



SEXUAL PURITY

Written by Nancy Chukwuemeka

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GLOSSARY

Biko (Igbo): In the Igbo language, “Biko” is used as a polite way to say “please.”

Eh? (Igbo): In Igbo, “Eh?” is an exclamation used to express surprise, shock, or disbelief. It is similar to saying “What?” or “Huh?” in English.

Ewoo! Awolam eh! (Igbo): This expression is a strong exclamation of shock or fear in the Igbo language. “Ewoo!” is used to convey extreme surprise or distress, while “Awolam eh!” can be loosely translated to “My God!” or “Oh my goodness!” in English.

Okwu-adiro (Igbo): In Igbo, “Okwu-adiro” means “speechless” or “speechlessness.” It describes a state of being unable to speak due to shock, surprise, or extreme emotions.

Uhhh and Ehhh: These are vocalized pauses or filler sounds in speech, used when someone is hesitating, thinking, or trying to find the right words to say.

CHAPTER 1.

I lost my virginity to Charles the night before our wedding. From the moment I got my first period at the age of 13, Daddy constantly warned me to flee from sex before marriage, which is why my relationship with Emeka, Uzonna, and Bayo could not last. Neither of them could find satisfaction to their youthful hunger for sexual intimacy before marriage.

But with Charles, I did not have to explain why I had to wait until I had exchanged my wedding vows in the presence of God and my loved ones before getting sexually intimate because we held the same guiding principle. He was the youth leader of his church and was fervently devoted to God. And I was a daddy's girl, fervently devoted to making him proud.

It was the 12th of December 2022, the last day of the annual youth week convention in my church, and Mr. Charles had been invited as a guest speaker to talk on sexual purity. I remember being drawn to his gentility off the pulpit, and when he mounted the pulpit to preach, the sudden

resounding authority and fluency with which his words left his lips made my heart jump every minute I felt his eyes on me.

"I love this man, and I am getting married to him," I whispered to Maria, my best friend, who had barely heard me because, while she was focused on taking notes during his sermon, I was lost—lusting after this breath-taking man on fire for God. A combination of holy ruggedness and meekness. *"Is it too early to say I have seen my husband?"* was the only thing I scribbled in my church journal throughout his sermon.

CHAPTER 2.

"Ada, you must be joking. You are joking, right? You told everyone you were going on a special marriage retreat and would not want to be disturbed, so how did you end up in a hotel room with Charles? Even if you lied to everyone, you should have confided in me. Since when did we start keeping secrets from each other, eh? I am your best friend!" Maria spoke provocatively after I had narrated the incident between Charles and me at the Olive Hotel last night.

"It was the devil." Filled with guilt and shame, my hands were placed across my face to prevent Maria from looking directly into my teary eyes while I spoke. *"Will you shut up?! Did the devil carry you into the hotel room to defile your body? Did he cause you to lie about going on a marriage retreat the night before your wedding? I even thought you were taking this marriage thing seriously with God by choosing a retreat over our bridal shower. Were you both this impatient to explore your bodies? I beg you not to mention the devil again; do you not have self-control? Did the devil open your legs to a man you are not yet married to?"*

"Ewoo, awolam eh!" That was Mummy's voice. Mummy is the women leader of our church, and Daddy, who is the Assisting Pastor, was standing hands akimbo in between Mummy and Aunty Oluchi; all three of them had unknowingly been in my bedroom the whole time, eavesdropping on me and Maria's conversation.

Mummy said nothing more because her loud wailing did enough talking. To ensure she did not raise unwanted attention from the wedding guests trooping into our compound, aunty Oluchi, who is Mummy's twin, went on to console her as she was miserably crying on my bedroom floor with her wrapper loosely tied on her waist.

CHAPTER 3.

Daddy extended his right hand to me *"Give me your phone, Adachukwu!"* He demanded, in an attempt to call Charles. I always found it difficult to discern Daddy's emotion, he was nicknamed Okwu-adiro by his friends because he is a man of few words and often expressionless about his emotions. It was a result of his ideology that men who cry are weak which I never agreed with. Only Mummy had gained the mastery of discerning and understanding what was on Daddy's mind, I admired how they complemented each other and, mummy had once told me that they could read each other's minds only because they both had their first sex with one another, a mystery I would not understand if I defiled my body before marriage.

"Uhhh ... ehmm ... Daddy, I have called Charles already. I called to inform him that we...the guests ... the wedding guests are here. So, I ... I ... I asked where he was and ..." I was stuttering amidst tears and the fear of my ability to suddenly discern Daddy's emotion—anger. *"And!?"* Daddy's voice, now clearly authoritative and clouded with disappointment, demanded a response from me. *"He has called off the wedding, Daddy. Charles isn't coming."* Maria responded because I could not speak further, my outburst of tears and sudden stutter in my speech made it impossible to be coherent with my words.

"Ewoo awolam eh!" Mummy spoke up again, and at this point, her wailing was raising all the unwanted attention and suspicions from our guests in the living room, who were mostly women from church. Daddy stepped out of my bedroom.

It is my wedding day, and Charles, my bridegroom-to-be, has just called off the wedding because he realized we are not sexually compatible.

I would not satisfy him, so he said.

CHAPTER 4.

9 months later, as I heard the loud cry of a newborn babe, I also observed the incessant movement of angelic beings on red and blue scrubs, they spoke softly to me *“you are doing great, just take a deep breath”* I responded by taking a breath inwards but, let out a sharp pain as I tried to breathe out. I did not feel great. *“Where am I and what is happening?”* I questioned the angelic being whom I came to understand was a nurse, he smiled at me and continued setting up a life support monitor close to me.

“We cannot find a heartbeat” “she is dropping rapidly” “restart the machine” “please hand over the baby to her” “we are losing her”, were the words that filled the room from the doctors and nurses, an infant was placed in my hands and the most beautiful and painful moment of my life stood before me. I knew well enough that I had given birth to a baby girl and I would also be unable to see her grow. *“Call her Purity,”* were my last words to Mummy and Maria who were now crying uncontrollably beside me. I took a deep smile, observing every detail of Purity’s face, noticing her striking resemblance with Charles; His pointed nose, bow-shaped lips and,

almond eyes, she had all of it. Such a beauty to behold. I closed my eyes and wished softly for one more day with Purity but my eyes never opened up again.

In what seemed like a dream, I was instantly ushered into another room with a great white throne and someone seated on the throne. I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. It was my turn to be judged according to what was recorded in the books. This dream felt familiar.

Now standing face-to-face with the one on the great white throne, I realized this was not a dream but the judgment that Daddy had told me about on my 6th birthday from the book of **Revelation 20:11–15**. But he did say it signifies the judgment of the dead. “*Am I dead?*” I thought to myself.

CHAPTER 5.

“Daughter.”

“No, no. no. I cannot be here. I cannot be dead. I am young, full of life, there is more to be done. Please, send me back. I have a daughter too. I need to breastfeed and nurture her.”

“Daughter.”

“One more chance please. Next month is my 23rd birthday and I know all that you have promised before I am 30. Send me back, I cannot be dead. There must be a mistake in this book of judgment.”

“You defiled my temple, daughter.”

“What temple? I am a devoted member of the sanctuary unit in church, and I have been diligent in keeping the church clean. You see, you are mistaking me for someone else. Send me back to life, please.”

“Daughter.”

“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Living

Holy Spirit, who abides in you and was given to you by me? You do not belong to yourself.”

“But ... It was just a day before our wedding. Everyone knew Charles and I were getting married. I had waited long enough after 1 year and 6 months of courtship. He was going to be my husband eventually. I wanted to make him happy; I did not know how to repay Him for the joy and perfect bliss his existence brought into my world. When he questioned my love for him, I thought to give him a pleasurable gift so he could be assured that I truly loved him and trusted him completely to walk through life with me as my husband.”

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.”

“James 1:17, I am aware of the scriptures. But if I had known Charles would eventually not marry me, I would have honored this temple of yours. The past 9 months of my life have been the worst. I had to walk through pregnancy alone, I had to watch Charles on national TV going for ministrations like none of this has happened, I had to watch Daddy get drunk for the first time after Charles called angry mobs to attack him for

threatening to expose him, and I had to watch Mummy abused and ridiculed by other women in church. I am a failure. I am a failed failure. There's nothing worth living for, so you might as well take me to be with you. There is really no need to send me back; please take me instead."

"You do not belong with me anymore."

CHAPTER 6.

“Father, please. Is there no mercy after death?”

“Daughter.”

“If you had listened intently during Charles' sermon on the 12th of December 2022, you would have heard him say:

Flee from sexual immorality [in any form, whether thought or behavior, whether visual or written]. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the one who is sexually immoral sins against his own body. I Corinthians 6:18.”

“You never asked me if Charles was your husband, you let your lustful thoughts guide you to approaching him after his sermon on December 12th, 2022. I was never involved in anything that evolved after that.

Do you not know that the accuser of the brethren knows your hunger and will feed it with the sword of destruction if you do not let me feed you with the Word of life?”

"Father, I am sorry."

"Look! Here he comes."

"Who? Charles?"

"The accuser of the brethren, the one whom you now belong with."

"No! ... Father! ... God, no! One more chance and I will not only flee from sexual immorality but, I will tell my world about sexual purity. I will dedicate Purity, my daughter, to you. Do not let him touch me, leave me! Leave me! Get away! Do not touch me! Leave me alone!"

"Why should I leave you, eh?" This was Mummy's voice. *"I came in to turn off your room light but heard you screaming. What happened in your dream, Ada?"* Mummy continued as she observed the droplets of sweat on my face.

Panting heavily, I asked, *"Where is Purity?"* *"Purity!"* I called out. *"Who is Purity?"* Mummy asked, trying to calm me down and drying the sweat off my face with the hem of her wrapper.

"My daughter. Did the accuser of the brethren take her instead? No, not

Purity." *"Take me!"* I got up and was about to run out in search of Purity. But Mummy's outburst of laughter made me stop half way, and with anger flashing across my face, I retorted, *"Mummy, you should not be joking at this moment!"*

"Ada, this must be the stress of planning and camping in the church during the youth week convention. I am sure this is your imaginary daughter from one of the dramas you people ministered. Please, have some rest." Mum said.

"Youth Week Convention?" I immediately withdrew to my bedside, taking up my phone from the drawer to check the date, and it was **December 12th, 2022.**

The exact day I met with Mr. Charles.

CHAPTER 7.

"Mummy, but I saw you and Maria carrying Purity in the hospital."

"Okay, call Auntie Oluchi to confirm; she was the one consoling you when Charles did not show up for my wedding." "Mummy, are you sure this is the same day of the youth convention?"

"Biko, which wedding are you talking about? Or, when was the last time I saw Oluchi since she relocated to London three years ago? This young woman, you need to rest now or I will have to take you to the hospital this instant." Mummy concluded as she was getting impatient with my gibberish and rabble.

With relief running through my entire spine, I could only cry for joy as I narrated my dream to Mummy. How it first began by my lustful thoughts towards Mr. Charles earlier that day and how I approached him after the convention and deceitfully asked him to be my mentor while he was waiting on Daddy at His office, using my advantage as the assistant pastor's daughter to gain entrance to the guest speaker. I also told her that Mr. Charles had invited me to a discipleship training at his church, and I was

going to use that as an opportunity to tell him about my feelings.

Mummy listened intently all through, advised me and prayed for me, she led me to confess my immoral thoughts and acts to God. I felt more relieved than I did earlier, and when she was convinced I had become calm and stable enough to be left alone, she stood up to leave. But before she turned off my room light, I could hear her husky voice that often indicated fatigue, and with her index finger pointing at me, which was Mummy's usual poise whenever she wanted her statement to leave a lasting impression—especially during the women meeting in church, she whispered to me, ***"Adachukwu, it is the will of God, that you be sanctified [separated and set apart from sin]: that you abstain and back away from sexual impurity;. 1 Thessalonians 3:4."***

"Did you hear me?"

"Yes, Mummy."

Lights off.

THE END.



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