**ALMOST BURNT-**

It was on a cold evening, and he came in drunk as usual. “Where is my gun?! I need to kill the devil tormenting me” he shouted. Everyone went scampering for safety. “Go to the room” his wife whispered to me. Uncle Efe, as I normally call him, is a habitual drunkard. He comes home drunk every night and exhibits all sorts of drama depending on his mood. I saw his children scurry off as I hurried to my room quickly tucking myself under the covers. I had been assigned a room upon my arrival for the holiday to make me feel at home but there is nothing homely about Uncle Efe. He has always given me the creeps with his murdering sneering looks. I would always shiver whenever we made eye contact, turning my gaze onto the next friendly sight.

Uncle Efe had no gun but his paranoia after getting drunk knows no bound.

“Efe my love, is the devil really after you” I could hear his wife beckon to him acting concerned. “Talk to me my Love, we can fight him off together but we wouldn’t be using your gun dear” she added trying to play along with his fantasy.” You wouldn’t want to go to prison for murder now, would you?”. “Who would take care of the children if you go to prison?” she said as she walked up to meet him with smiles and her arms opened to embrace him. He shoved her aside charging into his room like a raging bull.

His wife laid there crying wondering what she had done to deserve such a man. He used to be a better man, loving and caring (he still his except when he’s drunk). She had often times advised him to seek help but he was reluctant to do this. He kept on making empty promises but he never really change. Few minutes into her tears, her stressed body shutdown and she dozed off losing consciousness of her surroundings.

Uncle Efe kept pacing around the room and eventually came out of his room. He saw his wife lying on the chair and hissed as he passed by her. “Where’s that seductive witch?!” he said aloud “I think I might need a taste of her” he said to himself laughing sarcastically.

I could hear his footsteps approaching as I lay in bed. I looked at the doorway and I could see his shadow as he came closer to the door. I became tensed. I could feel my heart racing fast and my thoughts went wild. I became scared for my life. He is such an unpredictable beast. “Hello love” he said as he approached my door, “you know you are my most precious sweetheart” he continued as he approached the door. With every thumping of his feet I could feel a pounding in my chest. I had never been this scared in my life.

“Knock knock!” he gave a light tap on the door and pushed his way through. I held on to the bed covers as my thoughts started to map out the possible outcomes of the unfolding event. None of the thoughts ended on a good note. “Come on baby” he said calmly “I don’t bite but we could have fun”. I felt him sit on the edge of the bed talking calmly as he hears me sob. “Common babe, why are you crying” he said. I know you want me as much as I want you; this feeling is mutual”. Gently touching my legs, he continued “You know, I see the way you look at me you little seductress”. “You know I really love those shorts you were around and you enjoy wearing them just for me.” he added “You little seductress!” he retorted his voice a bit stronger “but I love your subtle seductions babe and I’m here to cash-in on the offer” he said brushing his hands on my body. “No Uncle Efe, I don’t know what you’re talking about. I didn’t do anything sir.”

I had noticed during my two weeks of staying with them during this vacation that there was something different about the way he looks at me. He stares at me more often with his eyes lingering on my chest. He sometimes stares at it and looks up to my eyes like he’s trying to pass a message across to me. On some occasions, he would drop some things at some awkward places and request that I pick it for him and sometimes he chooses which if he wants me to pick it facing him or backing him. At first, I didn’t understand what he was doing but after a while I *caught* up with his gimmicks. I began to fear him even more at that time. On one occasion he told me to sit on his lap but I refused calling out to his wife to come and watch the interesting movie playing on the TV. He replied by saying “Oh, you’re playing hard to get you little tease. I am going to have a taste eventually because I don’t ever back down.”

He gently pulled my blanket away from my body and I could feel cold air blow in from the open window. Lightning flashes and I could see his eyes bright like a starved hyena about to devour his prey. “It’s just you and me tonight babe”

I opened my mouth to scream but he shoved a sock in my mouth and then I knew he came prepared. He held the sock to my mouth threatening to choke me to death if I didn’t corporate. I threw my hands up to defend myself. Aiming at his eyes but I missed. “Baby I love you but you’re just going to hurt yourself if you don’t let us have this fun|. I felt so helpless at this moment as I fought frantically for my breath trying to stay alive. He grabbed my hands pinning me down hard and then bringing my hands together to the front holding both hands down with his hand so tight like a clamp. I could almost feel his coarse palm tearing my skin as he held me down. He started touching me all over with his second hand. At this point, it hit me that no help was coming for sure and I had to fight for my life.

I lifted my knee hitting him hard in his rib cage. “Arrrgh!” I could hear him scream as a thunder roared in the sky. It shook the whole room but I wasn’t ready to be distracted. I knew I had to turn my fear to strength if I am to stand a chance to break free. He twitched at the pain not willing to let me go but I gave another shot this time missing his rib cage but hitting his armpit enough to send enough shock to the joint. I could swear I heard it dislocated but I certainly don’t know for sure. His grip on my hands weakened and I tugged my hands but I didn’t have enough strength. He pushed his body weight on me standing off the bed, he lashed out a slap on my face and everything went dark for a moment. My thoughts left me and I thought I was unconscious till I saw another lightning flash and I knew I wasn’t dead yet. I pushed hard against the bed and I saw him eyeing my waist and he made an attempt to go for my pant.

I could feel his hand tugged hard at it ripping it apart but I couldn’t scream but at this point the position of the sock had shifted due to the struggle. In reflex defensive action, my leg shot at him as he ripped my pant apart hitting right under his jaw and he lost balance also losing his grip on me. I could see him shake his head as he tried to regain himself but he was too late I pulled the sock out of my mouth kicking hard in his scrotum. I went for the lamp by the bed and hit him on the head. “Wam!” the lamp shattered as it made contact with him. He fell to the ground and with every strength in me I kicked him in the throat choking him. I had aimed for his head but missed. The second hit is head and I kept kicking over and over again screaming out as I kicked not stopping till I felt his wife pull me away. He was afterwards rushed to the hospital and he got admitted for two weeks.

\*sighs\* That was ten years ago but the memories still haunt me up till now. Over the years I have hated men and restricted myself from loving but I have had to work with a professional who has been helping me recover. I haven’t gotten over the trauma but I am in a better place.

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