

Fadimata's Redemption: From Brokenness to Blessings

The stars luminate the night sky of the Fyere Village as Fadimata fell to her knees as she prepared for her nightly prayer. “Father God,” she whispered, “I pray for your strength, so that I can find my dear son...”

Fadimata’s tears ran down the leather casing of Bible. “Amen,” the whispers of a hopeless mother travelled to the heavens into God’s hands.

The road to the Bamako City marketplace the next day felt like an eternity. The nature guided Fadimata to the busy city. Her calm before the chaos where her thoughts drifted afar...

“...Moussa! Moussa! Get back here immediately!” Fadimata chased after her son with fists tightly clenched. “I refuse mother! I refuse to take your... your, nonsense!” Moussa hesitated. He had finally spoken up against his mother. The peak of a mountain that he never thought he could climb. The risk was worth it, but Mother’s rage burned as hot as Fyere’s sun.

With a yank of the wrist, Fadimata grabbed Moussa’s attention and just as he looked back, he felt her burning rage across his left cheek. He stopped.

“Listen here, young man! Your tongue is very sharp!” Fadimata was disgusted by her son’s actions, “How dare you speak to me that way, eh? I will never let a child defy me!” Moussa, stared into his mother’s eyes as his own teared up. Fadimata noticed the pain in her son’s eyes.

“I have, had it with you.” Moussa confidently confronted his mother and ran into the house. The woman that chased after him shattered the image that Moussa once had of his home.

His time to leave had come.

...A vivid memory of the encounter with her son replayed in her head, triggered by the tree that shaded her during that heated ordeal.

“Fadimata, Fadimata!” The sounds of footsteps quickly approached with loud breaths filling her ears. “Mama Moussa, please slow down!” Fadimata hastily turned.

“Ah!” Fadimata exclaimed “Mama Kone?” Fadimata was confused as to how she quickly managed to catch up from the marketplace. “My eyes cannot believe what they have witnessed! Let us go back to the house first! We can talk there, eh?” Mama Kone grabbed Fadimata by her hand, rushing her home.

Upon arrival, Mama Kone seemed enthused.

“Fadimata, I am not here to waste your time. Have I ever wasted your time? Not once! Mama Kone knows how to get things done fast-fast! Eh, my sist- “.

“Mama Kone! Ah ah! Speak!”

“Okay! Mama, these very two eyes here,” Mama Kone pointed to her eyes, “saw your son!” Fadimata’s eyes lit up. She was hesitant though. “Wait, Mama Kone, please now. We cannot be playing games like this!” Fadimata could not believe Mama Kone’s words.

“Jesus, strike me down today if I am a liar! Fadimata! Eh eh! My eyes do not deceive me! I could never miss the sight of that tall boy. Remember that rosary you gave him?” A question that slowly brightened Fadimata’s face. “Mama, that was Moussa!” Fadimata dropped to her knees raising her hands to the heavens. “Thank you, Father God!” Her voice trembled. She couldn’t grasp the fact that after almost 20 years of not seeing Moussa, there were signs of him.

Mama Kone quickly rose to her feet, helping Fadimata up. “Fadimata, he seemed troubled.” Mama Kone’s words pierced into her heart. “Fadimata, you must find him.” She knew that it was only Fadimata who would bring him back to Fyere.

Fadimata reached for Mama Kone's hand, "God bless you!" The weight on Fadimata's shoulders had lightened.

The light of the stars seeped into parts of her room as she knelt by her bedside. She only had one thing to pray for. "Lord, please help me get my son back. Amen!" A small prayer for a big moment in Fadimata's life. It was all in God's hands.

The rooster's call the next morning meant the beginning of Fadimata's journey, but before she could commence, she knew that she had to consult somebody about it. Fadimata ran out of her home and onto the pathway that led to the chief's estate. She was overwhelmed yet overjoyed by the opportunity that lay ahead. A life of resolve and redemption was promised.

Fadimata treaded the royal ground, and there sat the chief on this throne. His presence demanded respect and Fadimata sat humbly before him, her head bowed and hands clasped.

"Fadimata Kadiatou," a deep voice crept out of the shadows. Her head immediately rose. "You have finally graced my presence."

Fadimata sat upright. "My chief, it is of such shock to me that you know my full name." Her eyebrows furrowed. The chief's knowledge of her existence surely meant something, and she wasted no time letting the chief know what was going on.

"My chief, I have a problem. With your help, you will make my journey so much easier as you always have for the people of Fyere." The chief adjusted himself. "I need... I need your assistance to find my son, he seems to be around in Bamako. Mama Kone visited me yesterday- "

“Your son, Ma Kadiatou,” The chief leaned forward in his chair. “Moussa Kadiatou,” she replied. The chief was a dear caught by headlights! “Eh! Moussa?” He rocketed off his chair, towering over Fadimata! “How dare you come here and insult me?”

“But what makes you say this my chief? I don’t understand!” she eventually broke into a cry. “Your son bought shame to my throne and the people of Fyere. How do you come and steal from me and the people of Fyere?” The chief continued to rant his distaste for Moussa, all to which took Fadimata by surprise. “Woman, get out of my house!” She immediately rose to her feet at the chief’s command, “and” Fadimata stopped in her tracks, “if you dare go ahead with finding that man, I swear...”

The threat fell on deaf ears. She knew that Moussa was incapable of such actions. The guilt shredded her heart into pieces. “Without my actions, my son would still be here with me.” She held her hands together, “Dear Lord, please take me to Moussa. Amen.”

The road to Bamako City the next morning seemed longer than ever. Fadimata was restless. She imagined just how life changing the moment will be with her son. That warm embrace, feelings that she had not felt for nearly 20 years. The hot sun and commotion of the busy city centre no longer bothered her. The sight of her son would make up for the pain she had to endure.

Fadimata decided to set up shop underneath the raging sun by the place Mama Kone spoke of. Right next to the busy city centre near the exit of the market. She fastened the fabric around her waist and adjusted her head wrap.

Sweat slowly trickled down Fadimata’s face. Hours went by. Just as she reached to wipe her face, a strong yank of her arm took her away from her stall! Her body rag drolled to the end into the end of the hallway!

“Listen here, if you even dare to bring your son to Fyere, forget ever coming back. The chief warns you!” A man in khaki green uniform with hands of

sandpaper gripped onto Fadimata, pinning her arm against the wall. The chief was always two steps ahead.

He released her from his grasp and walked into the marketplace vanishing into thin air. Fadimata followed him out of the hallway and her stall drew her attention. All the stock that she had, scattered all over the ground.

The threat that the village officials posed seemed too big of a feat for Fadimata to overcome. She was grasping at shadows. She was getting old and suffering from physical constraints her body could no longer bear.

She went down on her knees onto the dusty marketplace grounds, reaching for each of the artifacts that were scattered. The sight of a man in the distance caught her attention. He was tall and around his neck sat a black rose-,

“Moussa? Is that you?” She whispered under her breath. She rubbed her eyes.

“Moussa! Moussa!” Tears fell down her face as her voice waivered, travelling a distance. She stood up, navigating her way through the crowded marketplace. Like a hot knife through butter, she eased her way passed the busy crowds in desperation to get him. As she finally got to him, Fadimata pulled his wrist. He turned around, stunned by the force of the pull on his wrist, and looked down into her eyes.

A sight so familiar yet he could not recognize. “Moussa, it is your mother. Fadimata.”

“Ma?”

With a light nod of the head, Fadimata broke into tears. She grabbed onto him and rested her head on his chest. Moussa held onto his mother’s face, taking the moment in. Seeing her so frail struck his heart.

“I have looked for you everywhere Moussa!” She wanted him to feel her motherly love that she hadn’t been able to share for years “Mama?” He reached out and hugged his mother as his voice shook.

“What is wrong, my son?” His heart thumped while he held closely to his mother. She released him from the hug and reached for his arms. “Moussa, talk to me, eh, eh!” Her concern grew to impatience.

“Mama, I have lost 20 years with you! All because of your stupid chief and his nonsense views!” Fadimata gasped! “Eh! Moussa! That man that you called ‘stupid’ is your chief!” Fadimata and Moussa had once again found themselves at a crossroads.

“Your so-called chief, whom you love so much, banished me. I was the only one able to resist his toxic ruling. He treated the people of Fyere like peasants. Passed on customs that hurt us rather than grew us. Then, look what you have become? A monster! I do not want any child to go through the pain of having a prideful parent who cannot accommodate for their child. Fadimata! You abused me!”

Fadimata had never heard her own son use her name while addressing her. She realised that the ounce of respect that Moussa had for her had gone. Fadimata contained her rage, pleading for God for peace.

“So that chief of yours, the reason why he doesn’t want you to find me because I was the only one who dared to bruise his ego. Well, this nonsense ends with me!” Deep down, she was against her son’s words, but she was just grateful to God that he was alive and well.

“I understand my son, you did what you had to do.” Words that shocked Moussa. His mother was never a person of reason, but her son’s words cut deeply.

Moussa grabbed his mother's hand and led her through the busy crowds to where her stock remained scattered all over the floor. Moussa picked up all Fadimata's stock from the ground and placed it into her sack and led the way to Fyere, Fadimata slowly following behind him.

Moussa still remembered the way back to the village. He recalled the large trees that used to shade them while he was carried on his mother's back. All these memories brought a smile to Moussa's face.

Fadimata returned to the village that day with more than she had left with. News spread as fast a plague in Fyere and Moussa being right by Fadimata's side set the village ablaze.

Moussa understood his mother's position. Based on the customs that she grew up with, and at her age, Moussa knew it was impossible to change. But something triggered her.

"That's it! You and I, we are going to the chief." Moussa couldn't help but wonder why his mother came to such a conclusion but still, she insisted. Fadimata led the way to the chief's estate with Moussa right beside her. This could possibly lead to change in the village.

Fadimata arrived at the chief's estate while Moussa waited to see what his mother would do. "Chief of Fyere! Come out now!" her voice caught the attention of the village authorities. "Chief of Fyere!" The authorities drew closer to her, tossing Fadimata into the dust, while wrestling Moussa to the ground.

"Leave them alone." The chief commanded. Moussa quickly rose to his feet, charging at the chief. Fadimata quickly rose to her feet, holding Moussa back "Look what your people have done to my mother!" He ran to the defence of his mother while she held him back.

“Fadimata, your son speaks of me having no shame, but it is you that has no shame. Look at the mess you have brought along with you. After I told you of your son’s wrongdoings against me, you still bring him here to disrupt my peace!”

“You have not only insulted me but have disrespected the entire Fyere Village with your selfish actions.”

“Selfish? The only one that is selfish is you! You sit here in your estate, living a good life, while all your people struggle. You are the disgrace.” Fadimata seemed to have been holding this in for all her life. The consequences that awaited her could possibly change the rest of her life.

“Why don’t you get out of Fyere once and for all, since it is such a ‘bad place’? And take your bastard kid with you.”

The chief wasted no time letting Fadimata know that she was not being held back to leave the village. “Moussa, we are leaving now.”

Moussa held his mother by the hand and wiped the tears off her face, “Fadimata felt like this was the time that God had given her to be with her son.

“Moussa, I am sorry for the pain that I put you through my son.” God gave Fadimata the opportunity to redeem herself from the actions that haunted her and Moussa for years. She grabbed Moussa by the hands and prayed for the journey ahead. “Thank you, God for the biggest blessing of my life. Bless the new journey we are about to take.” Fadimata had truly found her peace.

“Amen.”