what your mouth will never say. His father already started calling him Wolf even before he joined the military. Then his daughter has same thing. Fast is unique in his way. Nobody taught him how to drive anything including a helicopter. When we went for training in USA, he flew their fighter jet they said required years of training to fly.”

“You are serious?”

I just had to pause him there.

“Have you heard of calendar brain?”

I shook my head.



“At least that one is a bit known. Medicine also has no explanation. It’s rare but some people are born with the ability to tell you a date without checking the Calendar. Like if you mention any date from any year, they can tell you the day. Major has that but he did not transfer to Sabrina, don’t know why. Major developed it to his strength. His brain is a diary and he hardly talks because he is observing, recording and saving. That’s what prompted him to develop a team like him. As for Sabrina, she is just skilled with reflex and acrobat, then she is very balanced. She can land from a high place and won’t move an inch.”

“I had a glimpsed, with heels.”

He chuckled.

“Is that the death dance?”

“Nope. That was a child’s play.”

I really did not want to know the death dance.

“Beast is very strong. It is legendary to his family, traced back to his three great grandfather. No female was also recorded but they were immersed with natural strength and they hunted deadly animals, Beast is the first to hunt humans. The rock he moved during his set’s USA training is still unmoved by anyone. Wild is in a world of his own. I can’t explain him so don’t ask me. Just know he can make you feel what he wants you to feel and he uses your mind to decide what to do with you. Let’s just skip him please. You already know my own. That’s is my world Ella. My family and my world.”

I understood what he meant by giving me a weapon I could use against him. But I still had questions.

“You have not yet explained Geoffrey, he is already on gloves.”

“I said his case is super rare. Jason was very ready to handle it in case any of the twins took after him. It is not supposed to be hereditary but from the day he was born, he cried a lot and it became worse as he grew. Jason made anyone carrying him to wear gloves and that was how he stopped crying. They are now two years and AI is a year plus. George can talk and you will hear him clearly but Geoffrey does not talk except with his dad and it’s non-verbal communication. I named it autistic language. He can communicate with figures using a tab and he loves solving puzzles and numbers attract him. You won’t believe but that dude can communicate with numbers. You know some computer languages are in numbers.”

I nodded. They gave me headaches. My laptop once started showing numbers when I’d switched it on. I could not

understand anything. I had to take it to be fixed and the guy said I pressed escape key while switching it on.

“Just take something like that, place it before him, especially if the programming is not in order. He will rearrange it for you in minutes and God help you if the rearrangement will harm or destroy something. He crashed Fast’s computer because Fast wanted to test him. He also recovered Wolf’s files by reordering the numbers in his system. Jason found a way to get to him through that. He teaches him and he understands because he uses puzzle to teach him.”

“So he is like his dad?”

“Or worse because Jason was not even that good at ten. Wild believes Jason is the influence here.”

“And he can’t talk.”

“No he can talk, just doesn’t. We were worried until AI fell and Geoffrey said sorry and asked her if she was feeling pain. I thought they switched their band but George also spoke. He just doesn’t want to talk. They always act like AI big protective brother. You won’t be allowed to touch AI except they give you a pass.”

I started laughing.

“I can just ignore them if I fail their screening.”

“They will fight you.”

He was serious.

“They are just two.”

He took the tab from me.

“Watch the last video I wanted to show you about my world.”

I took the tab from him.

“This is from yesterday. We have eyes everywhere in the compound, to monitor them. This is a typical morning in our second fortress. Our first is in Abuja. That’s where I have been but our second fortress is like our reality show house because every morning they lighten up our day, no matter where we are, we just connect and watch them life.”

It was true, the compound I dreamt about. Two houses, one bigger than the other, a swimming pool, a mini gym.”

“The orchard is behind the small house” he whispered to my ears sending heat to my body.

“And the tunnel?”

“You can’t see it now, it’s behind the mini boxing ring. It leads to Wolf’s house. The smaller house is Beast’s house the other one is Jason’s house.” But the both houses were big just that Jason’s house was bigger than Beast’s house.

The twins were running out of the bigger house. There were so many children cars. They climbed one each and started driving but stopped when they saw AI running out from the other house door, there was no one with her. She was so cute, fair like her dad but she did not resemble him nor her mum.

“She took after her grandmother” Ghost answered my unasked question.

She was not slim, not fat, not chubby but potty cheeks with that big beautiful clear eyes. Her hairs were packed into three balls. She ran to them. They hugged her pecking her cheek.

“How are you cutie?”

“George” Ghost and I said at the same time.

He was rubbing her hair. His voice was too sharp for a two year old. A huge dog was following her. It almost looked like a wolf.

“That’s a wolf dog known as Siberian husky.”

I nodded.

“GG, AI.”

It was Pearl.

“She is ten.”

I nodded.

They all ran towards her except Geoffrey who was rubbing his face on the dog’s face. The dog was very excited.

“Puppy and Geoffrey” Pearl shouted after pecking George and AI.

The dog’s name should be puppy. They both ran to receive their hugs but Pearl was careful of where she touched Geoffrey.

There was so much love that I could feel it but most especially, I wanted to carry AI.



“Are you ready?”

Only George shouted yes but all followed Pearl including the dog. It did not take long to know what Pearl was asking about.

They followed her to a field. It was as if the camera was following them. I wanted to ask about their parents but kept quiet. I could not believe what I was seeing. They were practicing karate and screaming along with Pearl, only Geoffrey was not screaming. It was both funny and scary because they were good, although AI was making me laugh. AI was really following along with her cute white and pink pajamas and very balanced. But Pearl was something else. She reminded me of one film I watched, Karate kid acted by Will Smith's son. The camera moved away from them and I saw the adults working on the garden. I could glimpse the orchard although not fully. There was a gate leading to a vast yam farm. Beast, Jason, Wolf and

one elderly lady were clearing weeds from the ridges. There was also melon, beans and groundnut plants.

“That’s Beast second mother.”

“I did not see her at the hospital.”

“She was preparing food for Beast’s wife. Beast loves farming especially yam and the garden is not big enough so Jason had to release more lands. Before you ask, his parents left vast amount of land. There is so much to do every morning.”

(Don’t forget chapter thirty is out.)

<https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

(Hope you've read chapters twenty eight and twenty nine? If not just click on page and scroll down.)

## CHAPTER THIRTY

The camera left them and moved to the garden where the ladies were working. There were so many vegetables including tomatoes and pepper. There was a small poultry close to the garden. I wished the camera would move to the orchard because I love the little I was seeing. In fact, I wanted to go there and join them to pick ripe tomatoes and fill up sand in the bag containing the nursery plants. They were discussing but there was no audio, seemed to be intentional. I could still see the gate connecting the garden to the farm. The camera went back to the children and they were sitting down on the field. AI was sitting between GG, their hands on her shoulder while the dog was sitting close to Geoffrey who had his other hand on his neck.

They were watching Pearl. I glued my eye to the tab screen because it was no film trick, it was real. Karate kid would have to give me back the data I used to download it because this girl was something else. She made me to remember those Chinese movies where they pose, legs and hands crossed, then they would start displaying their fighting skills. She was moving with grace and at a point, it looked like she was dancing and leaping but she had a plank sword with her.

“Are you sure she is ten?”

“What do you think?”

“I feel weak watching her. Please I want to learn how to fight. I can’t imagine her at eighteen.”

“Not only you. I think we might have contributed to making her this lethal but she is passionate with what she does. She has passed stage three of karate long ago, she is getting better with

Sabrina's death dance and I can bet my head that if cult groups like Boss were to face her one on one, she would beat them. They can't fight, just feel powerful because they possess weapons."

But he was going too far, she was good but defeating twenty guys was not possible. But I did not have the time to argue with him because I saw Wolf coming to the field, he had things that looked like stones on his hands and without warning he stoned his daughter. I was horrified by his actions but something was wrong. She was backing him but she deflected it with her sword. He released more and all the stones in his hands but no one touched her to my relief. She ran to his outstretched hands and got a bear hug and a kiss.

"What just happened?"

“Were you listening to all I had said? I told you they have sixth sense. This is nothing. To hit Wolf and his daughter by surprise is a great achievement. She can deflect all that with her eyes closed. She has been trained to see with her sixth sense and deflect danger without looking. So she can fight someone without turning back to protect herself from another because she would know and dodge without seeing. She has been training since she was seven. Forget the age, she is a lethal weapon and Wolf is not taking any chances.”

I had paused the video, I continued watching. AI was running to Wolf when he dropped Pearl. Wolf picked her up and threw her up scaring the shit out of me but AI was squealing, hands outstretched, legs shaking from being excited as she fell back. Wolf caught her and threw her up again and she squealed more.

“Not all babies fear height, it’s their ritual.”

I paused the video because it made me to remember something.

“Wait, GG and AI. They were the ones Fast wanted you to pickpocket for a ride?”

I was horrified when he nodded.

“Don’t tell me you did?”

“Yes of course. Immediately I dropped you I picked them from their rooms. Alarms don’t work on me. Pearl was also part of the plan. It was a fun ride. Their mums were the only ones horrified when we started a live video but they later calmed down because the creatures they were worried about were squealing with excitement. They’ve always refused Fast taking them to Abuja, they preferred being driven by their husbands because they believed they will be terrified but our plan worked because the children were so happy. George was even screaming for more when we came back while AI refused to come down, she clung

to Fast. In conclusion, only the women are normal, the children did not take after them.”

I stared at him as I tried to believe those children enjoyed a ride with Fast but he was laughing. I turned and continued the video because I had nothing to say to him.

The ladies were coming out from the garden carrying baskets of vegetables. GG ran to Beast’s wife, then Mena. There was so much love in the air and it was intoxicating. Wolf dropped AI and attended to the dog who was barking excitedly around him.

“Are you sure he is not a descendant of a Wolf?”

But he started laughing.

“Funny, we have asked him that same question. We told him he needs to do a paternity test using his brother because his dad is late, there might have been a switch when he was born.”



I turned my attention back to the video just in time to see Jason lifting AI off the ground. He was not on gloves. He rubbed his face on her face or rather they both rubbed their faces together. She was really the center of attraction and I just knew she was going to be very special to Jason. Beast and the elderly lady walked to the field carrying sugar canes. I did not see it in the farm. He was bare chested and I felt shy watching, I did not know why. Jason dropped AI to also greet the dog. Suddenly, I could hear them. Beast squatted as AI came to him. She was so small in front of him.

“Who am I seeing?” Beast asked.

She answered him making me laugh. She spoke in children’s gibberish language but I just knew she was saying AI.

“And who is AI?” and she answered for a long time describing what I don’t know. I had to pause the video to laugh like the others in the video and to ask what she was saying.

“Please Ghost what is she saying with all seriousness?”

“AI is Abigail Ifeoma Justice, the one and only princess of the hunter’s family, first of her kind after which no other.”

I started laughing.

“Who taught her that?”

“Who else, from day one Beast always said it to her and she could mutter it from nine months.”

I just could not get enough, I had never felt this elated. I pressed play to see what would happen next. Ghost had to do the interpretation.

“And who is Justice?” Beast asked.

“Beast.”

“And who is Beast?”

“King of the Beast, with a queen and one and only princess.”

“Who is the princess?”

“Me” she shouted jumping up so excited.

Beast picked her up and gave her a kiss, then threw her up.

“I love you so much” Beast said as he caught her.

“I love you daddy” she said.

I heard that one clearly and it felt so interesting and wonderful to see such big guy treasure his daughter so much. That girl might never know the meaning of hate.

“Halima you don’t want to tell him?” Wolf asked grabbing Mena and pulling her to him. It was then I noticed she was pregnant, not too big but definitely pregnant.

“Is she pregnant?” I asked and Ghost nodded.

I turned back to the video in time to see Halima holding her stomach. There was something about her name but I could not place it.

“Tell me what?” Beast asked.

“That you should stop deceiving AI, there is going to be more princesses and princes. Stop deceiving yourself Beast.”

“AI is that true? Does daddy need another princess?”

She shook her head, it made me believe that had happened many times for her to know what to do.

“But I think I may be preg...”

Beast pulled Halima to him before she could finish her statement.

“Young lady, stop joking. There is no more. I have the treasure I need.”

She was laughing.

“AI, don’t you want another princess or a prince? Tell daddy you want a prince.”

“No” she shouted shaking her head.

“Two against one, you lost Obim. One is already a handful, I am not dying before my time” Beast said kissing her.

“Wolf I can’t wait for John, let me see how you manage” Beast said dropping AI to raise GG. He placed them on his shoulders.

He was not wearing hand gloves but I noticed he was careful where he held Geoffrey.

“Unlike you, I am doing fine with Pearl and I am not afraid of giving birth to myself” Wolf replied rubbing Mena’s stomach.

The video stopped just like how the other ended suddenly

“I don’t understand, what is scaring about having kids, these ones here make me feel like having one of mine.”

“Because you are seeing the wonderful side. You have no idea how difficult it is handling hyper active children like GG and AI.

They are handful. I can’t start listing all the crimes they’ve committed. AI keeps lifting heavy things. Jason always study her strength progression to know what to keep her away, or is it climbing and operating gadgets by GG? Most times they are one step ahead of us.”

“This is my world Ella, my family. The others are in Abuja but you’ve already seen them and they can’t wait to meet you” he continued but something clicked.

“Wait, Halima. I know that name. I read about one Halima that was connected to my family’s murder.”

“Same person.”

I turned to look at him.

“How is that possible? I read that she was sexually abused for more than fourteen years? How is she married and so happy and how?”

He did not answer but laid on the mat, face facing the sky. I shifted away from his legs and laid down by his side.

“Cause she got connected to the one threaded to her.”

“It does not tally, this is not up to three years ago but she is married and has a child and so happy like nothing happened.

And she married that huge guy.”

“It’s a very long story Emmanuella. What I can tell you is, she is happy because she has experienced opposite of happy. Not just her, we all have stories to tell. Join my world and let her help heal you.”

I turned to look at the sky. I immediately understood the importance of the tent being transparent. The sky was beautiful with lots of twinkling stars and the moon looking like it was about to retreat.

“Your world is more than my fantasy and it feels too good to be real. I never thought I would have a happily ever after.”

“There is no happily ever after Ella.”

“Is that not what you were showing me?”

“I was showing you my world and its good side. It’s not like that all the time.”



“You are talking about what Halima went through?”

“Not just Halima, all of us.”

“I don’t understand.”

“George, Geoffrey, Ebuka, Ifeanyi, Abigail, Ifeoma, John, Pearl are not just names. They mean more than names to us Ella.

George is the name of my fallen brother, Geoffrey is Jason’s dad.

The twins also bear Ebuka and Ifeanyi because they were people who mean a lot to Cindy. Ifeoma is Beast’s late mum, Pearl is Pearl’s late mum’s name. John is one of Circle fallen heroes.

Abigail...”

He paused, there was pain in his voice. I found myself holding his hand.

“Abigail was my sister-in-law, Beast’s first wife.”

I sat up and looked at him. I did not even know what to say. I remembered he had talked about a drug lord killing his sister-in-law but it felt different from the first time. My mind went back to the video of Beast and Halima crying and it all made sense. Ghost gently pulled me back to the mat.

“We have lost people special to us and we have no idea of what the future holds. The common thing binding us together is that we have decided not to worry over things we have no power over. We do our best knowing our family is waiting for us to come home and knowing they can be in danger because of what we do. We do our best to stay alive but we still know that sometimes our best may not be good enough. We live everyday like it is forever. The past is gone, we learn from it and handle the pain from it, the future is undecided, that’s why the present is more important because it can decide the future. Our forever

is now and we always make good use of it. That's why I want you to be my forever because now is forever. Come to my world and heal and understand that you still have a family. Marry me Emmanuella."

I closed my eyes and tried thinking of the other alternative but I felt chills just thinking of a life without Ghost. Call me crazy or anything but my mind was already made up in the morning. I was going to do the crazy thing by accepting to marry a man I'd not seen. But I had seen enough cause my mind kept playing the videos I'd watched and all I could think of was the children, the garden, the orchard, the love and I wanted to be a part of it. My body welcomed that idea.

"I want to be your forever too. Take me to your family, make me legally yours."

"Is that a yes?"

I paused to think.

“Yes Ghost.”

I found myself wrapped in him and I remained there for a long time.

“So what next? This feels crazy that I am apprehensive.”

“It means you are still very normal” he said kissing my hair.

“What next?” I asked again.

“You will see me after you come back from Church.”

“You will be waiting for me?”

“Time to go back.”

“No Ghost, let’s settle this now” I protested.

“We have, I said after church. Just go straight to your room. The next step will be decided by you.”

“I feel something hidden in that word?”

But he chuckled and pulled me with him out of the tent.

I wanted to ask him more about how I would see him but he drove off immediately he dropped me. He did not even say a word and I had forgotten to ask him about what he had discussed with Ken. My phone blinked as soon as I entered my room.

‘See you tomorrow. I love you Emmanulla.’

‘Will you be waiting for me in my room tomorrow?’ but the message bounced back as not sent.

Please vote and comment on wattpad. Thanks

<https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

## GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

### CHAPTER THIRTY ONE

I could hardly sleep, I kept trying to imagine how his face would look like. I knew he had kept his face hidden because I would have recognised him as Hausa or Fulani but that was then and he knew it. I just did not know what was so special about revealing his face. I almost did not want to go to church the next morning, but I found my will and went for first service. I never concentrated throughout service. I just knew the time was working against me because it felt like a year before they said the grace.

I had to stop a cab to take me to Back Gate and I ran all the way to my hostel expecting to see him in my room. But there was no Ghost, just a beautiful white flared gown on my bed with a thick paper jotter and a paper. I picked the paper.

“Read what is in the jotter, very important” was written in capital letter.

There was no direction, no feeling of his presence, just the flared gown and the jotter. I felt very disappointed because he was taking this too far but I had no option but to open the jotter.

“I had to write this for you to read. Before you see my face, you have to know me” was written on the first page.

I sat down on my bed and opened the next page.

“An Intel came from Stud, a Special Force Air Force officer on undercover as a police officer that your life was in danger. Wild appointed me to keep you safe but I refused because I felt I would fail again same way I failed your family. Everybody agreed with me and Wild lost through vote and Jason was given the mission. But Wild called me and told me he knew I was somehow still struggling with the memory of your family’s

death, my first mission failure. He had helped debrief me and he knew I was still struggling to get over it. He said protecting you would be the best debriefing I could ever get because now I had the chance to redeem myself and I would feel worse if you get killed under Jason's watch. He told me I could do it, he convinced me that your family died not because I was late, and I wouldn't have given them justice if I was not in your dad's office that night. I was not even supposed to work that night, I just wanted to bug Barrister Omake's office, that is, your dad. I discovered your dad's client's plot and swung into action but they were already dead by then. Wild was able to convince me to take the mission and I agreed.

You were just a subject I was watching from a distance and the DPO had gained your trust by arresting fake assassins. But I had to get involved when the DPO changed tactics after getting



a tip that Special Force was now involved. My mission was simply to keep you safe and find a way to retrieve the file from you, there was nothing important about you until that first contact. I had never felt that way with any girl before, it was both intoxicating and distorting because I had series of headache and flashbacks. I felt a very powerful pull towards you and it was making me lose focus. I had to investigate more about you but nothing struck as special except the picture of your grandma which gave me headaches, then your childhood pictures made me feel someone was hammering my head. I wanted to talk to Wild but I could not because he could not help before then, he said no matter how he tried to help restore my memory, it was not just working except I knew my parents were dead and I knew there was something I must remember, I also knew I was Hausa and Fulani because I could speak both languages fluently. That was how far Wild could go and any more attempt knocked

me out for days. He said it was almost like something was blocking me from retrieving my memory, a very bad event which my brain was protecting me from.

I know you must be confused about the memory stuff, exactly how I had been confused for long. I had woken up on a wood in the bush with just a nicker and a bead on my hand.”

I paused, I was too tensed to continue, my brain was screaming I was thinking too far. I wanted to jump to the ending but I forced myself to continue reading.

“There was nothing else on me, just headache and a bush. I could not remember my name or anything. I walked for hours and burst out on a road but they were speaking a language I could not understand. There was a food seller not far from where I was standing. I rubbed my head as I walked to meet her because I was hungry. I opened my mouth to speak but what I

spoke sounded different from what they were speaking. The woman called me Aboki and told me to leave her store because my dirty body would prevent customers. I thought she knew me but I later realized it was what they addressed Hausas with. I could hear her Pidgin English and I could also speak. I begged her for food but she chased me away with a pestle. I was very hungry and had no idea of anything, I begged for food but no one helped. I got to a provision store selling snacks. There was no body outside and I was too hungry. I went and packed lots of biscuit and froze when I saw the owner coming from the back of the store. I was expecting her to chase me but she did not look my way and the noise I was making did not attract her my way. I left without being called.

Later, I discovered it was a trait, people only saw me when they looked and even when they looked, they just did not

suspect me and it's with their subconscious mind. I managed to survive sleeping on the streets. I also later knew I was at Okija. As time went on, I moved to different states, met with criminals who sent me on errands, including stealing for them for a roof over my head but stopped when I could not find fun in it. I kept feeling I was missing something and I was always referred to as Aboki so I had no need for a name until I met Major's family. His wife named me Saheed, meaning lucky or blessed. I had no idea if I was a Muslim or Christian. I attended Jumu'ah prayers with Major and family but stopped because it was not resurrecting any memory. I attended an Anglican church and felt headache whenever they prayed. Major Ahmed said I must have been a Christian and encouraged me to continue if it would help bring back my memory but the headache kept increasing with a flash of blood and screams so I also stopped, gave up on everything and became Saheed except, I kept feeling there was

something important I must remember. The bead became my only past and I had to pull it off when the rope became weak. I did not want to change the rope.

I met Wild on few occasions before I joined the army but we became close when I became part of the Circle same time I was called into Bar as a lawyer. I could not say why I was so keen on becoming a military lawyer. Wild offered to help restore my memory but I became his first failure, although he gave me back the knowledge that my parents and siblings were really dead as I had thought, and he also gave me back a name, Ella and that was all. In fact, he said the name might be from him because he is looking for one Ella, a girl he called his wife. Now I think about it, I guessed Wild wanted me to take the mission because he wanted me to rule you out in case my Ella was different from his. And it was because his own is Isabella and yours is Emmanuella.

Meeting you was making me feel emotions I had never felt and had no idea how to handle them. I could not tell Wild but I wanted to know you more, I wanted to find out more about you, then you gave me a ticket by offering me a deal. I knew I went against my working principle but it was an opportunity to try find out if you are connected to my past and you kept giving me headaches and pissing my brain off with your bantering about the men sent to kill you. Sorry I acted that way but you have no idea what it feels like having flashes of memory when you are close to someone and losing it just when you are about to grasp it. Seeing Ibrahim was also what put me on the edge because the flashes increased and you kept denying me knowledge I needed so much. Wild, Jason, Wolf and even Pearl noticed I was not myself but I could not tell them. I took Ibrahim because I wanted to study it, I allowed the headache and flashes and the stabbing pain to dwell while looking at it, then I heard a girl's

voice telling me to also take her bead that it would bring me luck. That was enough to know we were connected and that damn teddy bear was mine. I decided not to force the memory anymore, just continue using my deal with you and make you talk. It worked because the more you talked, the more I remembered. But I only remembered more of what you talked about. At a point, I wanted to reveal my face to you, hoping you will recognize me but there was the part where you will notice I'm Hausa first and all bets will be off, so I wanted you to find the file and when you must have realized that evil has nothing to do with tribe but individuals, I would then reveal my face. Well, things didn't go as planned and like I said before, I would have been late if I had taken the seconds to equip myself. My load was already out of the bike and just the pistol in my pocket. I have never been so destabilize that I could not think straight. I

just knew I needed to save you. I was right on time and I was grateful you did not take the bullet.

Somehow, something good came out from being in coma because I remembered everything from my age of knowledge to finding myself in a bush.

Except the part where you and Grandma saw my dead body, that was not me and I have no idea who you saw because I was already tied and sold to the business man that very day he took me away from your house, only he was not a business man but a ritualist who sold me to an Okija shrine where I was tied with others waiting to be beheaded and have my parts butchered for different purposes. My wound was treated by the native doctor, he spoke Igbo throughout but I knew it was not yet my turn. We were made to watch people being slaughtered. Babies were pounded in a mortar, there was no segregation of age or gender.



There were both old and young waiting for their turn including me. The horror killed some before their turn. We were like animals in a ranch, no bathing we defecated and urinated where we were tied to and we were chained to a pole and padlocked, no escape. One of the nights, after the man had pointed to me, indicating I was the next, I made a third attempt to escape. My hands found a bended iron and I seriously had no idea how I was able to twist and open the lock setting myself free. I set the others free and ran away with them but they soon discovered and pursued after us. It was night and their torches were very bright. They started catching us one after the other because we were too weak to run. I squatted under a tree already sure I would be caught but they walked past me without noticing me. I heard them shouting in pidgin that I was the only one missing. Later, they gave up and retreated. I stood up and walked a long time in the forest. I had missed my step and fell hitting my head

on a wood knocking me out and deleting my memory. If you research the news you will discover that place is now history, not my doing but they were discovered. It shocked Nigeria as a whole because of the numerous human skulls that were discovered at the shrine. I will track down my uncle when I'm fully fit. He has a lot of questions to answer.

I don't think I still need to tell you that the person you have been with, has been Ibrahim, your one and only Ibrahim. I told you we are linked together but you did not want to believe me, your body knew me the moment it saw me. I tried many times to signal to you that I'm Ibrahim but your mind is very stiff and unbending Emmanuella. We owe Wild a lot, that dude sees what one can never think of thinking. He said he had always had the feeling he was missing something about me from the very day I sent them a video where I was playing with Efe. I play with

children a lot but I felt connected to your step mum and dad and I had a push to visit his office that night when I was supposed to be sleeping and he said my reactions felt personal to him and also the fact your name is Ella.

Thanks for holding on to my memory but I prefer Ghost to Ibrahim. Ghost can do a lot of things Ibrahim cannot do. Thanks for still loving me and thanks to your body for recognizing me. But I'm only disappointed with you on one thing.

You say you are a Christian, you believe in God, Jesus Christ, even Angels. As a child, your mind was opened to believe me but as an adult, you are doubting my story. If you are a true Christian, why is it difficult to believe that Angels are ministering spirits and they are on assignments? When last did you read your bible? Have you not read about Angels appearing to different people in the bible? Or is bible a fiction to you? I

saw the doubt when you told me the story of Ibrahim escaping death. Lady that story is true. Jason told me yesterday that he might be Angel Mikel, the angel of war. If you believe the bible, then you should know Angels are still ministering Spirit. You need a lecture from Jason. I did not doubt you at that time not because I remembered the event but because the video you said Ibrahim had talked about is real. There are many mysteries one cannot explain but it does not mean they are not real. Jason said the video I was showed by the Angel was a projection of my destiny as a guardian, destined to help many. I can't count the number of those I've rescued and protected but I'm still baffled on why the Angel did nothing to save my parents. I asked Major about it and he said his believing it or not will not change the fact that it happened. I'm also called Messenger of death by some Hausas, and some nicknamed me the killer on the roof. That image the man on white showed me turned out to be the

day I executed those who attacked your family because I remembered the setting was the same. I guess I'm more Christian than you. Jason has promised to explain more but most importantly, my family can't wait to meet you, the girl from my past.

But I need to tell you the truth, Ken is more handsome than me, so let's not talk about Mark. I am not handsome but not ugly. If you are still willing to marry this not handsome guy, raise the white gown, take your mum's bead, take the rose flowers, pick the ring, wear the gown and come meet me at the river. And you need to stop confusing numbers, I lost my memory but I was correct with my age. I was ten and you were four when I joined you but stayed till thirteen before..."

I stopped reading and raised the gown, the bead, the bouquet and the ring were there. I found myself running to the river like my life depended on getting there immediately.

<https://my.w.tt/N1ILZbdnS7>

GHOST (The Shadow in the Dark)

## CHAPTER THIRTY TWO (THE END )

I had already entered the last street that would lead me to the path to the river when I remembered I did not wear the gown, I did not pick my phone, I did not take the flowers, I did not pick the ring, I did not lock my door and I was bare footed, just the bead on my hand. I paused and turned to run back because my things were not safe but I stopped and turned back towards the river, then I stopped again and turn to run back but turned back

towards the river. I did not care if thieves took everything in my room, running back would make Ibrahim believe I did not want to come and he would leave. In fact, the room could be bombed, I did not care. I needed to get to the river before Ibrahim changed his mind.

As I ran like my life depended on it, my mind took me back to the day we had the first contact, to that night I had dread and terror but I was no longer seeing it same way I saw things that day. Knowing he was Ibrahim made me realize I had really been protecting those that were sent to kill me. I remembered the night six of them tried escorting me to my hostel, they knew what they were doing and they were not confused, they were leading me to a dark area to kill me but Ghost had stopped them. The men at Engineering were not trying to protect me, they wanted to kill me at a dark secluded area but Ghost had

intervened, then DPO and his gang had become desperate, they had thrown caution to the wind and they had tried shooting me from any position but Ghost kept stopping them. Then that day I had sent a message to the DPO, the message had prompted him to send those men I had seen inside the Hilux because he must have felt he was losing his grasp on me. Then the day Ghost had told me to remain in my class, I understood everything now.

They had been stationed to shoot me on sight and even in the morning and at Ekosodin but Ghost had stopped them. He must have avoided my hostel for fear I would be suspicious after Ghost must have stopped them. He was not ready to take the risk that they might not succeed and I would have a lot of questions about how they knew my room and why they attacked me. The DPO was so smart and he had used my hatred for Fulanis and Hausas to play a game with me and I had fallen to his ploys. I had set Ghost up to be killed. I stopped running as fear took hold



of me. The realization was horrifying. I had really set Ghost up to be killed and the DPO had wanted me to come out because someone was waiting to kill me.

I felt chills thinking of that night. It all made sense, the reason my body fought against my mind, the reason I almost committed suicide, I almost killed the only person that mattered to me. I could almost not breathe from fear. It held me to the ground as I panted thinking of the day Ghost took bullets for me. I did not even pause to think about him being Hausa could also mean he could be Ibrahim. The name gave me back my strength because a new dread took over forcing me to increase my speed.

I could not stop thinking he was all an illusion, I could not stop thinking that I might get to the river and not meet him, I could not stop thinking that he might really be the Ghost of

Ibrahim and would disappear anytime soon. I doubled my speed and did not stop till I got to the river.

The river was clear and empty, it was on Sunday and I was not surprised indigenes were not at the river rather I was surprised Ghost was not there as he had promised. I could not even feel his presence. I was very right. He was Ibrahim's Ghost. Ibrahim was dead. I turned round hoping against hope but no sign of Ghost. I sat down on the ground and started crying. I was the foolish one to believe Ibrahim was still alive, to believe what I read. I was just confused on what to think. I just cried.

“No gown, no shoe, no flower. You look terrible Emmanuella.”

I stopped crying and turned towards the voice. I felt his presence before I saw him. He was lying down on a thick mat on the hill, just after the self-innovated bamboo chairs, by the large bamboo trees. I stood up and climbed the hill within seconds. I ran the

rest seconds to him. There was no mask but he was wearing a sunshade eye glass and relaxing lazily on the mat. He was in his normal black T-shirt and black Jeans trousers, his legendary bag by his side.

“It was just a simple thing, put on the white gown made by Halima, put on the bead and the ring. Take the flowers and come and meet me at the river and I should have added shoes, not that you even followed anything.”

I ignored him and knelt by his left side. I held the glasses and he did not stop me as I pulled it off his eyes. The recognition struck me instantly. It was like seeing your parents’ childhood picture and without being told, you can point out your dad or mum or even your grandma, only, the reverse was the case here. Even at that, I still had my doubt because I was experiencing more than the impossible. I had another place to look at, the back of his ear.

I never mentioned that to him but Ibrahim had a birth mark there. A small dark spot, the size of a pimple. I bent his right ear and checked the back. It was there, he was Ibrahim. I fell on top of him.

“Ibrahim, I can’t believe this, o my God. Ibrahim” I cried and wailed. If someone came to the river they would believe I was mourning.

My heart cried along with my voice. I was resting on top of Ibrahim, the man I did not even dream of meeting because I was sure he was dead. His uncle really had a lot to explain. He did not stop me and I did not know how long I cried on him, then started sniffing after exhausting my tears.

“Are you done?” he asked rubbing my back.

I started laughing, then started crying again.

“That’s enough tears Emmanuella, my top is drenched.”

I raised my head to look at him. He was handsome, tanned and handsome. Looked like Hausa, his eyes and straight face gave him away as Hausa but his lips were full, his nose was pointed and he had sharp cheek bones with side bears that was neatly shaven to this jaw and just sharp to touch. He was handsome by human standards.

“You are right, you are not handsome but you are also wrong because you are ugly.”

He started laughing and it was music to my ears.

“But I will still manage you, a show of appreciation for being a good bodyguard” I said rubbing his cheeks and staring at those beautiful eyes.

“I’ve always preferred your body and I know exactly what your body is saying” he said still laughing.

“Ibrahim, you are alive. You are real” I said resuming my tears.

“No, no no. That’s enough” he said in Hausa sitting down and raising me up with him.

“You’ve cried enough and yes Ibrahim is alive but you are seeing Ghost not Ibrahim” he continued in Hausa pulling me to him.

I pulled myself away and he allowed me. I looked at him again and sent a punch to his chest.

“What was that for?” he protested rubbing his chest.

“You should have told me. You should have revealed yourself, I would have recognised you. Idiot” I said punching him over and over again.

“I almost killed you without knowing you. You should have told me you lost your memory.”

I continued punching him, he held my hand and pulled me back to him.

“I was hundred percent sure and still sure that you wouldn’t have believed me Emmanuella. I confirmed it the day we visited the waterfall because all my attempts to make you think there is a possibility that Ibrahim is still alive did not work. I wanted to first clear your mindset about Hausas and Fulanis. We are peaceful and wonderful tribe. Also, I was confused because you said I was eleven when I arrived, it was not correlating with the age I knew with the help of Wild. I stayed three years with you Emmanuella. Now that I remember everything it makes sense. You always had issue with math and you never accepted I was ten, kept saying I was eleven.”

I stared at him looking guilty

“Wait, you did not complete what I wrote?”

I had no answer. He started laughing.

“What were you expecting me to do? Keep reading when I already know you are Ibrahim and you’ve already written where I can meet you?”

“Wow, so impatient just the way you are terrible with math. I won’t be surprised if you don’t remember your twenty first birthday is on Saturday.”

I did not remember, never thought about it.

He started laughing sending waves of heat to my body. I just stared at him thinking inappropriate things.



“So you did not read where I wrote about your marriage story being wrong?” he asked pretending there was no tension in the air.

“How?”

“I told Grandma I will add one year not two years. Good you went for art not science. And she later gave me an answer.”

“I know that part, you were the one who did not allow me finish my story. You kissed me.”

I shouldn't have said that because it brought more tension and awareness.

“Well Grandma already gave me the go ahead.”

“As long as you protect me, take me to school with you, take me back home with you, make sure nobody bullies me, then you can marry me when the time comes” I said smiling.

“Pride price paid in full. Thank you Grandma. I paid the bride price” he shouted.

“Stop deceiving yourself. You terrorized me, you did not protect me” I said laughing, my heart filled with joy.

“I’m sure you would have felt differently if you knew I’m Ibrahim and if you did not disobey the bible by hating your neighbors.”

I started crying because he was right, my hatred for Hausas and Fulanis crowded my view.

“I’m sorry, Ibrahim I’m sorry” I cried.

“Ghost please. Call me Ghost.”

“No I’m calling you Ibrahim, you need to know how I feel when you call me Emmanuella.”

“Okay but can you stop crying? We need to go, they are all waiting for you. Pastor Sam is waiting.”

I raised my head to look at him.

“I don’t understand.”

“Well I had planned to wed you today but Wolf refused, he has claimed you as his kid sister and now we have to go through Isoko tradition but they are all waiting to see you and Pastor Sam wants to talk to you. He has also been convinced by Wolf to follow the protocol of counselling you to find out if you really want to marry me. It’s Wolf pay back.”

“But he doesn’t know me.”

That was not what I wanted to say. I was excited one of his brother has claimed me as his sister when I was not even qualified.

“He has not just claimed you, he has contacted Mama and his family and talked about you. You will be surprised to know Mama knows Grandma.”

“Ghost you are confusing me.”

“Oh sorry. Wolf is Urhobo and Isoko. Mama, Wolf’s second mother is Isoko. Mama called that your Mum was her customer. Mama used to sell Garri at different market days. It made her travel to different communities including Ozoro. So Wolf has decided to take you under his wing and even Mama can’t wait to meet you. She was shocked to hear that Grandma is dead. And all these happened yesterday. So Wolf is going to make you move in with him and make me undergo the traditional way of getting married in his tribe. So Mama is even on her way to Benin and can’t wait to see you. She is going to be spending the holiday with her grand kids.”

I just stared at him and wondered what I had done to deserve him and his family.

“Not again. Where are the extra tears coming from? I was hoping you must have finished the one your body can produce today. Na wa.”

I started laughing. I was an emotional train wreck. I pulled him to the mat and placed my head on his chest. I just wanted to feel him.

“Emmanuella we need to go and you need to help me with Wolf.”

I did not answer, I was still trying to grasp reality.

“Emmanuella.”

“Just wait please. Wait!”

I sat up.

“Wolf wants me to move in with him?”

He nodded.

“Till we get married?”

He nodded.

“Then after?”

“We move to our own.”

“Where? I am still in school you know.”

He pulled me back to my position.

“Jason started building a three bedroom house by the side of the mini ring which is close to Wolf’s house. He said we were disturbing him. We kept leaving our base at Abuja because of the little creatures and invading his house and privacy. And Jason, well you already know. His parents were very rich and had lots of shares in many companies which Jason is making

wealth from by using his skills to know which shares would make money although under Cindy's name, he helps Cindy to predict profits and losses from the market. He gave me the keys yesterday as his gift. He will have to think of another solution to the other's invasion."

"Just like that? He just dashed you a house like that?"

"Early wedding gift. That's where I stayed in yesterday night. He told me to furnish it myself. My family is bonded by love and oneness Ella. They can't wait to meet the latest person joining our world. GG and Pearl are expecting you. I don't know if AI understands much but she has seen your picture. Let's go."

But I went back to resting on his chest. I needed time to absorb everything he just said. I remembered Ken and raised my head again.

"What did you tell Ken?"

“I thanked him for taking care of you. I told him if everything were to be normal, he would have been the one for you. I apologized that you had to meet me. I begged him to talk to you because he was hurting you by ignoring you. I told him I owe him what I can never repay and we talked about other things. Also thanked him for showing love to Jamila and her siblings. I have been waiting for you to ask.”

I did not know what to say or how to answer him but a bird flew close to the mat distracting me. Ghost pressed something on his wrist watch, then caught the bird.

“Meet my eyes in the sky.”

“O my God. It was a bird? But it looks real” I said touching the feathers.

“That’s the purpose. It led me to you many times. It has been with you for so long.”



And I never noticed. Everything started making sense.

He threw it up and it flew away.

“Emmanuella let’s go to my world.”

I rested my head back on his chest and grabbed his neck.

“Not yet, can I stay like this for just five minutes? Let me absorb everything and I also need to go back to my room.”

“For sure, I can’t take you to see them like this and your legs might have bruises. Let me check” he said trying to raise me but I refused.

“Please five minutes, please. I need to recover from my shock please. I need to believe you are real and not just real but Ibrahim. I need to believe you are not a ghost.”

“But I’m Ghost.”

“You know what I mean.”

He pulled me closer and ran his hands in my hair.

“What if I am a real Ghost?” he asked after five minutes, after he failed to raise me up.

“Then I will become a ghost’s wife and I will also become a ghost.”

(The End)

(This is as far as I can write. If you want to know what happened next, about their wedding night, well I don’t know, please I never spoil reach there. I never even spoil. Just imagine it like your wedding night. Let me experience it first. Thank you for reading Ella’s story. I hope you enjoyed it?)

The circle standalone novels is not yet over but if you have not read:

The Next Two Days- Jason and Cindy

Untamed- Beast and Halima.

Nightmares of Pearls- Wolf, Pearl and family,

Now is a good time to read and enjoy them.

Coming Next .....Let the drum beat begin.....

The next will be announced 6:AM tomorrow...

Don't forget to view, vote and comment on wattpad. It increases popularity and can be picked by wattpad which can open doors to meet movie and big publishing companies, which is my dream. That's the only way you can help me.

Don't forget: Our present is mostly due to our choices from the past and there is no forever-after, but now can be our forever. So get angry, forgive, love and be happy because happiness is a choice not a reward and mostly importantly, live today like it's your forever- Omaholly.

Thanks, love you all, including my ghost readers. You gave me the will and desire to write.

Wattpad ohhhhhh.

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