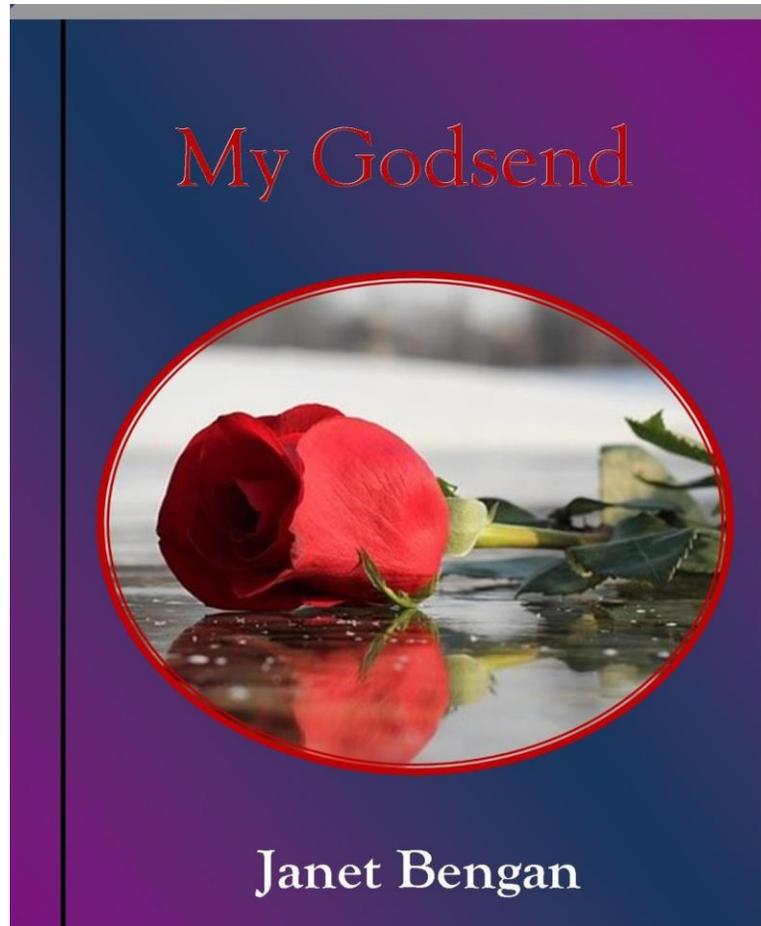


# My Godsend



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## **CHARACTERS**

**YAFE**, engaged to Burushaga

**TAN**, Yafe's best friend

**BURUSHAGA**,

**FIMBA**, in love with Wirngo

**WIRNGO**

**CHIA**, Fimba's Salesboy

**MIRABELLE**, friend to Yafe and Tan

**DOCTOR**

**NURSE**

**MUNA**, Fimba's best friend

**MRS LUNGAI**, Burushaga's mom

**MAMA KEMBONG**, Yafe's mom

**BALAK**, Burushaga's friend

**BIY**, Wirngo's friend

**PASTOR BRENDAN**, pastor to Fimba and Muna

**PASTOR EBENEZER**, pastor to Yafe, Burushaga and Tan

**MAMA NGWAFESS**, Fimba's mom

**EXTRA**

The play takes place over a few years in various locations in Bamenda and Kumba, Cameroon

## ACT I

### SCENE 1

*(A restaurant. Past midday.*

**YAFE**, a twenty something year old, fair average height young woman, and **TAN**, dark, slim and tall, same age group with Yafe, are among the few customers seated at tables in the not-so-busy restaurant.

*Yafe's phone rings.)*

**YAFE:** Hi, dear.

**CALLER:** Hey. Where are you?

**YAFE:** I'm at a restaurant. It's break time.

**CALLER:** You sure? With who are you?

**YAFE:** With Tan.

**CALLER:** Give her the phone.

*(Yafe gives the phone to Tan.)*

**TAN:** Buru, you don't believe your woman when she tells you she's in a restaurant at break time, with her *female* friend?

**BURU:** Has my action cost you a dime? She hasn't screamed, so how is that your headache? Give her the phone!

*(Tan gives the phone to Yafe.)*

**BURU:** I wish you a wonderful day. Just called to know how you doing.

**YAFE:** Thanks, dear. You too.

*(Buru drops the call.)*

**TAN:** My friend, for the umpteenth time, I will say it again: you are getting married to a Police Inspector. You better think twice before it's too late. I wouldn't want my best friend regretting in marriage, you know.

**YAFE:** Tan, it's not everything you joke about. I have no cause to fear concerning my relationship with Burushaga. He is mine, and I am his.

**TAN:** O Lord, please don't give me one. I am comfortable the way I am.

**YAFE:** Wait until the day you meet Mr. Right. Only then would I believe you when you say you are comfortable being single.

**TAN:** I am happy you say Mr. *Right*, and not Mr. *Assumed* Right whose third name I believe should rightfully be *Wrong*. When I meet Mr. *Truly* Right, yes, I won't be comfortable being single. Who should be comfortable being single when they meet Mr. or Miss Right? Tan is no exception.

**YAFE:** I will not continue to argue with you whether Buru is Mr. Right or not. God works in mysterious ways. Buru is not close to the man I ever dreamt of, but fate had our paths cross. We are headed in the right direction.

**TAN:** Yafe, listen. I am not saying Buru is not Mr. Right. He is simply not the Mr. Right for you. He can be Mr. Right for whosoever, I don't care. But you are my friend, that's why I care. This guy lacks manners, he is immature and (--)

**YAFE:** Who is footing this bill, me or you?

**TAN:** Me. Listen to me, my sis. If (--)

**YAFE:** Please, enough. We are in public; people are looking at us. Besides, I don't believe you are correct with the things you are saying about Buru.

**TAN:** Maybe you just refuse to acknowledge the truth.

**YAFE:** Pay the bill and let's get out of here. My break is almost over.

## SCENE 2

*(Large provision store in the Ntarikon neighborhood, Bamenda. Late afternoon.*

**FIMBA**, a twenty something year old guy, fairly fair, fresh but plain, is seated at the table doing some calculations. There are no customers in the shop. **CHIA**, the dark teenage salesboy is standing in the middle of the shop with arms folded.

Minutes later, **WIRNGO**, a twenty something year old, not too tall, shiny brown color, long curly hair, wearing a flowery top on a denim skirt, comes in. She is acknowledged by Fimba and Chia.

Chia hands her a basket and Wirngo goes to the shelves. After picking up the items she needs, she takes the basket to the table where Chia calculates her bill. She then pays to Fimba and collects her receipt.)

**WIRNGO**: Excuse me sir, do you know where I can get the services of an electrician?

**FIMBA**: Sorry. The one I know has gone out of town for work. I can only ask around to see if there's another.

**WIRNGO**: Oh God, what do I do now?

**FIMBA**: What is the problem?

**WIRNGO**: I took a new house three days ago in the neighborhood. It's not properly wired. Not all the rooms have electricity. In the night I have to use torchlight.

**FIMBA**: Let me see. I will give you the number of the electrician I know. You can call him. Maybe he knows someone who can fix it for you.

*(Fimba writes the number on a piece of paper and gives to Wirngo.)*

**WIRNGO**: Thank you so much, dear. God bless you.

**FIMBA**: You are welcome. God bless you too.

*(Wirngo leaves.)*

**CHIA**: I don't like these girls that go around calling everyone dear, dear. Can you imagine one came here yesterday and called me, 'dear'?

**FIMBA** *(laughing)*: Chia, you think everyone grew up in the village like you? Welcome to township, my boy. You need to start making adjustments so you can fit in.

**CHIA**: Patrong\*, I don't like it.

*(Fimba continues laughing while Chia stands beside the table, arms folded.)*

\* The pidgin word for master or boss.

### SCENE 3

*(Driveway. Sunday late evening.*

*Yafe and Tan come up towards the roadside, from the church.)*

**YAFE:** God has really blessed Glory with a wonderful gift. I like it each time she coordinates the Sunday evening singspiration.

**TAN:** Me too. I was very happy when I discovered she was going to be the emcee for the evening. She knows how to keep things in order. The chances of the focus being derailed are zero when she's in command.

**YAFE:** Can we learn a song for next time?

**TAN:** Why not? This week doesn't look like it will be busy. We can plan something for next week's program.

*(Someone calls from behind them: Yafe! Yafe!*

*Yafe and Tan turn around to see who it is. It is **BURU**, a fair-complexioned, handsome twenty something years old. Tan becomes irritated while they wait for him to come up to them.)*

**BURU:** Yafe, how could you just leave like that without waiting for me? I had to stay back to park the instruments into the instruments' room, but I expected to meet you at the church's door.

*(Tan looks at Yafe with an angry stare and swallows the feeling in her throat.)*

**YAFE:** You didn't tell me to wait for you, and it's getting late.

**BURU:** Must I tell you every time to wait for me? This is just 6:51 p.m.

**YAFE:** Dear, I have assignments from work that I must complete this night. Tomorrow is Monday, remember?

**BURU:** Please, some respect. I do not work at your jobsite to know you *always* have assignments on Sunday.

**YAFE:** I'm sorry. What was it you wanted me to wait for you?

*(Tan leaves.)*

**BURU:** My mother is coming in tomorrow in the evening. I want you to come to my place after work and prepare a meal for her. She loves pounded cocoyams and eru.

**YAFE:** Dear, why didn't you tell me this before now? My workday ends at 3:30 p.m. When would I make it to the market, then to your place on time to prepare for your mother's arrival? When I don't put up a good front, I would turn out a bad daughter-in-law to-be, isn't it?

**BURU** (*shallowly*): Sorry.

**YAFE:** Okay. You give me some money, I will try to get some items during break tomorrow and (--)

**BURU:** On the contrary, I think you should make a list and give me. I'm my own boss; I have time. I will get the items for you so you just come prepare the meal.

**YAFE:** Dear, why can't you just make a list? At least, you know what is necessary.

**BURU:** I don't know. There are some things only you women take note of.

**YAFE:** Okay. Buy cocoyams.

**BURU:** Mom is bringing cocoyams.

**YAFE:** All right. Buy Eru, fresh beef – or chicken, I think you should buy chicken for mom –crayfish, red oil – if you don't have enough – and...ehmm...what am I forgetting? And waterleaf. That should do. Please, if she comes before I do, can you help me clean the cocoyams and put the pot on the fire?

**BURU:** I won't have the time to do that; that's why I need you. Come early.

**YAFE:** As soon as I close from work.

**BURU:** Okay. You have to go now. It's late. Make sure you go straight to your place. Avoid chatting for long with that friend of yours. I can see she doesn't particularly like me. The reverse is also true.

**YAFE:** Dear, I just told you I have assignments against tomorrow. Where do you think I will leave for from here? I'm going home. Good night.

**BURU:** Good night.

*(Yafe walks faster until she catches up with Tan along the roadside. The road is busy with taxis going in both directions.)*

**YAFE:** Tan, your leaving had something to it.

**TAN:** Yes. One, it's past time for my favorite TV series. Two, I am sick and tired of seeing this man popping everywhere you go? Is he MTN or what? I mean, isn't it nauseating?

**YAFE:** Nauseating? How? Tan, for God's sake, Buru and I are engaged to be married. Isn't it but natural that we be around each other more frequently.

**TAN:** The frequency is not even my problem. It's the policing and the way he talks to you. He takes you for some kid who shouldn't be allowed to make decisions for herself.

**YAFE:** How many times would I tell you that God wants me to marry Burushaga? It is the will of God; our relationship is ordained by God. Why are you constantly finding fault where there is none? Don't you think you are the one who is hypercritical here?

**TAN:** Yafe, it is not the will of God! I can assure you that. This is the will of Buru. If you continue with this *boy*, you are going to regret tomorrow. Look at how a man you are supposedly engaged to treats you. He wants to pull you by the nose all the time. (*Mimics Buru:*) *Why did you not wait for me? Must I tell you every time to wait for me?*

**YAFE:** Tan, it takes time for two people to get to walk together smoothly. That's just Buru's temperament. I'm learning to adapt to it.

**TAN:** For two years, and yet no change? Just count me out of this. I will not be participating in the wedding. I will not, with eyes wide open, (*pulls her lower eyelids*), go to the length of escorting my best friend to a life of bondage; because if he treats you now like some kid, it is but sure that after (--)

**YAFE:** You don't understand how God works.

**TAN:** Oh yeah, he works in mysterious ways.

**YAFE:** Are you saying Buru should never get married because he is just being himself?

**TAN:** He can marry anyone! It must not be you!

**YAFE:** Who should it be? Someone will have to marry him and I'm certain God wants me to be that person.

**TAN:** All right. Let's stop it. I see you are ready to accommodate *anything*.

*(Tan's phone rings.)*

**TAN:** Hello, Mirabelle.

**MIRABELLE** (*crying*): Tan! Ndifon has been involved in a ghastly motor accident! I am calling from the General Hospital where he is in the operation room. Please, pray that my brother makes it.

*(In the background of the call a woman is also crying.)*

**TAN:** Dearest Lord! Calm down, okay? We are on our way.

*(Mirabelle drops the call.)*

**YAFE:** O my God! Let's get a taxi here. Dear Lord, please intervene. This poor woman should not lose two children in less than a year.

**TAN:** Taxi! Taxi!

#### SCENE 4

*(General Hospital, Bamenda. About 7:30 p.m.*

*A taxi drops Yafe and Tan at the gate. They rush to the emergency unit where **MIRABELLE**, a young lady of Yafe's and Tan's age, and her middle-aged mother, with a handful of others who had heard the news of the accident, are waiting. Mirabelle slumps into their hands and they try their best to comfort her.)*

**TAN:** He will be fine. God is in control. Your brother will be fine.

**MIRABELLE:** He's my only living brother. I can't stand to lose him. He's still young and so full of dreams.

**YAFE:** God is in control, dear. God is in control. Calm down.

**MIRABELLE:** Why Lord, why did you let this happen, seeing my mother is still mourning her other son?

*(Mirabelle's father comes in.)*

**MIRABELLE:** Daddy! *(Falls unto his arms).*

*(Yafe and Tan step aside, find somewhere and sit, to pray.*

*About one hour thirty minutes later, the surgeon comes out and asks for the parents of the patient. Mirabelle and her parents follow him inside.*

*Few seconds later, loud wails come from inside. The others rush in and try to comfort the bereaved family. Tan and Yafe support their friend to a bench outside.*

*9 p.m. A nurse comes out.)*

**NURSE:** You can come view the corpse before we transport it to the mortuary.

*(Tan whispers to Yafe:)*

**TAN:** I don't like viewing corpses, especially at night.

*(Tan and Yafe stand outside while the rest go in.)*

**YAFE:** I'm just lost for words. *(Sighs.)* I don't know what I'd do if I lose two siblings in one year.

**TAN:** It's really terrible. In moments like this, one is tempted to question the goodness and faithfulness of God. I just pray they receive the comfort he offers to them during this dark moment. It's painful.

**YAFE:** Mirabelle will be emotionally shattered for a long time.

**TAN:** Yeah. We need to stand by her. I have some accumulated days-off. What about you, would you be going for the burial?

**YAFE:** Fortunate you. Hope they grant me permission.

*(Yafe receives a tap on her shoulder. She turns around. It's Buru.)*

**BURU:** What are you doing here? You told me you had assignments against tomorrow; that you were going straight home. What brought you here?

**YAFE:** I...I...a friend of ours just...just lost the...the brother. She called immediately after we parted that he had been involved in a motor accident. We had to rush here immediately.

**BURU:** Why didn't you call me? If I had not seen you here, would you have bothered to tell me about a friend losing the brother and you being out *at this hour*? If something had happened to you, I'd have been surprised, because I knew you were safe indoors.

**TAN** *(to Buru):* And you, what are you doing too out at *this* time of the night? Do you also tell her your movements? *(Points a finger)*. See, brother Buru or whatever you call yourself, I (--)

**YAFE** *(beats down Tan's finger):* Tan! Please, stop it! Just stop it! *(To Buru)* Please, dear, I'm sorry. Forgive me. I should have called you. But it was so sudden...so urgent...and... it didn't even cross my mind to call you.

**BURU:** It's late. Go home immediately. Now!

*(Tan grabs Yafe's hand while staring at Buru in the face.)*

**TAN:** She is going nowhere until our friend comes out from seeing her brother's corpse!

**YAFE:** Tan, let me go!

**TAN** *(grabs her waist):* You are going NO WHERE!

**BURU** *(to Yafe):* See me tomorrow. First thing in the morning. Before you go to work.

*(Buru leaves.)*

**YAFE:** Tan, I hate this interference of yours. For God's sake, this is a delicate situation. Why are you making it uglier? We must cooperate with God to see his will for our lives fulfilled, else we hinder it.

**TAN:** O yeah, I agree, but in this (--)

**YAFE:** You don't know this man as I do. He can in anger call off the relationship.

**TAN:** Halleluiah! I wish I can make that happen. So Buru is God's plan for you? Stop tolerating nonsense and blaming it on God. The Bible says every good and perfect gift comes from above. A man that is verbally abusive and domineering doesn't sound like a perfect gift. It's amazing to me what you consider a perfect gift.

**YAFE:** I didn't say he is a perfect gift, but (--)

*(Mirabelle and her family come out. Tan and Yafe accompany them out of the hospital premises.)*

## SCENE 5

*(Buru's well-furnished living room. Monday morning. The clock on the wall reads 7:00.*

*Yafe knocks and comes in; she nervously looks for a seat. Buru comes out of the bedroom and leans on the door post, hands in his trouser pockets. Yafe stands up.)*

**BURU:** Yafe, do you want this relationship or not?

**YAFE:** I want it.

**BURU:** Why?

**YAFE:** The Lord said we are meant to be. You are my husband-to-be.

**BURU:** Are you treating me like one would treat a husband? Are you the respectful submissive wife the Bible talks of? You tell me at 7 p.m. you are going home, you can't wait for me because it is late, yet I find you out at 9 p.m. Then you allow your disrespectful friend to rubbish me in front of other people.

**YAFE:** Please, I am very sorry. It won't happen again. Forgive me.

**BURU:** Maybe you are clinging to the fact that God said you are my wife. For your information, if I can't see signs of submission in you, I have reasons to break this relationship. Because God said it doesn't mean it is settled. I can break it. And you know what it means for *you* to miss out on God's perfect will. You may still get married to another man but that would be under God's permissive will, not his perfect will.

**YAFE:** Please, dear, forgive me.

**BURU:** Since last night I have been thinking seriously. There are some adjustments you *must* make if you want me to marry you. One, you must cut off links with Tan or whatever she calls herself. Two, you must make a promise to keep your word. If you say you are going home, you are going home. If something happens that alters your plan, you let me know. Do you know what embarrassment it was to me to find you out there at 9 p.m. and you let your friend talk to me! Yes, I say you let her talk, because if you disapproved of her actions, you would have followed me, and not remain behind with her.

**YAFE:** Our friend was bereaved. There was no way I could leave before she was back from seeing the brother's corpse.

**BURU:** Wow! So you were only pretending when you asked Tan to let you go. I hope your waiting resurrected the dead man. Listen, there's something I have never told you and right now I think you need to be aware of. I had girls in church non-verbally

screaming for my love; yes, girls wrote me letters, some even gave me gifts. There are girls who would give me an instant 'yes', were I to approach them today. But I chose you because the Lord led me to. You too affirmed after your prayers that God spoke to you about me being the right person. So treat this relationship with all the seriousness it deserves, or else.

**YAFE** (*kneels*): Dear, please, forgive me. I am very sorry. Please, forgive me.

**BURU**: Well, I forgive you, but you must know forgiveness has limits.

**YAFE**: Thank you very much. (*Stands up.*) Let me rush. I may be late for work, with all the traffic jam at Mile 2.

**BURU**: Make sure you are here at 4.

**YAFE**: Unfailingly! Wonderful day, dear!

(*Yafe leaves.*)

## SCENE 6

*(In front of an apartment building. Morning.*

*Wirngo is leaning on a pillar, busy with her smart phone.*

*Fimba comes by. He is on his way to somewhere in the quarter, humming a tune.)*

**FIMBA:** DO YOUR WONDERS IN MY LIFE,

O LORD MY GOD

YOU HAVE NOT CHANGED

DO IT FOR ME

AS IN THE DAYS OF OLD

DO IT AGAIN

I HAVE GREAT EXPECTATIONS

DO IT AGAIN

*(He notices Wirngo, and turns aside for a chat.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey, good morning.

**WIRNGO:** Hi. Hey! It's you! Thank you very much for your help. Somebody came and fixed the electricity problem.

**FIMBA:** That is great. Happy to hear that. How are you finding the neighborhood?

**WIRNGO:** Getting used to it, but sure to love it sooner. With good people like you around.

**FIMBA:** Great. I want to see a sick friend around the corner over there.

**WIRNGO:** All right. Have a nice time.

*(Fimba turns to go, then hesitates.)*

**FIMBA:** Dear, where do you come from?

**WIRNGO:** My village? Oku. Where I was before coming here? Douala.

**FIMBA:** What do you do for a living?

**WIRNGO:** Ehmm...ehmm...I don't yet have a steady job...I'm into any odd job I see...till I can get a good job. Do you have a job for me?

**FIMBA:** Well, let's say no for now. (*Jokingly:*) Or do you want to come clean the floor of my shop?

*(Wirngo laughs.)*

**FIMBA:** Are you a Christian?

**WIRNGO:** Yeah.

**FIMBA:** Where do you attend church?

**WIRNGO:** Ehmm...I'm still new here, so I haven't had a church yet...but I think there is a church sign post three blocks away? On Sunday I will go there.

**FIMBA:** New Life Chapel. It's a good church. But you could come to my church. It's a bit far from the neighborhood, though.

**WIRNGO:** No, I don't want to attend a church that's not found in this vicinity.

**FIMBA:** It's all right, dear. New Life Chapel is a good church. Can I have your number and name please?

**WIRNGO:** 237860034089096, Wirngo.

**FIMBA:** I'm Fimba. 23786011000415.

*(They save each other's number.)*

**FIMBA:** Thanks, I'll give you a call. Are you on WhatsApp?

**WIRNGO:** Yeah, that's my WhatsApp number.

**FIMBA:** Nice time, dear.

**WIRNGO:** You too.

*(Fimba leaves and Wirngo continues with what she was doing.)*

## SCENE 7

*(Buru's residence. 7 p.m.*

*Yafe serves the table. Her prospective mother-in-law, **MRS. LUNGAI**, a bulky dark fifty something years old, is seated on the sofa with her son, Buru.)*

**MRS. LUNGAI:** I want you children to hurry up and fulfill the marriage rites. I don't just know what you are waiting for. Two years is too long.

**YAFE:** Mom, it depends on Buru. He's the one to make a decision about when we get married.

**BURU:** January next year.

**MRS. LUNGAI:** Six more months!? That's too far.

**YAFE:** Dear, that's too far nah? I prefer November this year.

**BURU:** Because the money is not coming out of your pocket, right? It's your father that stands to gain. *(To his mother:)* Mom, after the December business period I shall have enough money to do the traditional rites and the church wedding, stress-free.

**MRS. LUNGAI:** But traditional rites are never completed. Isn't that so, Yafe? Or don't I understand well the tradition of the Oku's?

**YAFE:** You are right, mom. There are essential things he must bring for my mother, and there are maternal aunts he must visit, with packages. Then the marriage is good to go.

**BURU** *(mimics Yafe):* Then the marriage is good to go. Without the bride price being paid? Anyway, I have decided that I shall not owe my father-in-law a dime when I leave Oku. I shall pay for my wife, full and complete.

**MRS. LUNGAI:** Can you pay for a woman full and complete? What is the price of a human being? The traditional rites are mere cementation of relationship between the two families, not a full price for a human being.

**BURU:** With that kind of money usually demanded, plus items I have heard some of my friends talk of? My friend got married, his wife is from...eh... I have forgotten the name of the village; they asked him for 1.5 million CFA, in cash. That's before the palm oil and other things.

**MRS. LUNGAI:** Even if it was 10 million, can you call that a full and complete price for a human being? Did your friend not pay?

**BURU:** He bargained for an amount closer to a million. He had the money. Yafe, you had better start coaching your parents. They better behave when I come to Oku with my people. If they begin to behave as if you are the only girl in the universe, if they think I need to refund all the money they spent in educating, feeding and clothing you, you shall see me evaporating into thin air.

**MRS. LUNGAI:** Don't worry, my dear daughter. My husband and I are ready to make sure you are married into our family. Let your parents ask for a million CFA, we will pay. Don't mind this Burushaga. Please, let's eat.

## SCENE 8

*(Muna's residence. Night.*

**MUNA**, a dark handsome guy of Fimba's age, is lying on the couch, watching television. Minutes later Fimba comes in.)

**MUNA** (*sits up*): Good to have you visiting. I was feeling really lonely and bored.

**FIMBA**: Then get married. Anyway, I am also lonely *but* not bored. I'm rather burdened. You need to pray with me.

**MUNA**: What is it?

**FIMBA**: It's a good burden, though. There's this new *sister* not too far from the shop. I first met her in the shop about a week ago and then in her residence two days ago. I feel like God is ministering to me about marrying her.

**MUNA**: Is that? Who is she and where is she from?

**FIMBA**: I...I...don't really know her that much but she's from Oku, light in complexion and (--)

**MUNA**: You don't know her that much and you are already thinking of marrying her?

**FIMBA**: Yes...no. I mean it's not me. I feel like the Spirit is ministering to me about her. There's something about this sister that draws me to her. I don't believe it to be lust. And if it's not lust, then it should be love. It must be God.

**MUNA**: Bro, I think you should get to know her better. There are other voices besides God's.

**FIMBA**: Bro, do you mean I'm not hearing the voice of the Lord that clear? I do hear God about my business and other things. You remember, you were fearful about not getting this present well-paying job, but the Lord spoke to me to tell you to go ahead and apply for it, that the job is yours. And that's just one example of me hearing the voice of God. I should be able to know if he's the one talking in this case or not. And the voice I'm hearing is similar to the voice of God that I'm acquainted with.

**MUNA**: *Similar*, right? If I were you, I would consider that I am not hearing anything at all. Get to know the sister in question first. Establish a simple friendly relationship that can help you get to know her.

**FIMBA**: When I say 'similar', it doesn't mean 'different'. I'm very sure of what I am feeling and I've been praying very much these days. I've never felt like this for any lady. This is different.

**MUNA:** Looks like your mind is made up.

**FIMBA:** Not really. I need your prayers. Join me in prayer. If it's not the will of God, let him make me understand. Let him show me. I'm willing to be led of him.

**MUNA:** No, I don't think prayer is necessary at the moment. What exactly do you want us to pray for? Relax. Know whether she is engaged to someone else or, maybe, even married.

**FIMBA:** She's not yet married.

**MUNA:** All the same, get to know her before thinking about what the Spirit is ministering or *not* ministering to you. What do I offer you?

**FIMBA:** Nothing. I don't have appetite.

## SCENE 9

*(Yafe's residence. Late afternoon.*

*Tan comes in. Yafe, who is lying on the couch, is cold in reception.)*

**TAN:** What is going on these days? You have become cold towards me. My number has made your blacklist, isn't it? I came to your jobsite two days ago, and it was reported you were too busy to see me. Yafe, what is going on?

**YAFE:** I'm fine. Don't worry about me.

**TAN:** Something tells me your God's-will-husband has told you to cut off our friendship. It doesn't surprise me though; I half expected it.

**YAFE:** Tan, you have to understand that doing what God wants is more important than friendship or what people have to say. You are constantly giving Buru judgment instead of mercy. Do you think you are right in God's eyes? Are you more justified in his sight than Buru is?

**TAN:** What has justification got to do with this? Did this man give you some concoction which took away your brains? I just don't seem to understand you anymore. You've been in this so-called engagement for close to two years, yet I can't see its effect on you.

**YAFE:** What do you mean?

**TAN:** Don't ask me because I don't think you want to hear my reply. Well, but if you insist to understand what I mean, let me ask you this: Is there anything you can brandish as a sign of Buru's love for you?

**YAFE** (*sitting up*): I don't love him for his money! I love him for his heart!

**TAN:** What heart? And who says you want his money or that you should? I am just saying the man's actions don't match with his profession of love and blablabla, *the Lord told me you are my wife*. Men in love are givers. While you shower him with gifts, all he excels in is to police you around. When he's not yet married to you. Can you think of what it would look like when you finally say "I do" and officially become Madam Burushaga? My friend, you would spend the rest of your life in a tight police cell!

**YAFE:** Tan, people mature and change; Burushaga is not an exception. Give him some grace, okay? I am ready to work with him. In the future, when he's the mature godly man he should be, I'll be glad I stuck with him.

**TAN:** I'm glad you even admit his unbearable domineering, immature attitude, but what guarantee do you have that he will change? You might be dead before he does. For your information, people can resist change. His is the choice to change; you can't desire him into changing. If that is what you are believing for, my dear, you might be disappointed and distressed if he doesn't change.

**YAFE:** The God who said we are supposed to get married knew the challenges we will encounter, so I won't let go just because Buru is not yet perfect. God knew Buru; he knows his future as well. I'm sticking with God's plan and working.

*(Buru's bike sounds outside. There's confusion inside. Yafe pushes Tan inside the bedroom, and only with great difficulty does she succeed to close the door before Buru comes in.)*

**YAFE:** Dear, you are welcome.

**BURU:** Thanks. How are you today?

**YAFE:** I'm great. And you?

**BURU:** Very hungry. What have you cooked?

**YAFE:** I haven't cooked yet. I just came back from work and was still thinking of what to cook.

**BURU:** Please, prepare something while I take a nap. I've been very busy today.

*(Buru lies down on the couch.  
Yafe opens her room, goes in and closes the door behind. Tan stares at her. They speak in whispers.)*

**YAFE:** I beg you in the name of God, stay calm, please. If you know you are my friend, if you truly care about me, please, stay quiet for my sake.

**TAN:** No. I will shout. I'll let him know I'm here.

**YAFE:** Please, don't!

*(Yafe takes a two thousand francs note on the top of her bed and gives it to Tan.)*

**YAFE:** Take this money. Just stay here till he leaves. Please.

**TAN:** Is this a bribe?

**YAFE:** Ooooh! Please! Just take it.

**TAN:** I'm not touching that money until you tell me what it is for.

**YAFE:** For appeasement.

**TAN:** Appeasement? But I don't want it!

**YAFE:** Then, a request for your understanding.

**TAN:** And is this all you are paying for detaining me here against my will? For no crime committed?

**YAFE:** Please, I don't have more money. Take this and shut up (*thrusts the money unto Tan's palm*). I'm going out there to prepare food for my fiancé. See you later.

*(Yafe goes out and into the kitchen. Buru is asleep.*

*Twenty minutes later, she brings a tray containing two plates, one with boiled spaghetti, and the other with tomato stew. She places on the table, and then wakes Buru up.)*

**BURU:** Don't you have plantains or something heavier? This is no food for a hungry stomach. By the time I reach my place I will need to eat again.

**YAFE:** I have plantains but they are not yet ripe; I thought to prepare a quick meal.

**BURU:** It's getting dark. Go buy me bread and banana. I can't eat this and be satisfied.

*(Yafe takes the banknote handed by Buru and goes out.)*

**BURU** (*verbalizing*): I have never seen how this lady's bedroom looks like. Some of these church sisters can be pretenders.

*(Tan hears him coming and immediately jumps out of bed and hides behind the wardrobe at the lower part of the bed. Buru opens the door and sends his head inside, looking around the room. Then he goes in and takes a look at some of the items on the top of the bed: body lotion, face and hair products etc. He then throws another look around the room. Tan pushes herself further behind the dresses.*

*After several seconds, Buru goes out to the living room. Tan is breathing nervously. An angry expression is on her face.*

*Yafe comes back with a loaf of bread and six fingers of banana. She hands some coins to Buru as his balance. He takes them and puts in his trouser pocket. Yafe goes and brings him a knife. He begins eating.)*

**BURU:** Mom called; said I should greet you.

**YAFE:** Okay. She called me the day before yesterday.

**BURU:** What did she say?

**YAFE:** Nothing in particular. Just greetings.

**BURU:** She's still of the opinion that we should get married before the end of the year. I don't know, what do you think?

**YAFE:** You are the head; whatever you say is okay by me.

**BURU:** Is something wrong with you? Why do you look nervous?

**YAFE:** I'm stressed. I had much work today at the office.

**BURU:** We could settle for November like you said. You can start soliciting your friends for their participation on the bridal train. But I don't want to see that Tan as part of the team. My wife must be submissive, and I don't want arrogant disrespectful women in her escort train. If the Lord had rather revealed to me to marry Tan, I would have released lightning plus thunder mixed with fire, sulfur and brimstone on that revelation. That girl cannot make a good wife. I pity the poor guy whom ill-luck will put in her arms.

**YAFE:** Aah! (*Holding her stomach*). Aah! Aaaaah!

**BURU:** What is it?

**YAFE:** Aah! Period pain. Just starting. (*Runs to the bedroom*). Aaah!

**BURU:** Sorry. Is that how sudden the thing comes upon you women? Take some painkillers, okay?

**YAFE** (*from the bedroom*): I will.

**TAN** (*whispers*): Congratulations! Madam Burushaga. From bribe, to lies, to what next?

**YAFE:** shhhh...

**TAN:** I am just watching this movie and wondering how the story would end.

**YAFE:** Please, shut up! Shut up!

(*Goes to the top of the bed and shuffles some of the items there, to give Buru the impression that she is looking for what to make herself comfortable. Buru calls from the living room.*)

**BURU:** Dear, are you through?

**YAFE** (*looking at Tan*): I'm almost through. Give me some few seconds.

(*Yafe comes out to the living room.*)

**BURU:** Ashia\*. What have you taken? Do you even have painkillers in the house here with you?

**YAFE:** Yeah. Paracetamol, two tablets.

**BURU:** You chewed them? Or do you have water in the bedroom there?

**YAFE:** Ah! Don't mind me; I'm used to chewing tablets.

*(Yafe goes to the kitchen and drinks some water before coming back to sit with him.)*

**BURU:** You women are in trouble. Thank God he made me a man. Just, make sure to take enough rest.

**YAFE:** I will. When you leave, I'm going straight to bed.

*(Buru finishes eating and Yafe clears the table.)*

**BURU:** Come see me off. *(Goes out, followed by Yafe.)*

*(Buru holds her hand and looks amorously into her eyes.)*

**BURU:** Still feeling pain?

**YAFE:** Slightly.

**BURU:** Ashia\*. Don't worry, that will soon be a pain of the past. I heard that when a woman starts giving birth, the pain goes away. November is not far, you know.

**YAFE:** Hmmm. Do you know how painful childbirth is?

**BURU:** But that's just once in a while. Once every year.

**YAFE:** What!?! Every year!?! I'm no baby factory, please.

**BURU:** I'm just joking. But once every two years, right?

**YAFE:** Hmm. Let me see. Okay, once every two years.

**BURU:** For the next twelve to sixteen years.

**YAFE:** Hey!!

*(They laugh. Buru mounts his bike.)*

**YAFE** *(scratches her head)*: Dear.

**BURU:** What?

**YAFE:** If we are bringing the wedding closer, in November, I think we should go for the medical tests as the pastor suggested, considering the fact that we'll have to repeat the HIV test after three months.

**BURU:** I'll only do that because churches are making the tests obligatory, as part of the pre-wedding plans. Who told them I have HIV or other sexually transmissible infections? The Lord said you are my wife. Do you think he would give me a sick wife?

**YAFE:** The tests are meant to know our physical health. That's all. They don't stop anyone from getting married, if they truly love their partner.

**BURU:** Then, why should they insist?

**YAFE:** I don't know.

**BURU:** Let me ask you something. If the hospital says I'm HIV positive, would you believe their report and dump me? Because I'm ready to marry you no matter what the hospital says.

**YAFE:** Dear, don't pull my legs. I believe what God said, and I don't think you have HIV.

**BURU:** Then let's insist to the pastor we are *not* going in for the tests! That we love each other the way we are. Why waste money? The church is not the one footing the bill? You and I are.

**YAFE:** If we refuse, he may suspect something. Let's just do the checkup, to fulfill all righteousness.

**BURU:** Okay. Think about a convenient date and tell me.

**YAFE:** I will.

**BURU:** Good night and take care. Make sure you rest. Five kisses for you.

**YAFE:** And ten for you! Good night.

*(Buru rides away. Yafe returns to the living room and finds Tan eating.)*

**TAN:** Happy marriage life. What a wonderful couple you are. A domineering husband and a lying wife. He wouldn't have needed thunder and lightning in my case, 'cause I can't misplace my brains.

**YAFE:** Tan, please for the sake of God, stay away from me. It's good we separate on good terms than to be enemies for life. You have said it: you won't support my marriage to Buru, but please don't spoil it.

**TAN:** You think with what that man said about me that I can still step foot here and anywhere around you? After I leave here today, our relationship comes to an end. Once again, happy marriage life. And your money is on your bed; I don't eat blood money.

**YAFE:** Watch your tongue. You are going to extreme with your disapproval of my marriage to Buru.

**TAN:** Before I leave and we never talk to each other again, Mirabelle is grieving. Seriously. Losing two brothers in a year is unbearable. You need to make out time to

visit and pray with her. Last time I was there she was wondering why in the world you've not even called.

*(Tan finishes her food.)*

**TAN** *(in a sober voice)*: Yafe, you may think I'm hard; I just fear that you may be making a mistake. A terrible mistake. I don't know how to make you see things the way I do. My inability to get through to you is the reason for my frustration, and harsh words at times, but I'm honestly concerned about your relationship with Buru. I am. Forgive me for hurting you by what I say. I just wish I could do it in a better way. My heart is in the right place. Good night.

*(Tan goes out. Yafe continues staring at the closed door.)*

\*A pidgin word that expresses comfort.

## SCENE 10

*(Fimba's shop. Daylight hours.*

*Chia is busy attending to some customers. Fimba is seated near the door in deep thought. Few minutes later, he sees Wirngo coming towards the shop. He quickly rises up and gets ready to greet her.)*

**FIMBA:** Good to see you again, sister Wirngo. It's been a while.

**WIRNGO:** Thank you, dear. How are you doing?

**FIMBA:** Very good, as you can see. Need some items?

**WIRNGO:** Yeah.

*(Wirngo takes a basket and goes to the shelves. Fimba watches her nervously as she picks up the items: a tin of Ovaltine™, a packet of sugar, 5 bars of Mambo™ chocolate, a tin of Dolait™ Milk.*

*She comes to the table for her bill.)*

**FIMBA:** Don't worry sister. You don't have to pay.

**WIRNGO:** Why?

**FIMBA:** It's my blessing to you today.

**WIRNGO:** Wow! Thank you so much, sweetheart. It's been a long time that someone just gave me things like this – for nothing. I really appreciate it.

**FIMBA** *(floored)*: Can I invite you to my church this Sunday?

**WIRNGO** *(verbalizing)*: So this was to serve as invitation to church, eh? No wonder. *(To Fimba:)* I'll really love to come but I'm busy on Sunday...I...

**FIMBA:** Okay, I understand. But you won't also refuse me taking you out.

**WIRNGO** *(verbalizing)*: I now understand better. Crafty man. *(To Fimba:)* it depends on the time. If it's convenient, no problem.

**FIMBA:** You give me a suitable time, then.

**WIRNGO:** Let me see. Today is Tuesday; let's keep it for Saturday evening then. Bye.

**FIMBA:** God bless you, sister. Bye.

*(Wirngo leaves.)*

**FIMBA** (*watching her go*): My dear, my sweetheart and my honey. Chia, that's the woman I will marry! I have been praying for a wife and God is about, no...God has answered my prayer. It's a matter of time. Very soon.

*(Chia laughs and runs to the rear of the shop.)*

## SCENE 11

*(Fimba's bedroom. Night.*

*Fimba is lying on his bed; he dials a number and waits for the other person to pick.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey Muna, the Muna! I am super excited! Guess what?

**MUNA:** You made a lot of money today.

**FIMBA:** No, I make money daily.

**MUNA:** Tell me, then.

**FIMBA:** The Lord has given me a confirmatory sign about sister Wirngo.

**MUNA:** Wow! Tell me more.

**FIMBA:** Can you imagine? Because I have been so overwhelmed with strong convictions about this sister, I got up this morning and prayed. I told the Lord that he should further confirm to me that Wirngo is going to be my wife. That He should make her come to my shop today and buy Dolait Milk. You can guess what happened later in the day.

**MUNA:** Are you sure it was not mere coincidence? Such things do happen, you know. Dolait is a popular brand.

**FIMBA:** No, she came in response to my prayer. She has not been to the shop for some time now. Why today? Why buy Dolait milk today? It's no coincidence. It was a confirmatory sign from the Lord. She's going to be my wife. I'm so h.a.p.p.y! I, Fimba (*places hand on chest*) am getting m.a.r.r.i.e.d very soon!

**MUNA:** Fimba, the Fim, Fim! I'm happy for you my bro. I hope I meet my own Wirngo too.

**FIMBA:** Bro, you know you are going to be my best man at the wedding.

**MUNA:** Of course. Who else would do? So when do you intend to ask her out?

**FIMBA:** We have a date Saturday evening. I'm gonna pop the big question before the day is over!

**MUNA** (*in Pidgin*): Take-am easy o. This girl nova sabi you nah! You nova sabi her too. Cool down, massa.

**FIMBA:** I'm losing no time, bro. I've been praying for a wife for years now. If God has said she is the one, what should prevent me from proposing to her? (*In pidgin:*) I no di loss sense, yah.

**MUNA** (*in Pidgin*): I di jealous o. I di really jealous.

**FIMBA:** I'm praying for you. Your own time won't be long from now.

**MUNA:** Amen oh.

(*Short pause.*)

**FIMBA:** Bro, I'm so happy; I've not felt so good in a very long time. It is very obvious that Wirngo is a Godsend, *my* Godsend. My business is even affected; the boom I've experienced these days is one in a long time. For all my struggles, God is repaying me double this year. This year is really my year!

**MUNA:** Then, this deserves some popping of something, don't you think so?

**FIMBA** (*laughs*): I know. I'll do exactly that. Tomorrow.

## SCENE 12

*(Tan's bedroom. 11 p.m.*

*Tan is on the bed, restless. After turning and tossing several times, she gets up to a sitting position.*

*After many hesitations, she picks up her phone and dials. The name on the screen is **MAMA KEMBONG.**)*

**TAN:** Hello mama. I'm so sorry for disturbing your sleep.

**MAMA K:** O no, dear child. I wasn't yet asleep. Papa and I just came back from a wake keeping ceremony.

**TAN:** Ah! Who died?

**MAMA K:** I don't think you know him. It's someone who has lived out of the village all his life. He is a relation of Papa's former colleague. That's why we went there.

**TAN:** Ok.

**MAMA K:** How are you over there?

**TAN:** Mama, we are fine.

*(Short pause.)*

**MAMA K:** What made you call at this late hour?

*(Short pause.)*

**TAN:** Mama, I don't know if I should be saying this. I really doubt if I'm right. But I'm truly worried.

**MAMA K:** What is it? Tell me, my daughter, and don't hide anything from us.

**TAN:** It's about your daughter, my friend, Yafe.

**MAMA K:** What about her?

**TAN:** Mama, it's about Buru, the man she intends to marry. Are you still there, mama?

**MAMA K:** Yes, my daughter. I'm listening.

**TAN:** Mama, how do you feel about the man?

**MAMA K:** Tan, if you have anything, don't hide it from me. You are the one living with them. You may know some things that we here don't.

**TAN:** Mama, the way the man is treating Yafe, the way he behaves, I don't believe he will make a good husband to her. As her friend, I am very worried with what I'm seeing.

*(Long pause.)*

**MAMA K:** Tan, you asked me how I feel towards that relationship. I must confess, I don't feel good. From the very first day she brought that man home. My spirit doesn't accept the man. Not that I know anything about him apart from what my daughter has told us. But from the day I saw him, *(sighs)* my blood has always been cold concerning him. Papa and I refused to acknowledge the relationship, but you know, our daughter cried and cried and cried every day on our ears. She told us she cannot marry someone else if we do not consent to her marriage to Buru. Her father had no choice but to give our consent. It was reluctant.

**TAN:** Mama, you should have stood on your word and conviction. If tomorrow, while married to him, she regrets, you and papa would share some of the blame.

**MAMA K:** You are right, my daughter. But after she had wearied us with pleas, her father said we should let her have her way and face the consequences. We did let her know we were giving our consent reluctantly.

**TAN:** Mama, Yafe does not care whether your consent was reluctant or hearty. All she wants is to get married to this Buru. She claims God told them to get married to each other.

**MAMA K:** That's another issue! What if we resist God? You know, I don't feel good about the man, I'm not excited having him as son-in-law, but what if it is really God bringing him to us? You have to consider that too.

*(Short pause.)*

**TAN:** Mama, I don't feel comfortable being the only one in this case saying this is not God. It seems like I'm not happy for my friend. But in all honesty, I do not believe God said anything. Instead, I believe God is speaking through the reservation in you and papa, and also through the circumstances Yafe is experiencing with this boy. That is what I believe God is saying: that he does not sanction this relationship.

*(Short pause.)*

**MAMA K:** My daughter, what can we do? We gave our consent already. The man's parents have visited us. What shall we say to them if we suddenly withdraw our consent? *(Sighs)* I think we can only begin to pray the good Lord that he should

intervene when they get married and help them have a good marriage. That's all we can do now. We cannot reverse the direction Yafe and Buru are going in.

**TAN:** (*heaves*): I don't know what else to say.

**MAMA K:** Thank you for showing concern. I understand how you feel. Let's just commit the situation into God's hands. Please, pray earnestly for your friend, is that okay?

**TAN:** I've heard you, mama. Good night.

**MAMA K:** Hold on! When are you bringing your own man home? You know, our eyes are as wide open as your mother's.

**TAN** (*laughs*): Mama, do not worry. God will bring someone my way.

**MAMA K:** He will. We shall continue praying.

**TAN:** Thank you, mama. Good night.

**MAMA:** Good night, my daughter.

**TAN:** Please, greet papa.

**MAMA:** He's in the living room watching a football match. You know him.

*(Tan laughs and drops the call. Short pause.)*

**TAN:** Well, I have done my part. I pray all goes well with my friend.

### SCENE 13

*(Buru's living room. Daylight hours.*

**BALAK**, *Buru's friend and age mate is visiting with him. Yafe is in the kitchen.)*

**BURU** *(to Yafe)*: Please be fast! You've wasted a lot of time in there!

**BALAK**: Bro, that's not how to talk to a lady. You can see she's doing her best. Please, encourage her.

**BURU**: She's sometimes too slow and annoying.

**BALAK**: Shouting and telling her to hurry up would only cause mistakes in there. If you want a good meal, you have to be patient. Or better still, just help her out.

*(Yafe brings out the food, and sets the table. Buru sends his hand into his trouser pocket and hands Yafe a banknote.)*

**BURU**: Buy drinks for us from across the road.

**BALAK** *(to Yafe)*: Let me help you, sweetheart. Give me the money.

**BURU**: Balak, please, I'm not happy with this.

*(Balak goes out. A minute later he comes back with three bottles of Malta Guinness.*

*After eating:)*

**BALAK**: Thank you, Yafe. The food was great.

**BURU**: Thank me for providing the money for the items.

**BALAK**: Food items don't arrange themselves into a pot, and unto the fire. It takes a good cook to put items together to produce a good flavor and an attractive dish. *(To Yafe:)* Thank you, our dear wife.

**YAFE**: You are welcome.

**BALAK**: I hope you won't mind me taking my leave now. Bachelors like us only stay in a place long enough to eat. After eating, what is there again to wait for?

**BURU**: Lazy man. I know you.

**YAFE**: Thanks for eating.

**BALAK** *(to Buru:)* You can't remove the food from my stomach. Come see me off. *(To Yafe:)* See you next time, dear.

**YAFE:** Until we meet again.

*(Buru follows Balak outside.)*

**BURU:** Man, I'm not happy with you; you want to make my lady think I'm not caring.

**BALAK:** But you are not. If you knew you wanted drinks, why didn't you buy them while waiting for the food, or why could you not just go buy them yourself? She's a nice girl, but I see you are taking her for granted.

**BURU:** She understands I'm the man; she doesn't complain. We both believe God gave us to each other.

**BALAK:** Meaning you should treat her like a piece of rag or piece of dry wood that has no feelings, right?

**BURU:** We are comfortable with our relationship, Balak. It looks strange to you, but she is not complaining.

**BALAK:** Could be you need a little more time to mature for marriage.

**BURU:** I'm more than mature. My house is in order.

**BALAK:** Buying a complete set of furniture and owning a hi-jack bike doesn't make one ready for marriage. It takes character.

**BURU:** Whatever. As if you are some saintly saint.

**BALAK:** If a caring man comes her way, you would be surprised at what actions she can take. She wouldn't look your way again. Not even for a second.

**BURU:** Are you the one to slay me, my brother? No man is coming her way. She is mine, sealed and delivered.

**BALAK:** You know I have a fiancée. But she's my queen, not my doormat.

*(Balak laughs. Buru is annoyed.)*

**BURU:** Live your life and allow me to live mine. I won't let a woman dominate me. She has to know her place and stay there. Anyway, Yafe knows God wants her to marry me; she honors that very much.

**BALAK:** You know, I care absolutely *nothing* about this whole "I saw a vision" thing. Some of you guys behave as if that is the recipe for good marriages. Treat your woman right, okay? I love Susan and I treat her well. She's happy and blessed to have me.

**BURU:** Yafe is happy and blessed to have me too.

*(Balak sighs and shakes his head. Buru is not happy.)*

## ACT II

### SCENE 1

*(Restaurant. Afternoon.  
Muna and a worried Fimba wait for their food.)*

**MUNA:** Bro, are you sure you heard from God?

**FIMBA:** I am very sure. Can't be surer than this.

**MUNA:** Why then did she turn down your proposal?

**FIMBA:** I don't know. I'm confused.

*(Short pause.)*

**MUNA:** Well, I think I know why she turned down your proposal.

**FIMBA:** Why?

**MUNA:** You were too fast. God spoke to you, and then you just hurriedly proposed to the girl. Did you consider the fact that he may not have spoken to her yet? Sometimes you need to be patient and to let God bring his will to pass. You can in haste delay the whole issue unnecessarily. Get closer to her and let her know and learn to love you too. You think which lady who sees you just twice will accept to marry you? You think you are some hot handsome guy that would sweep any and every lady off her feet? C'mon! *(Laughs.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey, it's not about the physical here. I want a godly woman.

**MUNA:** Godly or ungodly, we marry people we like. What have you done to let her love you to the point of wanting to marry you? You think you impress her with your well-kempt black hair, or maybe, your stocked shop?

**FIMBA:** No jokes, bro. This is a serious matter. *(Long pause.)* I think you are right. I should have waited. So what should I do now?

**MUNA:** Pray God will speak to her too.

*(A servant delivers their orders and leaves.)*

**MUNA (CONT'D):** Or another thought you need to give consideration to is that maybe your emotions are deceiving you. Because of the feelings you have, you may be hearing something that God is *not* saying.

**FIMBA:** I don't think so. No, no, no. It's not like I occasion these feelings, thoughts, dreams, and confirmations. Like you said, I believe I acted hastily. That's what it is.

**MUNA:** let's eat our food. We can talk later on.

## SCENE 2

*(Yafe's bedroom. Night.  
Yafe is kneeling beside her bed.)*

**YAFE:** Father, Burushaga treats me very poorly. If not because you told me and gave me more than one confirmatory sign that he is the right one, I would have let go. I feel nervous in his presence. I feel frustrated; I'm not free to be myself. I'm always under pressure to please and impress him. It's like he is always looking for something wrong to complain about or make me see that he is the man.

I am ready to submit as a wife, but he doesn't have to oppress me before I do that. Father, I pray you make him understand how his attitude towards me is not right. Father, you know I want a caring man, a loving man.

*(She pauses and let the tears drop.)*

Please, Lord, help Burushaga know that I'm not happy with his ways, his manners. Help him to (--)

*(Her phone rings on the top of the bed. She wipes away her tears, gets up from the kneeling position and picks the call.)*

**YAFE:** Hello.

**CALLER:** Hello. Is this sister Yafe?

**YAFE:** Yes, who is on the line, please?

**CALLER:** I'm calling from Bamenda.

**YAFE:** Okay, but who are you, Mister?

**CALLER:** Don't worry. You'll soon get to know me. How are you doing?

**YAFE:** Please, who are you? Are you sure you have not missed the number?

**CALLER:** I don't think so. Am I not talking with Yafe?

**YAFE:** Yes. Where did you get my number?

**CALLER:** Never mind. You'll get to know me. I will be in Kumba in two weeks; and would greatly appreciate an opportunity to meet with you. I really want to meet and talk with you in person.

**YAFE:** What for?

**CALLER:** Don't worry, my dear; it can only be good news.

**YAFE:** I'm not too comfortable. I don't like meeting strangers.

**CALLER:** I may be a stranger, but the person who recommended you to me is no stranger to you.

**YAFE:** Who are you? And what do you want from me?

**CALLER:** Don't be afraid. In subsequent calls I shall reveal more of my identity to you. Today I only intended to get the connection. Again I say, you have no reason to be afraid. I'm no scammer or stalker.

**YAFE:** Then, just tell me who you are.

**CALLER:** Next time, dear. God bless you. Good night.

**YAFE:** Night.

*(Yafe looks at her screen until the caller drops.)*

**YAFE:** This is strange. Why am I happy with the call of a total stranger? *(Long Pause.)* Tan is trying to unhook me from Burushaga! *(Pause.)* But wait a minute. That can't be true; it doesn't make sense. Tan would gladly have a man instead of sending him my way. *(Pause.)* Or does she care so much that all she wants to see is Burushaga leave my life? *(Pause.)* Whatever, it would be good hearing from this stranger. But...Father, I don't know. This is temptation lurking around the corner. Please, help me. Forgive me.

### SCENE 3

*(Fimba's shop. Early morning.  
Chia is arranging the shop. Fimba comes in.)*

**CHIA:** Good morning, patrong. You look tired.

**FIMBA:** Really? I didn't sleep well last night. *(Yawns.)* I think I should clean my face before customers start noticing. *(Yawns again).*

**CHIA:** You have a problem?

**FIMBA:** Sorry Chia, you can't understand, neither can you help with what I'm going through.

**CHIA:** Just tell me. I can be of help.

**FIMBA:** You are a small boy.

**CHIA:** I think I know. It's about that girl that collects things here and doesn't pay. *(Laughs).*

**FIMBA:** Chia, be careful with me. This is a serious matter.

*(Wirngo comes in.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey! What a divine coincidence! Just talking about you, and here you are. Good to see you again.

**WIRNGO:** Good morning.

**FIMBA:** How are you, dear? What can I offer you today?

**WIRNGO:** I'm fine. I need *(reads from a list)* a packet of fine sugar, a pack of malt drink 35cl bottles, 10 sachets of vanilla, 2 sachets of Margarine, 2kg of wheat flour (--)

**FIMBA:** Throwing a party?!

**WIRNGO:** 200g of Mayonnaise and a liter of vegetable oil. Oh no, a friend of mine is coming over to spend a few days.

**FIMBA:** Okay, let me get the items for you.

*(Fimba assembles the said items and throws in an extra packet of Cabin™ biscuit. He packages them in a Sacks & Motors®, and motions to Wirngo to come outside with him.)*

**FIMBA:** Sister Wirngo, it's been a month since I spoke to you. You don't pick my calls; you don't even reply my texts or messages on WhatsApp. I have been to your place several evenings and you were not in. Please, tell me, what is it? What do you want? I'm ready to do anything to satisfy your expectations.

**WIRNGO:** Brother, I simply told you my mind. I don't say no and later yes. I'm only being honest with you. I could deceive you but I don't want to because I see you are a good man.

**FIMBA:** Dear, please pray about this. Don't give me an answer until you pray about it. I know for sure we are going to get married.

**WIRNGO:** Please, try and understand. I have said no and I will not change my mind. *(Taking money out of her purse.)* How much do I pay for these items?

**FIMBA:** You do not pay.

**WIRNGO:** Thank you. Good day.

**FIMBA:** Good day too. Please, pray about me.

*(Wirngo leaves and Fimba goes inside.)*

**CHIA:** If she comes when I'm alone, she must pay.

**FIMBA:** Oh no, Chia. You won't do that. Anytime she comes here, let her collect whatever she needs free of charge. She's going to be my wife, that is, your second patrong, understood?

*(Chia laughs and falls on a bag of rice, annoying Fimba sorely.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(In front of Wirngo's residence. Night.*

*Fimba comes to the door, but doesn't knock. He presses his ear against the door to eavesdrop. He can get music and laughter, impressions of merriment.)*

**FIMBA** (*verbalizing*): Who are these visitors she's hosting? Is one of the males her boyfriend? Should I knock? No. What would I say I have come to do here at this hour? O Lord, why does it have to be this way? Why is she so headstrong? Can it be that you spoke to me while she is seeing another man? Why would you do that? Do I have to suffer emotional pain night and day before I finally get her as mine?

*(Presses his ear unto the door. The music is overshadowing the voices.)*

**FIMBA**: Father, I don't just understand this anymore. I'm (--)

*(The heavy door screeches and begins to open. Fimba is startled, but must run away before he is discovered. But it's too late to run away from the building without being seen. As fast as lightning, he jumps behind the first pillar on the verandah.*

*The man coming out passes by to the nearby bush to ease himself. Fimba then goes to stand beside the second pillar so as not to be seen when the man comes back.*

*After few minutes, the man comes back and goes inside.*

*Fimba slowly walks away in the darkness.)*

**FIMBA** (*verbalizing*): Lord, what is going on? Was I mistaken? I'm not sure these are ordinary friends; one of these men is Wirngo's boyfriend. I'm not comfortable with what I'm seeing, but Lord, I am also confused. Look at the man; this is not the caliber of men I can compete with. Handsome and posh, I stand no chance with them. What should I do?

**INAUDIBLE VOICE**: Don't worry, son; you are not deluded. Other men are also interested in her; she's a beautiful woman, can't you see? Because of their outward looks, she's seeing things carnally. But don't you worry, she's going to be yours; she's the one I have ordained for you. Just invite her to church. And also pray to blind her eyes to any man that is trying to fool her. They are deceiving her with their good looks.

**FIMBA**: Thank you Lord, I am so glad to hear she's going to be mine. I love her so much. I will invite her to church.

**INAUDIBLE VOICE**: O yes! Invite her to church this Sunday. Keep praying and closing her eyes to every distraction. And give her more gifts; you must surpass what the other man is giving her, if not...

**FIMBA:** No, Lord; I can't allow anyone take her from me. I will do as you've said. Tomorrow, I will bring her gifts and invite her to church. Thank you, Lord. Let me rush home before the rains meet me.

**INAUDIBLE VOICE:** Run, son. Run!

## SCENE 5

*(Burushaga's residence. Night.*

*Yafe comes out of the kitchen, into the living room. She takes her phone from her purse and dials.)*

**YAFE:** Hello, dear. I'm through. I will be leaving.

**BURU:** Wait till I come.

**YAFE:** Dear, please, it's late. I have been here since midday, now, it's almost 7: 30 p.m.

**BURU:** In few months' time you will be in that house full time, so you better learn how to sit there for hours. *(Drops the call.)*

*(Fifteen minutes later, Buru comes in.)*

**BURU:** Wow! You've done a wonderful job. This place looks and smells good. Thank you, my dear.

**YAFE:** You are welcome. Can I go now?

**BURU:** What are you going to do in your place? This is just past 7? Spend some time with me. I'll drop you in your place at 8:30.

**YAFE:** I'm tired. I want to go and take a rest.

**BURU:** Why not rest here?

**YAFE:** No, I just want to go to my place.

**BURU:** Did I force you to come clean and cook? I'm asking because it looks so to me. I only said the house was in bad shape, that you come sort out things. But you don't look as happy as you used to. You came here under compulsion, right?

*(Yafe remains silent.)*

**BURU:** See, Yafe, no one is begging you to stay in this relationship. You follow your convictions and let peace reign. If I ever forced you to love me, then you were wrong to accept me. But if truly you heard God tell you we are meant to be, then you must grow up and start taking up your responsibility, as homemaker, seriously. For your information, I can cook; I can clean. When I ask you to do these things for me, it's not because I don't have hands or the strength to do them myself. I do so because I think it would be a joy for you when I allow you to begin taking up the responsibilities.

Would you be happy if you come here and I'm the one cooking, cleaning and doing other things that the woman is supposed to do? I don't think you would be happy.

**YAFE:** It's okay. I have heard you. Let me go.

**BURU:** So I've been talking to the air? (*Mimics:*) *It's okay. Let me go.* Won't you say something concerning what I've just said?

*(Yafe gets up to go.)*

**BURU:** Yafe, if you open that door and leave this house, you may not like the consequences. It's either you sit down and we talk or you walk out, *forever*.

*(Yafe comes back and sits down.)*

**BURU:** If there's one thing I hate, it's called disrespect. In the middle of my talk, you get up and want to walk out? I hate that! What is your problem? What is eating you up?

**YAFE** (*sobs*): I don't feel loved. I feel frustrated, used and (--)

**BURU:** What do you mean? Of course, I love you! I love you with all my heart. But if you do something wrong, I won't keep quiet just because I love you.

*(Yafe sobs profusely. Buru comes closer, sits and holds her hand.)*

**BURU:** Look into my eyes. (*Yafe looks*). They burn with the fire of love. If you listen to my chest, you would hear my heart beating faster, because of the love I have for you. Yafe, I love you more than words can tell. I was so happy when God revealed to me you are my wife-to-be. (*Short pause.*) When we get married, I will show you how much I love you. (*Laughs*) I honestly can't wait for November to come. Each passing day is causing my heart to beat faster and faster.

*(Yafe wipes away the tears from her eyes.)*

**BURU:** Would you mind if I kiss you?

*(Yafe takes away her hand.)*

**YAFE:** No. Let's wait till the wedding day.

**BURU:** Only light kisses; I won't go to the level of arousing your emotions.

**YAFE:** No. I'm not comfortable with that.

**BURU:** It's okay. As you wish. I just wanted to let you know I care about you. I want you as my wife. (*Short pause.*) Is someone still feeling frustrated and marginalized?

**YAFE:** No. I'm fine.

**BURU:** Then, smile for me. Big, big smile. (*Yafe smiles*) Yeah, I love that smile. Can we eat? I'm fainting.

*(Yafe goes to bring the food.)*

## SCENE 6

*(Fimba's shop. Morning.*

*Fimba and Chia are busy serving clients. Wirngo comes in, accompanied by another young lady, BIY. Fimba abandons everything in order to attend to them.)*

**FIMBA:** Hi. You're welcome.

**WIRNGO:** Good morning.

**FIMBA:** I planned on coming to your place this evening, but here you are! Is this the friend you said was coming over?

**WIRNGO:** Yes, her name is Biy.

**FIMBA:** Sister Biy, it's good to meet you.

**BIY:** The pleasure is mine, *brother.* (*Chuckles.*)

*(Wirngo and Biy go to the shelves and pick the items they want. A tin of milk, loaves of bread, a tube of toothpaste, and cubes of soap.  
They come to the table for their bill.)*

**FIMBA:** You already know I won't collect payment from you.

**WIRNGO:** Thanks. Have a nice day.

**FIMBA:** Wait. Please, I invite you to my church this Sunday. Don't say no, again.

**WIRNGO** (*verbalizing*): If I say no again, he would stop giving me free provisions. (*To Fimba:*) Okay. When do the services start?

**FIMBA:** 8 a.m. I'll come pick you up.

**WIRNGO:** Deal. Biy, let's go.

*(Wirngo and Biy go out.)*

**BIY:** You mean this guy has always given you free provisions?

**WIRNGO:** I told you. (*Laughs.*)

**BIY:** But why are you deceiving him?

**WIRNGO:** Me, deceiving him? If he has chosen to give me free provisions, that's his business. It isn't my fault that he's not the kind of man I want. Take a good look at me. Do you think that this guy can maintain me? Well, yeah, he has a big store, but what is

a provision store after all? My monthly expenditure on manicure, pedicure, facial and hairdo would bankrupt him in a year. And that's just make-up. Babe, I need a guy with plenty money. (*Laughs*). And handsomeness too.

**BIY:** Then stop collecting his gifts.

**WIRNGO:** I'm not forcing him.

**BIY:** You come to his shop because you know he can't ask you for money. Why can't you go somewhere else?

**WIRNGO:** You would do same if you were in my shoes.

**BIY:** So would you really follow him to church?

**WIRNGO:** Maybe.

## SCENE 7

*(Inside a church. Late morning.*

*About a hundred people are gathered. **PASTOR BRENDAN**, a dark stocky man, early forties, is rounding up his message.)*

**PASTOR B:** We thank the Lord for today's service. I'm sure everyone here was blessed in one way or another. Before we say the benediction, I have words from the Lord for some people. Brother Ngoh, Mama Yefon and our visitor, Miss Wirngo, please see me in my office. I will like to talk with each of you. "May the grace..."

**CHURCH:** May the grace of our Lord be with us all. Amen.

*(As the others disperse, Fimba moves to a corner to wait for Wirngo who is going the direction of the Pastor's office. Few minutes later, she comes out, very angry.)*

**WIRNGO:** Take me out of this place! I don't even know why I accepted to come here in the first place.

**FIMBA:** Dear, what is it? What has the Pastor told you?

**WIRNGO:** Fimba, I want to go home. Don't even bother dropping me. I'll take a taxi.

*(Wirngo leaves, muttering.)*

**FIMBA (to himself):** Should I ask the pastor what he told her. No. I will just let it be. I will let God do his work. *(Rushes out.)*

## SCENE 8

*(Yafe's bedroom. 8 p.m.)*

*Yafe comes into the room, dressed for bed. As she is about to lie down, her phone rings. She notices it's that strange number. With a firm face, she picks up the call.)*

**CALLER:** Hello, good evening, Yafe.

**YAFE:** I'm not talking again until you tell me who you are and how you got my number and what you want from me.

**CALLER:** Okay. I understand how confused you may have been. My name is Muna, I'm an IT specialist, living in Bamenda. My aunt in Kumba told me there's a lady whom each time she sees, she believes her to be my wife. She gave me your number.

**YAFE:** Who is your aunt?

**MUNA:** She is Mrs. Ateh Miranda. She works with the delegation of Basic Education.

**YAFE:** I know her. Why didn't she first contact me before sending you my number?

**MUNA:** I don't know. But she assured me you are a wonderful girl. I want to meet you in person so we can sit down and talk. I will be in Kumba next week. Is that okay by you?

**YAFE:** I don't know.

**MUNA:** What do you mean by 'I don't know'? Okay, you give me a convenient day.

*(Short pause.)*

**YAFE:** Mr. Muna, I'm not too comfortable with meeting you. I don't know you.

**MUNA:** Exactly why we need to meet each other; I don't know you too. I love the report my aunt gave about you. I know her to be a sincere Christian woman. I want to meet you. I cannot appreciate it if we continue talking on phone without having met each other physically.

*(Short pause.)*

**YAFE:** Okay, no problem. Just call when you are in Kumba. I'll come see you in Mrs. Ateh's place.

**MUNA:** Presently, she's on holiday in the village. Has a building project. The day she was passing to the village, that's when she told me about you and also gave me your number.

**YAFE:** okay, call me when you arrive. I'll give you directions to where you can meet me.

**MUNA:** Thanks a lot, dear. I really appreciate it. Good night nah?

**YAFE:** Good night.

*(Muna drops the call. Yafe stares at her phone.)*

**YAFE:** What am I really doing? Am I not opening the door for the devil to come in to steal, kill and destroy? With all what I believe the Lord told me about Burushaga, why am I doing this? Our wedding is four months away. O God, please, have mercy.

*(Her phone rings.)*

**YAFE:** Hello, dear.

**BURU:** What exactly is wrong with you!? What kind of a woman are you!?

**YAFE:** What is it?

**BURU:** The pastor told me you came asking about... about kissing. What exactly did you want to hear from him?

**YAFE:** I...I...only asked him if fiancés can...can begin kissing; if that is all right?

**BURU:** Shut up! *(Mimics:)* I only asked him if fiancés can begin kissing. You told him I wanted to kiss you, right?

**YAFE:** No, I didn't! I was only surprised you asked to kiss me, and I just wanted to find out from the pastor what the Bible says about kissing without being married. I didn't even ask in a bad way. It was just an inquiry.

**BURU:** What the bible says about kissing? If it is wrong, is it everything the bible condemns that you no longer indulge? Have you never been kissed before? Have you not had more than a kiss? Or is it because Buru asked for it that now it suddenly became a taboo? I hate a holier-than-thou attitude. You excel in making me angry. What crime did I commit? Where is my wrong? You tell me! Is this how you intend to treat me when we get married? There are better girls out there, I hope you know that.

**YAFE:** Dear, please don't be angry. I am sorry. I had no wrong motive when I asked Pastor Ebenezer that question. That day when I came back I was just wondering if I am not too strict with the boundaries I have imposed, like what is wrong in kissing and all that, when we've already made up our minds to get married? Like I said, it was a mere inquiry. I am sorry. Please, forgive me.

**BURU:** Please, always think twice, thrice, before you make decisions. I hate embarrassment. That question got Pastor Ebenezer thinking far.

**YAFE:** I'm sorry. I didn't intend to. Please, forgive me.

**BURU:** Good night

**YAFE:** Good...night.

*(Yafe sits on the bed for a long time, staring at her phone and being melancholic.)*

**YAFE:** O Lord, if only I could have the liberty to make a choice. But Father, I love you and I want what *you* want for me. I may not understand it all, but you do. That is why I believe your will for me is the best for me, and all things work together for good for those who love you and are called according to your purpose. Have your way in my life.

*(She takes her phone and composes a text.)*

**YAFE:** 'Hello, Mr. Muna. I don't have any intentions to want to see you. I'm engaged to be married in a few months' time. Bye.'

*(She sits staring at the screen.)*

**YAFE:** I honestly don't want to send this message. Why am I feeling this way? Am I wrong or right? I don't know. *(Sighs and puts away the phone.)*

## SCENE 9

*(Fimba's shop. 9 a.m.*

*Chia is serving some customers. Fimba is doing calculations on the table.*

*Muna comes in.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey, bro. You are welcome

**MUNA:** Thanks. I paid my ticket at the agency, and said let me sit with you till take-off time.

**FIMBA:** Traveling to?

**MUNA:** Kumba.

**FIMBA:** Work?

**MUNA** *(smiles)*: No. my aunt called me to come meet one lady like that.

**FIMBA:** Bro! And you are already on the way without telling me?

**MUNA:** But I'm here to inform you, nah.

**FIMBA:** While your ticket is already paid? Well, I forgive you. So who is the girl?

**MUNA:** Like I've just said, my aunt called, said she's a very good girl. I have spoken with the lady twice on phone. I'm going to physically meet with her.

**FIMBA:** Unfortunately you are telling me when you've booked the vehicle. Why should you go to such lengths? If the Lord has a wife for you, she would be around you, in your vicinity, around your jobsite.

**MUNA:** That is your own theology. Abraham sent his servant on a long distance to seek a wife for Isaac.

**FIMBA:** So instead of Isaac to *patiently* wait for the servant to bring Rebecca, he is now the one going on the journey in search of a wife? This is the analogy I will give you: Abraham represents God who knows his son needs a wife. His servants, God's angels, go on mission on our behalf, to bring Rebecca, the wife to Isaac, that is, us, by causing our paths to cross.

**MUNA:** I think you should close down this shop and head to the seminary. You are too much, Rt. Reverend Fimba.

**FIMBA:** In our day and age, who chooses a wife again for another? Don't you have eyes?

**MUNA:** Fimba, this is a mere recommendation. I'm just going to see the lady in question. By the way, you have just contradicted your analogy.

**FIMBA:** All the same, I wish you safe journey. But don't tell the lady anything until you have heard from the Lord first.

**MUNA:** Yeah. *(Long pause.)* How is Wirngo?

**FIMBA:** Still playing hard-to-get. She doesn't come to the shop anymore. I just laugh because I know one day she would come crawling and begging. Who plays with God? When my God will get on her case, and deprive her eyes of sleep and all she can do is think about me, she will come.

*(Muna remains quiet. Fimba continues with the calculations.  
Ten minutes later...)*

**MUNA:** I think I should go. See you when I come back tomorrow. Please, pray for me.

**FIMBA:** I will. Please, be careful and don't get carried away by emotions and physical beauty, okay? Safe journey.

**MUNA:** Thanks, bro.

*(Muna leaves and Fimba continues with his calculations.)*

## SCENE 10

*(Tan's residence. Evening.*

*Tan is watching television.*

*Yafe knocks and comes in. She has covered her head in the Muslim women fashion, and takes off the covering when she closes the door.*

*Tan starts laughing.)*

**YAFE:** Trouble in Katanga.

*(Tan laughs hysterically for more than half a minute.)*

**TAN:** My sister, you have chosen to make your life miserable. So you have to disguise, and become a Muslim woman, so your man would not track you down eh? Don't be surprised if Burushaga shows up here. I can assure you, that would mean the end of this relationship. Don't blame me; you are the one who has carried your two legs into my house. I'm innocent.

**YAFE:** Please, somebody is in town to see me. He will meet and talk with me *here*.

**TAN:** Who is that?

**YAFE:** I don't know him yet.

*(Yafe's phone rings. She picks.)*

**YAFE:** Where are you now?

**MUNA:** I'm out of the park.

**YAFE:** Okay. Take a bike and ask the rider to drop you at the roundabout, Fiango.

*(On the background, the voices of bike riders can be heard clamoring to get the client.)*

**MUNA:** You said Fiango?

**YAFE:** Yes. Roundabout.

**MUNA:** Okay. I'm on my way. *(Drops the call)*.

**TAN:** How is the plot of this movie progressing? I'm lost.

**YAFE:** Please, when he comes, excuse us so we can talk. Please.

**TAN:** The part I'm playing in this drama is becoming uncomfortable. Every now and then I'm called upon to act without having been given the script beforehand. You know, I'm not good at ad lib. I may say something terrible, unconsciously.

**YAFE:** Just act, okay? Just act.

*(Yafe sits down and nervously waits.  
Minutes later, her phone rings again.)*

**MUNA:** I'm at the roundabout. Red T-shirt on denim trousers. Red face cap. Black backpack.

**YAFE:** Okay. I'm coming.

*(Yafe wraps the loin on her head and goes out. Minutes later, she comes back, holding a shopping bag. Muna follows.)*

**YAFE:** Meet my friend, Tan. Tan, this is Muna.

*(Muna and Tan greet each other.  
Yafe keeps the bag inside the kitchen.)*

**TAN:** I'm next door. Call me if you need me. *(Goes out.)*

*(Intercut.)*

## SCENE 11

*(Outside Wirngo's apartment. Evening.  
Fimba knocks on the door, Wirngo opens. On seeing Fimba, she gets annoyed and speaks with a stern voice.)*

**WIRNGO:** Brother Fimba, what brings you here this evening?

**FIMBA:** Sister Wirngo, you are disobeying God and you know it.

**WIRNGO:** I don't understand you!

**FIMBA:** The Lord has already spoken to you about marrying me, but you are rebellious.

**WIRNGO:** How? I don't understand what you (--)

**FIMBA:** You understand exactly what I mean. Why do you keep rejecting my proposal?

**WIRNGO:** 'Cause I don't want to marry you! Stop pestering me! Is it by force? What kind of a man are you? You think you can make me change my mind?

**FIMBA:** You are asking questions? Wirngo! Okay. No problem. Just remember you can't disobey God and still enjoy His blessings. No, you suffer the consequences.

**WIRNGO:** I don't know what you are talking about. Can someone please help me with this one!?

**FIMBA:** Keep pretending. *(Short pause.)* You know what? I hand you over to God. Sister Wirngo, I hand you over to the God who spoke to me about you. When you are ready to follow the voice of the Lord, come tell me. I'll be waiting for you. *(Leaves)*

**WIRNGO:** Why did I cross the path of one like this? He's not my type! He's neither rich nor handsome for my liking...I do not want him! What kind of a thing is this!? Nonsense! *(Goes inside the house.)*

## BACK TO SCENE 10

**YAFE:** I won't lie to you, brother Muna. I'm in a relationship of about two years now. The guy is abusive, emotionally abusive. He restricts and monitors my every move. I had to disguise to come here, but don't be surprised if he shows up. I've been coping with it. My friend has asked me to cut off the relationship but it's hard. I truly believe the Lord told me that he is my husband. So even though I'd really love to let go, it's hard going against what you believe God told you to do. I don't even know why I didn't tell you this before. Please, I'm sorry for making you come all the way from Bamenda.

**MUNA:** I'm grateful for your openness, my dear. Other girls would just have said there have no one.

*(Long pause.)*

**MUNA:** I understand it's a hard place to be when you believe the Lord has told you to marry someone and they are just playing with your person or taking you for granted. But let me ask you this? If the Lord had not spoken, would you continue (--)

**YAFE:** I would call off the relationship this very moment if I discover I was mistaken! But the signs were so strong and so clear! He too believes God spoke to him. That's what he told me when he came to ask me out.

*(Long pause.)*

**MUNA:** My dear, the Bible says a wife is a good thing. And I believe that a husband is also a good thing. How do you treat a good thing? How should a man treat a good thing? How should a woman treat a good thing? If you value it, you won't treat it poorly.

*(Yafe stares intently at Muna. It would appear the Burushaga cords inside of her, that had long held her captive, are snapping and coming off. The scales are falling off her eyes.)*

**YAFE** (*verbalizing*): How I wish I can accompany this one to Bamenda this very night. (*To Muna:*) You are right. Very right.

**MUNA:** You have a decision to make. It's not about me; it's about you. Forget about the convictions you felt or still feel, forget about them for the moment. Seek God and his word. If you want to continue with your fiancé, it's your decision.

*(Yafe sighs and bows down her head.)*

**YAFE** (*verbalizing*): Was it the devil that spoke to me? How can I live with the knowledge that I clung to false convictions for almost two years? (*To Muna:*) Okay.

**MUNA**: You would be the one to give me the green light if you so decide. But for the moment, I steer clear of the situation. My aunt gave a good recommendation of you – she thinks highly of you. I like you and would have wished to know you more but I can't court anyone who is in a relationship. No, I can't.

**YAFE**: Thank you. Thank you very much.

*(Yafe's phone rings. She puts it off.)*

**MUNA**: Dear, don't dump your fiancé for me. If you let go of him, do it because you believe it is the right thing to do. For your welfare. If you let him go simply so you can jump into the arms of another man, that's still not the right thing to do. You have work to do, and it's not to consider me, but to reevaluate the convictions you have about your fiancé.

*(Yafe's phone rings again. She puts it off again.)*

**YAFE**: It's a dilemma. I can't promise you I can easily make a decision either way. In some ways, it's easier remaining with him than letting go. For the sake of my beliefs.

**MUNA**: I understand.

**YAFE**: No, you don't.

**MUNA** (*laughs*): Well, I believe I do. When one has a sincere heart to do *only* that which God wants, it's a hard place to be when you encounter situations that make you want to reconsider your convictions about what the Lord has told you. I wish I can help you. But think of what I have said. A wife is a good thing. A husband is a good thing. The way you treat a good thing tells others if you truly value it as a good thing or not.

**YAFE**: I have a question. In the contrary case, that is, when one doesn't treat a good thing well, would you say it's not the will of God or that maybe it's the will of God and the person may not just be behaving well? Is God's will always perfect?

*(Long pause.)*

**MUNA**: Wow! That's a difficult question. In the issue of marriage, I'd say you *must* consider the person's behavior before you make your final decision. Don't go into a relationship *hoping* that the other person will change into who you want him to be. What if they don't change? You would carry a cross, but would that be the cross God gave you or the one you made for yourself?

**YAFE**: I don't know what to say.

**MUNA:** As to God's will being perfect or not, I'd say no human is perfect. If you are looking for a sinless perfect saint, you won't find him on planet earth. But the gift should at least be good; someone you are happy and comfortable being with, not someone you are with just because 'the Lord said he's the right one for you'. You said it, that if you were not sure it was God's will you would dump the guy this very minute. I'd advise you to do some praying and thinking. Like I said, it shouldn't be about me. It's about your future and your welfare.

**YAFE:** I will. Thank you very much.

**MUNA:** Thanks for the chat. I have to go. I will spend the night with a friend and then I'll travel back to Bamenda tomorrow.

**YAFE:** Let me inform Tan you are leaving.

*(Yafe goes out. Muna waits.  
There's a knock on the door. Buru comes in.)*

**MUNA:** Good evening, sir.

**BURU:** Good evening. Where's the girl who lives here?

**MUNA:** She is (--). O, here they are.

*(Yafe and Tan come in. Yafe freezes on seeing Buru.)*

**BURU:** I knew you were here. I knew it! That is why you refused picking my calls. For your information, this relationship is over! Call your parents and tell them they shouldn't wait any longer for a son-in-law called Burushaga. Tell them before they wait in vain; before your retired soldier of a father starts borrowing money while hoping to repay with the bride price from me.

**YAFE:** Where did I ever go wrong? Buru, why do you insult my parents?

**BURU:** Goodbye. *(Goes out.)*

**TAN:** I told you. I am very happy but it pains me that you had to wait for this long, and receive so many insults. This rascal does not deserve you.

*(Yafe sobs. Very long pause.)*

**MUNA:** From what I have judged, it's either the man believes God led him to you meanwhile he doesn't truly like you, or he was using "thus says the Lord" to blind you to his lack of good manners.

**TAN:** Mr. Muna, I believe the second judgment is the correct one. Buru *never* heard God any time. He knew Yafe loves God, and in order to get her to accept him easily, he said the Lord revealed to him that she's his wife-to-be.

**YAFE** (*sobbing*): But what about what I believe the Lord said to me about marrying him?

**TAN**: I don't know about that. I honestly don't know.

**MUNA**: My dear, I think the issue now is if you are willing to let go of those convictions. You might have felt a conviction or dreamt a dream, but the man's actions reveal the kind of man he is, and should not be ignored. Besides, he's called off the relationship. And one more thing, you do not have to blame yourself for the break up. Never do that. It's no fault of yours.

**TAN**: That's right! No fault of yours. Wipe those tears!

**MUNA**: Let her weep. It's a normal reaction to pain. She'll get some relief from that.

**TAN**: Mr. Muna, thank you very much for coming. This is what I have been praying for.

**MUNA**: Let's pray she heals completely. By the way, call me Muna. (*To Yafe:*) Dear, I have to go. I'll see you tomorrow, before I return to Bamenda. Relax, okay?

**YAFE**: Thank you so much.

**TAN**: Sorry, we can't offer you anything today.

**MUNA**: Who would eat in this kind of atmosphere? Another time, my dear.

*(The two women see Muna off. He mounts a bike and goes away.)*

**YAFE** (*humorously*): I think it's time to go with the permissive will of God.

**TAN**: Explain further.

**YAFE**: If the perfect will of God can be so troublesome and the permissive will so enticing, I choose to go with the permissive will.

**TAN**: Not true, my dear, but in *this* case, it is very, very true.

*(Hysterical laughter.)*

**TAN**: What did Muna bring?

**YAFE**: I didn't look much inside the bag, but I saw a liter of pure honey, fresh groundnuts (--)

**TAN**: Here is someone who knows how to match his words with his actions. I like this guy already. Let's go boil the groundnuts.

*(Yafe's phone rings.)*

**TAN**: Who is it?

**YAFE:** Burushaga.

**TAN:** What!?

## SCENE 12

*(Buru's living room.*

*Buru's call is dropped. He redials the number and takes the phone to his ear. It rings and rings and rings, and drops by itself. He redials and listens again. The same thing happens. The third time, a female voice answers.)*

**VOICE:** Sorry, this number is not available at the moment. Please, try ag (--)

**BURU** *(drops the call):* She put off the phone. *(Breathes heavily.)* She put off the phone on me! Okay, let's wait and see who'll cry the last. She who cries the last cries the bitterest.

*(Intercut.)*

## BACK TO SCENE 10

**TAN:** So what are the plans?

**YAFE:** I'll talk with Muna tomorrow. You know I just met him. Buru got me very exasperated. Falling in love with someone else is so refreshing, but potentially dangerous too. Muna speaks softly; the sound of his voice drowns my heart with emotions, but I won't rush into the relationship. I really pray he'll be patient, so I can get my mind completely back.

**TAN** *(laughing):* I'm so glad to hear you talking like this. The love potion just expired and Buru forgot to renew it on time! *(Laughs. Short pause.)* What you say is true. Muna looks like a nice guy, but one never can tell. Count on me to pray with you on this one.

**YAFE:** My main worry right now is about Mrs. Lungai, Buru's mom. She's such a nice person; she loves me so much. And the pastor too.

**TAN:** But it's Buru you were to get married to, not his mom, not the pastor. True, his mother will be hurt, but you can't marry a bad-tempered man simply because his mom is kindhearted. Do you know what I think you should do? Go see her and explain the situation. Before Buru does. But be careful not to return to the son when you encounter the kindness of the mother. As for the man of God, I believe Pastor Ebenezer will understand the situation.

**YAFE:** Dear Lord, please help me.

*(Intercut.)*

## **BACK TO SCENE 12**

*(Buru dials the number again. The same voice answers, this time around, in French.)*

**VOICE:** Désolé, le numéro que (--)

**BURU:** Nonsense! Vous êtes malades!

*(He dials a different number. It rings and the call is picked.)*

**BURU:** Good evening Balak.

**BALAK:** Hey, good evening. How?

**BURU:** I'm not feeling too well.

**BALAK:** Whatzup?

**BURU:** It's over between Yafe and I.

**BALAK:** What do you mean?

**BURU:** What you just heard.

**BALAK:** What happened?

**BURU:** She called off the relationship, disrespected me and walked away. I've been trying her number, seems she's put off the phone or blacklisted my number, something like that.

**BALAK:** Wait, wait, wait. She called off the relationship? How?

**BURU:** Man, I'm still confused. We had some misunderstanding, I expected her to call me and apologize, but it's getting to an hour now, she's not calling and her number is not going through.

**BALAK** *(laughing)*: Is that all? A mere misunderstanding an hour ago and you are panicking and making terrible conclusions? My guy, cool down. Yafe can't call off a wedding four months to the date.

**BURU:** I really hope so. I really hope so.

**BALAK:** Relax. There's no reason to be anxious. I'm sure she's just annoyed with you for the moment. She'll pick up your call in the morning.

**BURU:** Thanks, man.

**BALAK:** You are welcome.

**BURU:** It's a good night

**BALAK:** Good night.

*(Buru remains seated, staring at his phone.)*

### SCENE 13

*(In front of the church building. 5 p.m.)*

**YAFE:** I'm so confused. He left without seeing me again; said he had to be in Bamenda this evening. I'm sure he had a rethink over the night. Probably, Mrs. Ateh Miranda told him to let go. She didn't know I was in a relationship.

**TAN:** You must calm down. At least, he called. Had it been he never called, it would have been different. Important business might have necessitated his return to Bamenda this morning.

**YAFE:** But he promised to talk with me today. He should have come to the office.

**TAN:** I think you worry for nothing. Wait and see what happens before you make your conclusions.

**YAFE:** O Lord.

**TAN:** Let's go in; they've started singing.

**YAFE:** Honestly, I don't know if I will get anything from today's lesson.

*(Tan comes closer.)*

**TAN:** I know you are hurting. But dear, I beg you in the name of God, try to relax.

**YAFE:** But what if all that happened yesterday was wrong? Was I right in assuming that God never spoke to me? What if Buru and I were truly supposed (--)

**TAN:** Let me know this from you: why did you let Buru go? Because of his abusive attitude or because of Muna?

*(Yafe looks at Tan, confused.)*

**TAN (CONT'D):** If you were happy to let go only because there was another pair of arms in which to jump, then that was a wrong decision to take. If Muna never calls, would you go back to beg Burushaga?

**YAFE:** Buru called again in the morning, eight times or so. I didn't pick. Since then, he hasn't called again.

**TAN:** Answer my questions about Muna.

**YAFE:** I won't go back to Buru, but honestly, it's hard. I wish Muna would call.

**TAN:** Sweetheart, you must be firm. The issue has been Buru's attitude; let it stay there. Don't shift, don't budge. I mean, this is the guy who has threatened you with break up several times, he's never treated you like a man should treat a lady, he speaks carelessly to you and harasses you everywhere in town. He stalks your friend list on Facebook, he monitors... Babe, why give a second thought when you can be free. At least your conscience is free because it's his mouth that declared the relationship over. Let him beg all he can, but girl, get back your dignity and stand your ground, Muna or no Muna.

**YAFE:** Easier said than done.

**TAN:** Let's go in. We shall talk later.

#### SCENE 14

*(Fimba's residence. Night.*

*Fimba is doing some calculations. Muna knocks and comes in. He has a disturbed look.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey, you are back, but why that look on your face? The girl didn't listen, right? *(Laughs)*

**MUNA:** I have bad news for you. Wirngo is dating someone else. I saw (--).

**FIMBA:** How do you know she's dating someone else?

**MUNA:** I saw them. She was with one Arrey, my former colleague at J.B Informatique.

**FIMBA:** And so? It could be her brother, cousin, uncle, distant relation or mere friend.

**MUNA:** Mere friends? No. Wirngo is from Oku in the Northwest Region, and Arrey is from Mamfe in the Southwest Region. They can't be relations. Besides, (--)

**FIMBA:** Don't make me laugh. So people from different regions of Cameroon can't be relations?

**MUNA:** Fimba, I am sure of what I'm saying. Wirngo and Arrey are dating. Where I saw them, and how they were so into each other, bro, they can't be relations.

**FIMBA:** It can't be! I don't believe you. That girl is going to be my wife. You know I regret showing you her. I didn't do that so you could monitor her around.

**MUNA:** Bro, I think it's time you wake up to the fact that (--)

**FIMBA:** Hold it there! I don't want to hear it. I believe what the Lord told me and it shall come to pass. Let Wirngo date anyone else, the relationship won't end in marriage. She is going to be mine. *(Short pause.)* How was your journey to Kumba? Did you meet the girl?

**MUNA:** It's a complicated issue. That's all I'll say for now.

**FIMBA:** Why wouldn't it be complex? The moment you decided to leave Bamenda to go get a wife in *faraway* Kumba, you were embarking on a complicated journey. Why not wait upon the Lord?

**MUNA:** The location or distance is not the reason for the complex situation. Stop making wrong judgments. Kumba is not that far.

*(Very long pause.)*

**MUNA:** On my way back, Wirngo was in the same bus with this Arrey. She was nursed in his arms all the way.

**FIMBA:** Please, I do not want to entertain reports about Wirngo. Can't you get it? What do you mean to say? Muna, we are city people! You should know that platonic friends can sometimes show levels of intimacy that are suspicious. Wirngo is a friendly and outgoing person. You can't meet her in a bus with a male friend and just draw conclusions. Stop making wrong judgments.

**MUNA:** Haba\* ! Haba!! Haaa-ba!!!

**FIMBA:** Haba what?

**MUNA:** Haba nothing. Please, let me get back home. Good night.

**FIMBA:** Good night.

*(Muna leaves.)*

**FIMBA** (*verbalizing*): Lord, I am not comfortable; Wirngo is dating someone else. What do I do? Must I continue to wait?

**INAUDIBLE VOICE:** Dating is not marriage.

**FIMBA:** Why did you bring her my way when she is not yet ready to marry me? I'm suffering emotionally, having to wait and seeing her give attention to other men.

**INAUDIBLE VOICE:** Do you dare question my ways?

**FIMBA:** I'm sorry, Lord. Forgive me. I know your ways and thoughts are higher than mine.

\* An exclamation signifying surprise.

## SCENE 15

*(Buru's living room. 10 p.m.*

*Buru is restless on the chair. He lies down and as soon gets up to a sitting position. He takes his phone from the table and begins touching the screen. Several minutes pass.)*

**BURU:** Gracious Lord! She blocked me on Facebook!!?

*(He dials a number and wait.)*

**BURU:** Hello, Balak. It's truly over. She blocked me on Facebook! She didn't come apologizing as I thought. She blocked me on Facebook!

**BALAK:** Are you sure? Are you not overly worked up on this?

**BURU:** I said she blocked me on Facebook!!! Does that sound like something minor to you?

**BALAK:** Wow.

**BURU:** What do you mean by 'wow'? A girl just dumped me and all you say is 'wow'.

**BALAK:** Bro, it's because I don't know what to say.

**BURU:** Guy you do not care how I feel. You are disappointing me too.

**BALAK:** Calm down and let's talk amicably. Can you give me the permission to talk to her sometime within the week? I'll be less busy on Friday.

**BURU:** No. No, no. I won't beg her. If she wants to come begging, let her come. But if she expects me to do so, she's wasting her time.

**BALAK:** Bro, let me get something from you. Who hurt who? Who needs forgiveness from the other?

**BURU:** She hurt me. She disobeyed my instructions. She's the one to come begging, not me.

**BALAK:** Then permit me talk to her and get her to do so. That is, if your account of the story is the right one.

**BURU:** Please, don't. Let's allow everything in the hands of God. If she is mine, she'll come back to me. Let's leave it for God.

**BALAK:** If we leave it for God, promise me you won't fret over this again, promise me you will be calm and patient.

**BURU:** I will. I promise.

## SCENE 16

*(Tan's apartment.*

*Yafe and Tan sit in silence, watching television. Yafe looks sad.)*

**YAFE:** I just wish Muna would call or something. This is the third day since he returned to Bamenda.

**TAN:** It may be hard on him too, you know. Which guy would not be cautious if he goes to visit a girl he's interested in, only to find out she's engaged to another? Even if the fiancé declares the relationship null in his presence, it' would still be hard. For me, I would think Muna to be taking advantage of your vulnerability if at this time of your life, he comes in with his own agenda.

**YAFE:** But what if there's no agenda at all? What if he's gone for good!?

**TAN:** Then, he was never meant for you.

**YAFE:** Tan, you don't understand.

**TAN:** Sure, but (--)

*(There's a knock on the door.)*

**TAN** *(whispers):* Go into the bedroom now. Quick!

*(Tan opens the door and Buru comes in. He looks around and then looks at Tan.)*

**BURU:** You are the one who has incited Yafe to not come back to me. I know it. But don't you worry, I'm doing just fine without her. Remember to tell her that. Also tell her I am a man. I can get married next month if I want to; she's the one who stands to lose, not me. Before she'll ever find a man to fall in love with, I'll be a father of two. And as for you, read my lips, it shall never be well with you and your generation. You had no serious man in your life and you made it your purpose to deprive Yafe of a blissful marriage. It shall never be well with your generation. I saw a boyfriend last time I was here. I pity the guy because he will regret the day he fell in love with you if he goes ahead to blindly marry you.

**TAN:** A curse causeless shall not come. I am blessed by God; no mortal can curse me.

*(Buru looks around and then leaves.*

*Yafe comes out of the bedroom.)*

**TAN:** See? You heard what he said?

**YAFE:** He is expecting me to come begging? Who does he take me for?

**TAN:** He did not mean it when he said it was over. He thought you would come begging –as usual – and then he would say he’s forgiven you, and restore the relationship. Thank God, he failed woefully.

**YAFE:** I’m not enjoying this at all.

**TAN:** You better start enjoying it.

## SCENE 17

*(Outside of a building. Daylight hours.  
Buru is leaning on a pillar, busy on his phone.)*

**BURU** (*verbalizing*): I half suspected it; she has changed her relationship status from 'engaged' to 'single'. Let's see what she posts. (*Sighs*). Her timeline is not visible to the public. What should I do now?...Okay. I will not put up a picture of myself as the profile picture for this fake account. She must not know I'm the one. Yeah...Let me send her a friend request. Let's hope she accepts.

## SCENE 18

*(Pastor Ebenezer's office. Daylight hours.)*

**PASTOR E:** I called you both so we can talk and thrash the misunderstanding that you both have. I have talked with each of you privately and gotten each one's side of the story. Now, Yafe, are you willing to say here exactly what you told me?

**YAFE:** Yes, pastor. I believe Buru and I need to go our separate ways. I don't think he loves me.

**BURU:** I don't like (--)

**PASTOR E:** Brother Buru, wait. When she's through you will talk. Continue, sister Yafe.

**YAFE:** I feel I need to be someone else in order to satisfy Buru's expectations. I am not free to be me. He scolds me at the least mistake. Makes me feel like I'm a child. I have thought about it and I do not want the relationship any longer.

**PASTOR E:** Sister Yafe, relationships go through challenges.

**YAFE:** Pastor, I have tolerated enough. I have prayed and wished to see changes, but everything remains the same. I can't continue like this.

**PASTOR E:** Brother Buru, please, recount what you had told me.

**BURU:** Pastor, Yafe is disrespectful and childish. What I say she shouldn't do, it's exactly what she would do. She makes me constantly angry. She doesn't submit and respect like the Bible says a woman should.

*(Short pause.)*

**PASTOR E:** Are you through?

**BURU:** Yes, sir.

**PASTOR E:** Now, who called off the relationship?

**YAFE:** He did.           **BURU:** I was annoyed.

**PASTOR E:** Wait. One person at a time. Sister Yafe.

**YAFE:** Pastor, he did. He told me it's over. Tan can testify about it.

**BURU:** Because I was annoyed. I had told her to stop seeing Tan, but she wouldn't listen – lack of submission. I went to her house, didn't see her there. Something told me she was with Tan. I then went to Tan's place. Lo and behold, there she was. In

anger, I declared the relationship over. But I didn't really mean it. It was something I did in anger.

**PASTOR E:** Did you ask her why she went there in the first place?

**YAFE:** He didn't. He came in and embarrassed me in front of everyone; he even insulted my parents.

**BURU:** I was so angry I didn't think. That's why I hate to be angry. I only regret my actions afterwards. I had told her that if something happens, she should let me know.

**PASTOR E:** Something like everything?

*(Buru hangs down his head. Yafe wipes away the tears from her eyes.)*

**PASTOR E:** Sister Yafe, brother Buru is evidently not yet ready to let go. Please, can you reconsider and let's talk. Let's see how to settle the misunderstanding and get you guys going in the right direction. This is the more reason why I had told myself you two have delayed beginning your pre-marriage counseling. You need to know how to handle challenges, and stop reacting negatively towards each other. Please, come back to the relationship and let's sort things out.

*(Short pause.)*

**YAFE:** Pastor, I don't think I can come back to the place where I want Buru to be my husband. His views of submission are too much for me to contain. I do not hate him; he's still a brother in the Lord. But marriage? I'm not sure I can want it again with him. I'm tired of always begging and saying I'm sorry, even in situations where he should be the one apologizing.

**PASTOR E:** The day you two came here to inform me about your intentions of marriage and to request that I counsel you when the time comes, you both were beaming with love, and each recounting how the Lord revealed to you that the other person was the right one. What has happened? Have challenges made you change your minds?

**BURU:** I have not changed my mind.

*(Yafe remains silent.)*

**PASTOR E:** Sister Yafe, I am not saying you should stay in what you no longer believe in. I'm only wondering whether what you've experienced up till now is enough to warrant the disbanding of the relationship.

**YAFE (sobs):** Pastor, I have been tolerating much, hoping he would change. If I had to come to your office each time there was a problem, it would have been every time Buru and I met or talked. If I say let's continue now, I'm afraid he may hide his attitude now, and take off the cloak when we get married.

**BURU:** Stop making assumptions. You think I'm (--)

**YAFE:** Pastor, I fear for the future.

**PASTOR E:** Okay. It is wrong to force anything on anyone. Marriage is supposed to be entered into willingly. What I would say for now is that you forgive each other, as brother and sister. You must not bear any resentment towards one another. That you desired marriage to each other and it didn't work out doesn't mean you have to be enemies for life. Your eternal relationship in the Lord outlives a romantic relationship now. Therefore, please, forgive each other.

**YAFE:** I have forgiven you, brother Buru. I love you with the love of the Lord.

*(Long Pause.)*

**PASTOR E:** Brother Buru?

**BURU** *(To Yafe):* I forgive you too. But I hope you don't (--)

**PASTOR E:** It's okay brother Buru. Let it be. If in the future, you two think you can mend things, I'd still be ready to work with you. *(Long pause.)* Let's pray.

## SCENE 19

*(Burushaga's bedroom. Night.*

*Buru is punching his phone's screen. A minute later...)*

**BURU:** What?! She's unblocked me!? This is serious. Now is the time to show her I've moved on and I'm happy without her. Where are those nice photos? This one. What should we tag it? Okay. 'I love my life'. Yeah. Add two smiling emoticons. Great. And then this one should be...okay. 'Happy being me'. This third one, what should we tag it...okay. 'I'm a jewel'. *(Long pause.)* Tomorrow, we shall post more.

## ONE MONTH LATER

### SCENE 20

*(Tan's residence. Daylight hours.*

*Tan goes into the kitchen. Yafe sits in the living room.)*

**YAFE:** I've started missing Burushaga; I almost called him last night. I don't know what to do. Our wedding should have been less than three months away. You know, in some ways, he really loved me. He was not perfect, but at least, he loved me.

*(Long Pause. Tan comes out and leans on the kitchen door.)*

**TAN:** Let it never be said that I was the one who stopped you from marrying the man your heart loves. I wash my hands clean; I take them off this case. Do whatever your heart tells you to do.

**YAFE:** But I don't just understand how I feel. I thought I had let him go. Why should I still care about what goes on in his life? You know, most of the time on Facebook, I stalk him. Seeing those amazing selfies, it pains me to see he's moved on, and is happy – without me.

**TAN:** I have said you do whatever your heart says to do. You won't get something contrary from my mouth.

**YAFE:** I have a feeling he's also stalking me.

*(Tan goes back into the kitchen.)*

**YAFE:** I will also begin posting my own amazingly happy selfies. It's a psychological war.

**TAN** *(from the kitchen):* If I were you, I won't stoop so low. If you still love him, why don't you just go tell him and ask for reconciliation, instead of resorting to cheap tricks to make him think you have happily moved on when that's not the case? Who is deceiving who? You blocked him, and then, you unblocked him. Next thing you should do is send him a friend request and spare yourself the agony of wondering whether he will come to your page and see your *amazingly* happy selfies. Send him a friend request so the pictures can come up in his newsfeed. Period.

*(Yafe goes into the kitchen.)*

**YAFE:** In all honesty, I don't really want to go back to him. True, the feelings are there, but my heart is really afraid. What I tolerated with his silly behavior, I'm not

sure I can ever submit to that again. I really wish I could go back to him under different terms. I wish he could change and be the man I want him to be. But I know Buru; if I suggest that he make some adjustments, he would only pounce on me with insults. But I miss him. Terribly. Especially in the nights, when I'm alone. (*Sighs*). Just wish all of this wasn't happening.

*(Tan stops what she is stirring in the pot and turns to face her friend.)*

**TAN:** Girl, you are suffering from *withdrawal syndrome*.

**YAFE:** What!?! Is there such thing as *withdrawal syndrome* in romance?

**TAN** (*Laughs*): Oh yeah. Some don't realize how real it is. It usually happens that after a break up, even the partner that was happy for the break up, may want...that is, still desire a return to the relationship. They may make attempts or even succeed to restore the relationship, even under the *same* conditions that necessitated the breakup. Because of the emotional bond you have with a fiancé, it's not just as easy as saying it to walk away and never be tempted to look back. I said this because you admitted you don't really want to go back; you only miss him.

**YAFE:** You are right. I have debated the issue while lying on my bed several nights. You know, part of me – I think, the logical part – is happy we broke up, that I can breathe some fresh air, that I can be me, that I can repent from lies telling and that (---)

**TAN:** And bribery.

*(Thunderous laughter.)*

**YAFE:** But the feeling part of me desperately wants back that romance.

**TAN:** Romance or bondage?

**YAFE:** Maybe both. (*Laughing:*) Romantic bondage.

**TAN:** Please, I'm so hungry. I don't want to die of laughter.

*(Tan turns to continue stirring the content in the pot.)*

**YAFE:** Abeg\*, don't die and blame me for it. Let's talk about something more serious. I'll go see Buru's mother sometime next week. You tell me how to explain the situation to her.

**TAN:** No, no, no! You figure that one out.

**YAFE** (*rehearsing*): Mom, I'm sorry to tell you this, but I can't continue relationship with your son. He has proven to me that I am not worthy of his love. I tried to tolerate his...ehmm...his bad manners – what a terrible phrase – his lack of good behavior for a

very long time, but finally...ehmm...I have seen that both of us are happier going our separate ways. We were never meant to be. Mom, it's because of your love for me and the respect I have for you that I have taken the time to come tell you this in person. (*To Tan:*) what do you think?

**TAN** (*pause*): I think you need to let her know that it's her son that called off the relationship, not you. And then you explain his behavior which you can no longer tolerate.

**YAFE**: Really? I need prayers. Not gonna be easy.

**TAN**: On the other hand, if you believe the guy can make a change and you can take the risk of requesting that, go ahead. I don't just want to be credited in the future for being the reason you let Buru go.

**YAFE**: I don't think I can be courageous enough to approach him with that kind of agenda. (*Sighs.*)

\*Pidgin word meaning, please.

### ACT III

#### SCENE 1

*(Fimba's shop. Daylight hours.  
Fimba is busy inside. Muna comes in.)*

**FIMBA:** Hey bro, how you?

**MUNA:** Fine. And you?

**FIMBA:** Good. Whatz up? You've been so busy – your number too – that we haven't spoken in a while.

**MUNA:** I'm cool. Maybe you always called when my battery is low. I will be traveling to Kumba, to visit the girl I told you about.

**FIMBA:** Has the Lord confirmed she's the one.

*(Muna scratches his head.)*

**MUNA:** If I say no, you would tell me I shouldn't go see her. If I say, yes, you'd ask me for the *supernatural* signs of confirmation. So I don't know what to say.

**FIMBA:** I understand what you have just said. You are ashamed to admit that you want a relationship which you can't tell for sure that God sanctions. That is exactly what you have said. You haven't heard from God.

**MUNA:** That's your interpretation and you are entitled to it. I'll be traveling tomorrow. After I talk with her, we shall know exactly where the relationship stands.

**FIMBA:** Bro, do you really have to go that far? How much is the fare to Kumba aller et retour? Plus chop money, at least *fifteen* thousand! If God has a wife for you, he will bring her to you, to your doorsteps.

**MUNA:** How much are you losing in free provisions to Wirngo?

**FIMBA:** The Lord has already confirmed she's my wife to be. I'm losing nothing.

**MUNA:** Let's wait and see.

**FIMBA:** Doubting Thomas, let's wait and see.

**MUNA:** Yes o! When it comes to "the Lord told me he or she is my..." I remain a doubting Thomas until I see it fulfilled.

**FIMBA:** Muna, doesn't God speak?

**MUNA:** He does, but when many people have heard their emotions and desires, and call it God, and it doesn't come to pass, it makes one skeptical.

**FIMBA:** And I'm one of those people?

**MUNA:** I don't know. Only time will tell.

**FIMBA:** Is that why you don't care seeking God's will concerning your *girlfriend* in Kumba?

**MUNA:** I didn't say I wasn't seeking God's guidance and help. I'm doing so –with my eyes and ears wide open. I've also spoken with the pastor, informing him of the situation and receiving his counsel. If I see anything funny, I'd run nine ninety, but I'm quite confident that God will bless the venture.

**FIMBA:** Okay o. I wish you *luck*.

## SCENE 2

*(Yafe's residence. Evening.)*

**YAFE:** He tried getting back in touch, but he had given me the opportunity to break free from his enslavement. Sometimes, it got difficult. His mother loves me so much and it was not easy explaining the situation to her and my reason for not seeking or desiring reconciliation with her son. Good thing she finally understood and let me be. But she felt greatly disappointed.

**MUNA:** I had to give you time to sort out things and decide on either moving on or mending things with your ex. That's the reason for my two months' silence. But I have also been praying and seeking the Lord on what he would say.

**YAFE:** Ex? That word hurts.

**MUNA** *(laughs)*: Sorry. What should I have rather said?

**YAFE:** No, it's not about you using the word. I'm just thinking of what I went through and was willing to endure until God intervened and saved me. It would have felt better if someone else was that ex.

**MUNA** *(laughing)*: You are very funny.

**YAFE:** I'm just saying it the way I think it is.

**MUNA:** Now that you are freely free, do you think we can develop something? Can we build a relationship?

**YAFE:** Ehmm...let's give it a try.

**MUNA** *(laughs)*: Dear, we are *not* giving it a try. We are building a serious relationship. I'm into this with both feet. What about you?

**YAFE:** We'll pray and see.

### SCENE 3

*(In front of the church building. Late afternoon.  
Yafe waits in front of the church. Tan comes by.)*

**TAN:** Hope I didn't keep you waiting.

**YAFE:** No. I haven't been long here. How was your day?

**TAN:** Great. Hey, take it easy.

**YAFE:** What?

**TAN:** The way your cheeks have blossomed, hmm, before the wedding you'll get too fat. You may not easily find a gown that'll fit.

**YAFE** *(laughing)*: Do I really look fat. I know I feel fat but I didn't think it's noticeable.

**TAN:** Very, very noticeable. I'm sure everyone can read it on your face: 'she's in love'.

**YAFE** *(in pidgin)*: Chai!!! I don di shame.

**TAN** *(in pidgin)*: But na true nah? You no be in love?

**YAFE** *(in pidgin)*: I dey in love nah? Na crime for get guy wey di kill me with love?

**TAN** *(in pidgin)*: No be crime my dear. I no say na crime.

*(Laughter.)*

**TAN:** Just pray for me o. I want to get my own love too and talk about wedding plans. I'm tired of being single.

**YAFE:** Praying seriously! But what about...*(motions with the hand.)*

**TAN:** Ah! That one? Let's just wait and see if the admiration would turn into something serious.

## **FIVE MONTHS LATER**

### **SCENE 4**

*(Muna's Residence. Evening.*

*Muna and Fimba are in the living room. Minutes later, Yafe comes out from the kitchen and sits beside Muna.)*

**MUNA:** Thanks again, dear. The food was great. I can't wait to have you here permanently.

**FIMBA:** So it's the issue of cook, eh? You wanted a cook?

**MUNA:** C'mon, it's more than that. The Bible says two are better than one. It applies for the man as well as for the woman. You can't say I'm selfish for being happy that she can cook so well.

**FIMBA:** Anyway, I'm happy you guys are getting on well...and so fast. I wish I were in your shoes.

**MUNA:** We're grateful to God for the way things have progressed for us. We do not intend to prolong them unnecessarily. Five months gone. This is February; June, we should be getting married.

**FIMBA:** I can't tell you how envious I am. Honestly. Everything being equal, I'd love to be married by now. Man, I've waited for too long.

**YAFE:** God's time is the best. He makes all things beautiful in his time.

**FIMBA:** True, my sister. It's just that his time takes very long in some people's cases. Some things are confusing. Let's talk on something else. Yafe, will you still be here when I come back from Douala on Tuesday? I want to get something special for you.

**YAFE:** Awww. Sorry, I'll return to Kumba on Monday.

**FIMBA:** Anyway, I'll keep it. Next time you come, or when Muna goes to Kumba I'll send it.

**YAFE:** Thanks a lot.

**FIMBA:** Will the institution where you work transfer you to Bamenda after your wedding?

**MUNA:** If they deny her a transfer, I'm taking my wife out of there with immediate effect. We can't get married and she lives in Kumba while I live in Bamenda. Never! I can provide for my family.

**FIMBA:** It's not to you I asked the question.

*(Yafe and Muna laugh.)*

**YAFE:** All I need to do is notify them when I get married, and to apply for a transfer to the Bamenda Branch.

**MUNA:** And my babe will be home finally!

**FIMBA:** Hey bro, take it easy. Don't get me more burnt than I already am right now.

**MUNA** *(in pidgin):* Na wow for you o. *(To Yafe:)* Babe, you hear this one? Make we no talk anything romantic again for him presence!

*(Yafe and Muna laugh. Fimba does not find it funny.  
The clock strikes 8 p.m.)*

**MUNA:** Fimba, let's go.

*(The three move outside. Yafe leans on the wall beside the door.)*

**MUNA** *(in pidgin):* Bro, go before. Make I wish my babe good night.

**FIMBA:** Good night, Yafe. See you tomorrow.

**YAFE:** Thanks for coming. Good night.

*(Fimba goes away.)*

**MUNA:** You stay well, hmm?

**YAFE:** Hmm.

**MUNA:** I feel like standing here with you, but let me go. I love you.

**YAFE:** Love you too. Good night.

**MUNA:** Good night babe. I love you.

**YAFE** *(laughing):* I love you too. Good night!

**MUNA:** What? Why are you laughing? I know you feel the same. You really wish I could stay longer, right?

**YAFE:** Yeah. Ehein! There's something just came to my mind. What do you think about Tan and your friend, Fimba?

**MUNA:** Sweetheart, don't even dare tell him that. Don't go there.

**YAFE:** Why? But I see he really wants to get married. Don't you see they could make a good couple?

**MUNA:** You won't understand.

**YAFE:** What is going on? Is he engaged to someone?

**MUNA:** It's not just a long story, it's a difficult one.

*(Fimba calls to Muna.)*

**FIMBA:** Maybe you should tell me you have changed your mind and would rather spend the night in your house. With your *babe*.

**MUNA** *(to Fimba):* Bro, I'm coming.

**FIMBA:** Yeah, coming by staying. I'm going.

**MUNA** *(to Yafe):* Let me go. Good night, dear. See you in the morning.

**YAFE:** Go nah.

**MUNA:** I will go. *(Continues to stare at her.)*

**YAFE:**Go. Staying longer can breed problems for us; go.

**MUNA:** I made a promise to God, and I'm making it to you now: 'I will give my wife her first kiss from me at the altar'. I mean it, and I also want you to keep me accountable if in a moment of rash sensuality I want to break that vow.

**YAFE:** Praise God! I hold you by your word! I'm so happy. Now, you go.

**MUNA:** Bye.

*(Muna leaves. Yafe goes into the house.)*

## FOUR MONTHS LATER

### SCENE 5

*(Fimba's shop. Afternoon.*

*Fimba is leaning besides the door, busy on his phone. Muna approaches.)*

**MUNA:** Hey, bro.

**FIMBA:** Your coming here today has something to it; I hope all is well. I thought the sweetness of the honeymoon made you forget about your friend. It happens; when friends get married, their bachelor friends become non-existent. How's your wife.

**MUNA:** She's doing fine.

**FIMBA:** As in women's fine?

**MUNA:** Yeah.

**FIMBA:** O boy! Congrats! But you don't look excited for the good news. Is all well?

**MUNA:** All will be well. I talked with your mother yesterday night; she's coming over the weekend. Three days from today.

**FIMBA:** What for?

**MUNA:** To talk some sense into you.

**FIMBA:** What sense?

**MUNA:** That you keep waiting for a girl to make up her mind for over two years now is not normal.

**FIMBA:** Others have waited for longer than that. The Lord told me that girl is going to be my wife. He said I need to be patient to see his will come to pass. I can't do anything but wait till she too is ready to marry me.

**MUNA:** No, Fimba, the Lord did not speak to you. If He did, he would have equally spoken to the lady by now.

**FIMBA:** Yes, he did.

**MUNA:** He did?

**FIMBA:** Yes, he did, but she's rebellious. But no problem, she will finally humble herself and accept to marry me. I know my God. Wirngo will be creeping, begging me when God starts dealing with her. There's the case of one brother in our church, the Lord spoke to him about a certain sister (--)

**MUNA:** Fimba, if Wirngo is rebellious, then God did not speak to you. Two cannot walk together without agreement. He cannot tell you she's going to be your wife when he knows fully well she will be rebellious and *never* will accept to marry you. Where's the agreement?

**FIMBA:** There's time for everything; there shall be a time for agreement.

**MUNA:** I'm confused. Why would God tell you about a sister and then it's over two years and she's still saying no. Why?

**FIMBA:** I don't also have all the answers, but I suspect it has something to do with a trial of faith.

**MUNA:** Whose faith?

**FIMBA:** Mine. In Scripture, there are many examples of God revealing his will to his servants, and then it takes so many years for the fulfillment to come. That's where trial of faith comes in, to see if you'll stay true to what God said or you'll get led by circumstances. The time between waiting and fulfillment is called trial of faith. Like in Joseph's case, it took thirteen years for him to see God's word come true. During that time, the Bible says, the word of the Lord tried him. Thank God, he persevered. You know, he could have (--)

**MUNA:** Man, I must confess: I'm impressed with your Bible study, but I just feel it doesn't apply in *this* case. Wirngo is *not* going to be your wife! You better stop believing sh (--)

**FIMBA:** You won't get it! It's to me the Lord spoke, okay? When I was praying about the issue last night, the Lord told me she is not spiritually mature to understand the reason why he is bringing us together; that she's still looking at things from a carnal point of view. But the Lord also told me (--)

**MUNA:** Fimba, my friend, you need to wake up and stop listening to that voice in your head. I have seen that girl several times in town and honestly – though I am not judging her – I don't think she's even born again.

**FIMBA:** Muna, that girl is born-again. Truly born-again. She is a member of New Life Chapel.

**MUNA:** And so? Anyone can be a member of the church of their choice! There are many churches today to choose from. Wirngo can even open her own church and become a pastor or prophetess if she so wishes!

**FIMBA:** Muna, stop joking. Wirngo is seeking the Lord, even if she's not perfect yet. Nobody is perfect!

**MUNA:** Seeking the Lord! Which Lord? The one of harlotry?

**FIMBA:** Muna! Have you ever seen her practicing harlotry? Mind the words you use when talking about the woman I want to marry. Even if she were a harlot, if you know your Bible very well, you will remember the Lord told Prophet Hosea to marry one!

**MUNA:** Haba! Really? You surprise me, bro.

**FIMBA:** My marriage to Wirngo will be for her spiritual growth. The Lord made me to understand that she'll be influenced by my commitment. That woman you call a harlot I see in her a giant woman of God. Give her the same patience the Lord is giving her.

*(Long Pause.)*

**MUNA:** I think you need to swallow your pride and accept the truth: the Lord did not speak to you. You heard your emotions or, probably, the devil.

**FIMBA:** Muna! Get thee behind me, Satan!

**MUNA:** I am not satan and I won't get behind thee. The longer you cling to the belief that God spoke to you about Wirngo, the more you'll hear the voice in your head rationalizing and excusing this lady's *stupid* behavior. The more you'll dream and see visions about her. For your information, Wirngo is no giant woman of God!

**FIMBA:** Get thee behind me, Satan.

*(Muna leaves.)*

**FIMBA:** Wirngo is my wife. In the spirit we are already declared married. Nobody will stop me from marrying her in the physical. I command in the name of Jesus that her eyes be blinded to any man who is trying to deceive her!

My Father! My Father! When you declare, no one can nullify. When you decree, no one can reverse. When you open a door, no one can shut it. Any arrow, any bullet, any missile shot against my destiny with Wirngo, let it be destroyed by fire, by thunder, by lightning!

My Father! My Father! I begin to take control over any evil agenda against me. This year is my year. I shall see the fulfillment of your word to me.

*(Chia watches in silence, shaking his head.)*

**FIMBA (CONT'D):** No weapon fashioned against me shall prosper. Any tongue that rises up against me in judgment, I condemn. I declare and decree that the will of God

is prevailing in my life. The plans of the devil are failing, falling apart in the mighty name of Jesus!

## SCENE 6

*(Fimba's living room. Evening.)*

**MAMA NGWAFESS**, a dark fifty something year old, sits in silence, her head thrown backwards on the cushion.

*Fimba is annoyed, pacing the room.*

*Minutes later, Muna comes in and sits down.)*

**MAMA NG:** Good you are here, Muna. Your friend has refused to talk.

**FIMBA:** Mama, what should I tell you? It's Muna that asked you to come. God spoke to me, and that is why you people cannot understand my actions. You want me to get a wife, yes, but I have chosen to wait for her who is going to be mine. Where is the crime in waiting? I'm the one waiting and I'm not complaining. I'm not even yet thirty! What's the big deal!?

*(Pastor Brendan comes in.)*

**FIMBA:** Pastor, what a surprise.

**PASTOR B:** Yes it is, brother Fimba.

**FIMBA:** Meet my mother, Mama Ngwafess.

**PASTOR B:** Mama, you are welcome to Bamenda. How is Nkambe?

**MAMA NG:** We are all doing fine Pastor.

*(Pastor sits opposite Muna, Fimba sits beside him.)*

**MUNA:** Pastor, Mama, I called you here because of my friend and brother Fimba whose case I have already explained in detail to both of you. I have tried to help him on my own to no avail. I have thought about it, and said to myself that if I do not solicit help for my brother, then I do not love him. Please, talk to Fimba, and Fimba, in the name of the Lord, listen to wise counsel.

*(Fimba sighs.)*

**PASTOR B:** Well, we can't proceed without having heard his own narrative. Brother Fimba, can we talk?

**FIMBA:** I believe Muna told you the truth, though he may have presented it with bias in order to have you take sides with him. I met this girl, the Lord spoke to me about marrying her, I talked to her, but till date she's still not given me a positive answer. I have prayed and I'm still convinced she's going to be my wife. I have chosen to wait till she comes around. Where is my crime?

**PASTOR B:** Brother Fimba, I will advise you to go back on this journey. If you accept Muna's narrative as truth, then I think you need to let go of whatever emotions you feel for this girl.

**FIMBA:** Pastor, there is no going back on this. I heard the Lord *clearly* about marrying sister Wirngo. It's not about emotions; this is the wife God prepared for me, before I was formed in my mother's womb. How can you ask me to let go of God's will? How? That I should go look for someone who is not bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh? I can't!

**MAMA NG:** My son wants to repeat the mistakes of hundreds of people. Fimba, listen to me. I was happily married to your father before death took him away from me five years ago. But before him, I was madly in love with another man whom I thought God told me he was my husband. I am glad that relationship didn't end in marriage. It was the worst relationship I can think of. The man was a professional liar, he even cheated on me, but I kept holding on to what I called conviction from the Lord and ignored his blatant sinning. It was the intervention of my own father that broke up the relationship. I cried my eyes out. But when the love spell cleared from my eyes, I saw my mistakes. Your father was a godly man, but I never once heard the Lord tell me in any dramatic way to marry him. We had a lot of common ground, I loved him, and he loved me sincerely.

**FIMBA:** Mama, I didn't intend to interrupt your lengthy talk, but let me ask this. Does God not...or let me put it this way: can God not tell one who to marry?

**PASTOR B:** He can and still does. But (--)

**FIMBA:** Thank you Pastor! Then, why (--)

**PASTOR B:** Before I met my wife Kinyuy, the Lord had spoken to me about her, but I didn't cling to a voice or knowing or whatever they call it. And that is because I had learnt my lessons. Before her, I had *loudly* and *clearly* "heard the Lord" about one girl. This lady dealt with me. When I say dealt with me, I mean every bit of the word. She was a green snake in green grass, but I was just blinded to her actions because of what "the Lord" was whispering into my head. Thank God we broke up before it was too late. When I met my present wife, I was super cautious and prayerful, with an open heart. We spoke a lot, I got to know her, she got to know me, and when I proposed she gave a resounding YES. Today, we are happily married. I know people who God specifically revealed their partners to and I also know many, many who only fell in love with each other and got married.

**FIMBA:** Pastor, I belong to the privileged category of those to whom God specifically reveals their spouses.

**PASTOR B:** If what Muna told me is true, I must admit, you are wrong.

**FIMBA:** Pastor, I'm surprised you are talking contrary now when you even gave a word of confirmation about this marriage.

**PASTOR B:** Me? When? How? I don't even know the lady in question!

**FIMBA:** The day she visited our church, you gave her a Word of Knowledge

**PASTOR B:** I can't remember...when was that?

**FIMBA:** Pentecost, 2014. You gave Words of knowledge too for brother Ngoh and Mama Yefon. I kept quiet as a matter of respect; I didn't want to come asking you what the Lord had said. I was thinking you would tell me about it, but when you kept quiet, I decided to remain silent and to let the Lord have his way.

**PASTOR B:** Oh! Oh! Oh! Is she the girl? One tall fair girl? Were you the one who invited her to church?

**FIMBA:** Yes, pastor. I'm glad you still remember.

**PASTOR B:** Is that what she said I told her?

**FIMBA:** Actually...she didn't tell me anything. That day I invited her to church, I was really hoping she will hear the Lord's voice about marrying me because it was already some months that the Lord spoke to me but she was still rejecting my proposal. So when you said you had a message for her, I thought it was it.

**PASTOR B:** Brother Fimba, you have a serious problem. That girl is not even born-again. The Lord gave me a blunt word for her and I presented the gospel to her, but she didn't like it. She left my office before I could finish. I didn't even know you were the one who invited her to church.

**MUNA:** Pastor, Mama, I saw the girl yesterday in the evening. I didn't want to talk to Fimba because he won't listen to me. Wirngo is currently pregnant.

**FIMBA:** Which Wirngo? Muna are you sure of what you're saying? No. it can't be! You are lying in order to (--)

**MUNA:** I will take you to her place first thing in the morning so you can confirm with your two eyes, since you have chosen to be a Doubting Thomas as far as Wirngo is concerned.

*(Long Pause.  
Fimba looks very confused.)*

**PASTOR B** (*shakes his head*): I know of one case, the man believed the Lord spoke to him, telling him the woman was his wife-to-be, but today, they are getting a divorce. He says he can't tolerate her impenitence, recurrent unchastity and evil behavior. The warning signs were there before they got married.

*(Muna and Fimba exchange stares. Each is thinking about the Prophet Hosea's case which Fimba had quoted.)*

**PASTOR B (CONT'D):** I have heard similar accounts where someone feels they heard God about marrying a particular person, but it never ended in the civil registration office or in church. A certain sister waited for a brother for seven years, turning down other men, and he never came. She only heard his wedding banns being read. Like Mama said, most times people ignore the person's misbehavior and only cling to a supposed word from God. I think it is high time people understand they are not getting married to a conviction but to a person. Convictions alone don't produce good marriages; responsible behavior does.

**MAMA NG:** That's right, Pastor. You don't get married to a conviction; you get married to a person, their behavior, their character, their life purpose and everything. The conviction you feel today may not sustain the marriage in the event of a person's bad attitude.

**PASTOR B:** Brother Fimba, I know it's hard and humiliating for you to accept it was not the Lord who spoke to you, but you can't keep being deceived by whatever feeling or sign you thought the Lord gave you. The sure sign that it is God is when that Word from him gets fulfilled.

**MUNA:** Maybe he would still want to marry her, the pregnancy notwithstanding, so God's will can be fulfilled?

**MAMA:** What?! Not when I'm still alive!

**PASTOR B:** Please, brother Muna, be more compassionate with him. I can testify of the pain of realizing God did not speak. Brother Fimba, (--)

**FIMBA (sobbing):** No! It can't be. It's not about pride and not wanting to accept God didn't speak to me. Something went wrong somewhere. Even if Wirngo was not born-again, God wanted to work with her so she can (--)

**MUNA:** Pastor, Mama, I want to take my leave. My wife is not too sound.

**FIMBA:** Something went wrong somewhere. Wirngo gave way to the devil to disrupt God's will for her life. In God's original plan, she was meant to be mine.

**PASTOR B:** Brother Fimba, I'd love to talk with you tomorrow in my office. If you have time, come around 11 a.m. Mama Ngwafess, I'd love to say good night.

**MAMA NGWAFESS:** Pastor, thank you so much for coming. I'll make sure he comes to see you tomorrow. *(To Muna:)* Son, thank you so much. Greet Yafe for me; tell her I'll see her tomorrow.

**PASTOR B & MUNA:** Good night, Mama.

*(Pastor Brendan and Muna leave.)*

**MAMA NGWAFESS:** Son, I know you are confused and hurt. I know it's a hard place 'cause I've been there myself. But, it was never God, for if it were him, it'd have come to pass.

**FIMBA:** Mama, don't say I'm a stubborn child. But, honestly, I believe something went wrong somewhere. Maybe I wasn't prayerful enough.

**MAMA NGWAFESS:** No, son, no! Don't think that way. God is mighty capable to fulfill his word.

**FIMBA:** Even when it needs my cooperation and I fail? The children of Israel (--)

**MAMA NGWAFESS:** Fimba, you'll kill yourself with such thoughts. Where and how did you fail in cooperating with God?

**FIMBA:** I probably ran ahead of him, and asked Wirngo out earlier than usual, therefore, making her detest me for being the kind of man who easily falls in love.

*(Long Pause.)*

**MAMA NGWAFESS:** I don't know what else to say. Please, try and meet with Pastor tomorrow. Listen to him.

**FIMBA:** What will he say different from what y'all are saying. No one seems to see with me. *(Sighs.)*

**SOME TIME LATER**

**SCENE 7**

*(Supermarket. Late afternoon.*

*Fimba meets Pregnant Wirngo in the supermarket, going through the newborn stuff shelves. Fimba gets closer to her and speaks in a low voice.)*

**FIMBA:** I said it: when you disobey God, you suffer for it. See you now, pregnant out of wedlock, shopping by yourself, when I could have been accompanying you now to buy *our* baby stuff.

**WIRNGO:** Fimba! When will you grow up? Is this ring on my finger fake? Sweetheart! Dear?

*(A fifty something year old man, in rich apparel, appears from the rear of one of the shelves. Fimba runs away in the opposite direction.)*

**WIRNGO:** Why are you running now? Stand and face the music! Adamant stupid man!

## SCENE 8

*(Fimba's residence. Night.  
Muna and pregnant Yafe come in.)*

**MUNA:** Our visit will be brief. As you can see, my babe's condition can't permit her to sit in one place for long; her feet would swell. *(Very long pause.)* Hope you've forgiven me. Whether you still believe God spoke to you about Wirngo or not, is inconsequential now; she's married to someone else. You can't wait for her to divorce him so you can marry her. My wife and I have been thinking and praying. If you want it, we would love to see you and Tan – you marched with her during the wedding, she was my wife's best friend – we would really love to see you two get along.

*(Long pause.)*

**FIMBA:** She's as good as your babe?

**MUNA:** Yes.

**FIMBA:** Can cook as well as her?

**MUNA:** Yes.

**FIMBA:** Do you think she'll accept me?

**MUNA:** Yes, we have probed her and we are certain she will accept you.

**FIMBA:** Please, give me her number.

**(END)**

### **Take home from the story**

Be careful about emotions and desires, especially in the area of romantic relationships. Emotions can sometimes become so strong and convincing that it becomes hard to tell when God is speaking.

Do not get married to 'a conviction'. Don't cling to a supposed word from God, an emotion or 'confirmatory sign' while ignoring relationship red flags.

The only proof that God spoke to you, which you can cling unto, is when that word gets fulfilled.

Janet Bengan

*Fiction for Teaching, Inspiration and Entertainment.*

## APPENDIX ONE

### So God told you she's the one for you?

I believe that until the Lord Jesus comes back, this issue of 'God told me to marry them' will remain. It would be great if there are only success stories, but many times, they are not. Instead there usually is an abundance of regret, confusion, disappointments and disillusion stories.

While many learn their lessons and share their stories for other's education, not everyone will learn from the mistakes of others. We can only continue to make our own little effort to educate, peradventure someone somewhere, someday will hear and heed.

I too had once been a victim of conviction and confirmatory signs which never saw fulfillment. When the relationship crashed, I was devastated emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. I laugh because I can't believe I recovered; it was one of the darkest moments of my life and I didn't believe that I can ever be *normal*.

And it was not really because of the man, but because of the thought of having done something wrong to cause *God's will* not to come to pass. Like Yafe in the play, I constantly asked the question 'but what about what the Lord told me'?

For a long time I blamed and hated myself. I had failed God. Since I got born-again I had believed and taught that we are supposed to trust God to lead us to the right person in order to avoid unfortunate relationships, but here was I with a negative testimony. I hated myself and I believed God hated me too. I didn't think he will ever use me again. I had become a useless and despised piece of nothing in his sight.

But after a long time, the scales began to fall and I came to a place where I heartily appreciated God for deliverance, yes deliverance, for the path God wanted me to go in, the path he had always drawn my heart towards that direction, I would never have followed if he did not deliver me from that conviction!

I know several persons who have been victims as well; I know it is a perennial problem affecting singles. And it's with this that I wrote this comedy play. I really pray the play blesses someone as much as it makes them laugh.

The biggest problem that people who've 'heard from God about marrying someone' usually have is the ignoring of red flags. The 'word from God' trumps all logical reasoning and biblical principles. All the focus is on the 'fact' that God has spoken and the mistaken belief is that 'all will be well; and we shall live happily ever after'.

It is true that sometimes what God tells us to do defies logic, for example, telling Moses and the Israelites to go forward while the Red Sea stared at them, but in the case of relationships, that shouldn't be the case.

To throw every piece of advice out the window while clinging to a 'word from God' about marrying someone **whose actions are red flags and warning signs against such relationship, is not only stupid but dangerous**. You are setting yourself up for regrets in the future, unless God's mercies intervene.

**That is not to say relationships and marriages don't sometimes experience turmoil.** But the case of someone constantly being abusive, constantly making life bitter for their partner, constantly giving you reason to regret the relationship, it's just hard to believe God would give such a person to his son or daughter who is sincerely seeking to live for the Lord.

What singles need to understand is that it is normal to have feelings for the opposite sex. Personally, I don't believe there's anything wrong in admiring someone of the opposite sex and wishing they could be married to you, as long as the admiration is not mixed with immoral thoughts about the person. They could possess godly qualities that you long for and that can cause you to want to have them. But there are things you can do to cause the admiration to either wane or to intensify. Unfortunately, many singles only tend to intensify the feelings.

What is abnormal is to think those feelings as signifying something other than mere admiration (in some cases they do, but in majority of cases, they don't), or not considering it could be lust or infatuation.

This is especial consideration for the females, because they are usually on the receiving end, that is, they don't usually make the first move. Instead of thinking the desire for the guy normal (or lust to be resisted), she begins to entertain, nurture and intensify the desire, and sooner than later, she begins to 'hear the Lord' telling her he is going to be her husband. She asks for confirmation to be sure God is really the one speaking to her; and she gets them (dreams, coincidences, even prophecies etc.).

Then begins the waiting period, waiting for the guy to come along. In some cases, the wait takes several years. Or she takes steps to make him notice her, and manipulates him into asking her out. Or she begins to pray what I call witchcraft prayers (see below), mentioning the guy's name and asking God to make him desire her.

For the guy, the situation can be less burdensome. He can easily ascertain the 'word from God' by approaching the lady. If she turns him down, he can either dismiss the feeling or the 'word from the Lord' or he can persevere for some time in his 'chase'.

Sadly, like Fimba in the play, some choose to wait and wait and wait, rationalizing, dismissing and ignoring every red flag, (and probably praying 'witchcraft' prayers).

Muna tells Fimba to swallow his pride and accept that God never spoke to him in the first place. That is important because many times the clinging to the 'word from God' even in the face of failure is usually because of the pain involved in accepting that the 'voice' that was heard was not God's.

It was not easy for me when the relationship failed; I have spoken with others who also experienced failure and it is not always easy accepting the reality. Tucked somewhere in a part of our mind is the belief that somehow we disrupted God's plan; or that we were not prayerful enough and the devil outsmarted us; or that there was something we needed to do but didn't do because we were ignorant of but didn't take the effort to seek and receive wisdom and guidance from God.

All of that is grasping at illogical rationality aimed at protecting our dignity and integrity, and avoiding the humiliation of self that comes with the truth that God never spoke to us; that we heard our emotions, desires or, the devil.

But life experiences sometimes are a lesson for us to learn and be able to educate ourselves and others. When we fail to learn the lessons those experiences offer us, we continue to make the same mistakes. A guy courts a girl claiming 'God revealed...', the relationship fails. He dates another, claiming the same thing. The second relationship also fails. He goes in for the third, still 'hearing' from God! That makes God schizophrenic and unreliable – he says yes and no at the same time. He leads us into what he is not able to complete, he tells us they are our mate when he knows ahead of time they won't come or they won't accept us. That is not the God of the Bible.

### **What is important: Character or Confirmatory sign?**

Singles need to learn not to be overly concerned about whether God spoke or not as about the character of the person they are intending to marry. I know that doesn't sound spiritual. But if spiritual is what is responsible for so much heartbreak, confusion and a blurred image of God's faithfulness, it's high time to embrace the 'less spiritual' strategy.

The truth is if you are in a relationship that God doesn't want you in, and you are in tune with God, willing to let go of emotions and listen to his voice in your spirit and the principles of his word, God would make it known to you. So there shouldn't be fear in the heart of any child of God that they don't have 'supernatural' confirmations for their relationship.

About witchcraft prayers, I want to talk a little on it. It's not just about relationships; the way prayers are thought in some circles, it can encourage people to pray 'witchcraft' prayers, unconsciously.

Unfortunately I don't have a scientific method to prove it, but it'd sound more like something a witchdoctor or astrologer would tell a client desiring a certain lover.

The way some people teach prayers, it can lead one to engage in spiritual exercises that are synonymous with, if not actually, witchcraft – seeking to manipulate people's mind against their will.

Consider a situation where two people are in a relationship, one partner wants it, the other is undecided, or may be having reservations and wanting to end the relationship. But the person wanting the relationship (probably believing they are meant to be) is putting such a draw, such a pull, on the other person, spiritually through prayer, sometimes not actually directed the God, but more like the I-decree-and-declare type, that the undecided partner feels somehow 'compelled' to continue in the relationship even though his spirit may be vexed or grieved over the situation.

I'm struggling to explain this because it's something I don't know how to say, 'this is how it works'. Maybe someone understands the how, but I don't. All I know is that it happens.

And singles should be careful. If you manipulate someone, whether knowingly or unknowingly, into marrying you, you'll live to face the consequences tomorrow.

Dear single, if you believe the 'Lord has spoken to you' please let be and let God do his work. Ascertain the will of God by allowing him to orchestrate circumstances to bring his will to pass. Desist from trying to make God's will happen through your gymnastics.

And dear single, never, never go into a relationship when your heart doesn't agree, no matter the strong emotional drawings towards the person desiring your love.

One way God leads you is by putting desires in your heart. You may not like someone initially, but if you were meant to be, your heart would along the way desire (want) the person. Don't allow emotions to pressure you and drown out the voice of your spirit.

## APPENDIX TWO

### God can and will tell you who to marry

I saw the need to add this chapter in order to avoid another extreme. Extremes exist in almost everything, and the solution to one extreme is not another extreme.

Because of the high frequency of failed “words from God” about marrying someone, some have adopted the stance on the issue which says God cannot and will never tell you who to marry. That it is all up to you to go about looking for a mate.

I believe that stance hurts the wonderful amazing testimonies of those whom it is evident God spoke to them and led them to their spouses. And there are many of such testimonies.

Just because some experience failure doesn't mean others do not register **genuine** success.

God is our Father. And his Fatherly heart will not be happy seeing us make fatal mistakes. He guides, he leads. He tells us to ask for wisdom where we lack it, and he promises to give liberally, without grudging.

I believe you can and should expect God's leading and guidance as you seek a wife or husband. As a Christian, you should not go into a relationship without seeking to know God's mind concerning it. Only, do not seek to have an exact experience with someone else. You are unique – the way God leads me may be different from the way he leads you.

You can and should ask God for guidance. You can pray God to expose the heart of that person to you as you get to know them more. But remember that guidance in romantic relationships is usually clouded by our emotions, reason why it is unwise to be quick in concluding “God has said this or that” or clinging to a supposed word from God.

If you are in a relationship and your heart harbors reservations, for whatever reasons, do not ignore it. There's high probability that's the voice of God. If the person's behavior causes serious concern, do not ignore it. God's guidance is not some vague feeling, a thought or a voice that doesn't align with the realities at hand.

Lastly, if you have waited and waited and waited, and the person you are waiting for is not coming, please move on with your life.

Personally, I do not recommend waiting, putting a part of your life on hold while waiting for someone “God has revealed is yours”. But in some cases, some have been

made to wait, and the person finally came. I am not their judge. If God made them wait, that is very okay. It depends on where you are in your relationship with God.

But if you have waited long and the person has not come, stop rejecting the ones interested in you. I don't know why God would make his child wait for five, seven or ten years, seeing the person 'they are supposed to get married to' and agonizing, and waiting for them to make up their minds.

I do not believe that when God created you, he also created your counterpart of the opposite sex, someone you were "ordained" to marry; someone you are **inescapably bound** to marry.

I have seen cases where someone believes their spouse is not the one God **ordained** for them, and they are ready to divorce that one and go marry the God-ordained one. The increase in the cases of divorce and remarriage for unbiblical reasons among Christians today has made some not to take their marriage vows seriously. They can divorce and remarry for any reason, including 'marrying the **God-ordained** one you had missed'.

For a single seeking to hear God tell them who to marry, you must also seek to walk in closer intimacy with him so you can learn to hear and differentiate God's voice from other voices.

Closer intimacy helps give you God's perspective in life, it helps you understand the path God wants you to take in life and it also helps you understand the kind of mate you want. Two cannot walk together without agreement.

So I'm saying God can tell you who to marry. Personally I believe it's the best way of getting your spouse, as dangerous as some may consider it to be. It's a thing of guidance, keeping you from making fatal mistakes, keeping you from experiencing painful breakups.

But I'm also saying, God's leading is not a hallucination, a voice, a vision or revelation that you cling to while playing the ostrich, with your head in the sand.

I believed in God leading you to the right person, right from the time I got born again, but yes, I experienced failure. And I learnt. You can ascertain the will of God, you can 'examine' what you are 'hearing' by looking at the present circumstances in your relationship, by not exalting a 'conviction' above the person's character and attitude towards you.

### **Church responsibility**

The churches need to do a better job in teaching singles to prioritize seeking God and seeking to do things the way he would want them to do. I can't help but feel disappointed when I see in some circles today singlehood being treated as an inferior

life and the single is pressured to get married – to whosoever. It doesn't matter, as long as they are married.

It should be in church circles that singles are taught the values of dignity, integrity and intimate relationship with God, instead of being made fun of or given the world's methods of dating.

I remember an incident. It could have been my first, or one of my very first days in the youth meeting after my born-again experience. The lesson was on dating, and I remember asking a question: Can't we just trust God to lead us to the right person?

In my mind, I didn't mean just lazying around and just hoping that no matter what we do, God is just going to lead us to that one we were 'ordained for'. So don't get me wrong. I just felt like there was something better than what was being taught.

The answer was nothing short from what a worldly person would give. 'Seeking a mate is like going to buy a pair of shoes from a shoe shop. There are many shoes. How would you know the one that fits you if you don't try them on? Try one, if it doesn't fit, you try the next. Try and try until you get the one that fits.'

The difference is that human hearts are not inanimate shoes. Humans have emotions, and they get hurt when they are dumped for the next pair of human shoes. As such, you have pairs of shoes in churches who harbor resentment or who don't talk to each other because of the hurt from those experiences.

### **God will tell you who to marry**

He that is willing to be led of God will find his guidance available. The more you commit yourself to the Lord, the more he reveals his plan for you, including who to marry.

This is not about getting the Lord to give you a mate. If you only commit to God because you find in it a method of getting a spouse, you might be disappointed when things don't go the way you wish.

You can't put God in a box. Dedication to God is about the whole of your life so committed to following him at any cost that you find your contentment in him alone. When you live this way, you avoid some of the experiences of shoe try-outs.

I wish I can give you a step by step approach. But the secret lies in your relationship with the Lord. It's not a formula. Let him lead you.

I pray the Spirit of God brings to the understanding of the reader the things I have not been able to articulate well and the ones I have not highlighted. I pray that every single that has taken the effort to read the play and these two chapters would take a stand to make God the focus of their lives, seeking to live for him alone, not because

you want him to reward you with a mate, but because he is your creator and he has a claim on your life; because he is your God.

God bless.

Janet.

## **About Janet**

I am just a girl who loves Jesus passionately.

That's a summarized summary of who I am!

"In details', I am from the English-speaking region of the Republic of Cameroon. I consider myself some sort of Christian minister 😊 gifted by God with talents to use for His glory. I'm passionate about writing, singing, and encouraging two things: the pursuit of intimacy with God and a fulfilled life, i.e. a life of purpose.

I'm also very passionate about the Lord Jesus and biblical truth.

If I had only one chance to influence someone, and I tell them about intimacy with the Lord and the importance of following God's plan for their lives, and they get it, I'd have accomplished my mission.

My other hobbies are watching movies and playing computer games.

## **Other FREE eBooks I've Authored**

- ***Five Ideas and Misconceptions That Hinder Effective Prayer***

Prayer is meant to be effective: fruitful and rewarding, not an obligation or drudgery. Sadly, that is not the experience of many believers. This eBooklet looks at some common wrong mentalities Christian sometimes have that hinder effective prayers.

- ***Two Broken Hearts.***

Catherine's and Stan's paths cross when each is grieving a lost love. Empathy and a longing for new love draw their hearts together.

- ***Still loading...***

## **My Novels**

- ***Gold of Ophir***

Thirty years old Bethany had not imagined marriage would take that dreadfully long to come by. Tired of being without a certain type of ring on her finger, she has her internal troubles compounded by pressures from without. Panic and resentment take

hold of her as the prospects of marriage appear apparently slimmer. But where on earth is her Mr. Right?

The novel is available on Barnes and Noble, Kobo, iBooks and other eBook retailers.

### **Coming up next**

- ***Jedidah Belle Solomon***

The ease with which others achieve their dreams is many times a rare commodity for others. Fifteen years old Jedidah dreams of becoming a journalist, but life circumstances beyond her control take her through unfortunate situations. She finds herself in the city as maid to her paternal aunt, far away from her widowed mother and two junior brothers in the village. In the midst of the storm of abuse and domestic violence, the young girl finds God. When it appears she will finally make it in life, the story is just about to begin.

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