

TOMIWA'S DEMISE

BY OGIEVA ERHUN

"Tomiwa, give Mr ochuko here a million naira, he's done well" Mr Ajasi said to him smiling. Tomiwa grudgingly left to retrieve a million in 500 naira bills packed in a black sac bag. Mr ochuko had never been given such money in his life, but so had Tomiwa. To him the boss didn't appreciate his efforts enough, he took him for granted because of his quietness. "Ah, thank you sir!" Mr ochuko went on to bless Mr Ajasi in his native tongue while Tomiwa just stood by, his face expressionless. Why would the boss give that kind of money to a mere foot soldier he barely knew and till date had not given him? He was in his feelings but his shades covered his angry eyes.

Mr ochuko left smiling and the boss immediately sent Tomiwa on another errand. "yes, I'm good enough to give duties but not gifts" Tomiwa muttered under his breath as he left to carry out the errand. It was either that or sudden death.

How would he get his own share of the Ajasi empire, it was his right. Or so he thought. For Christ's sake he had served Mr Ajasi for more than 10 years now. Mr Ajasi had sent him to pay off the custom officers for a certain shipment, he had kept it secret from his underlings, like he did every other shipment details. The boss was keen on running that part of the business himself.

Tomiwa pulled into the drive way of the grandeur, a small time pub in dutse. Ironic, I know. His benz was nothing short of attention grabbing, he stepped out and walked straight into the pub. "welcome oga, what will you have?" a light skinned girl not more than five feet tall asked him. "Gulder and a tall Glass, thank you" she quietly left to retrieve his order. Tomiwa was getting impatient really quick. They had agreed on 8 pm, it was 10 minutes past already. He was conscious of how suspicious he looked. I mean, wouldn't you notice a dark skinned mini-giant with a black duffel and shades at night?

Three men stepped in amidst his thoughts and seemed to be walking in his direction. "All these ones naim dey spoil the country so" a drunk man in the pub said loudly, drawing the men's attention briefly. They didn't mind him, they were here to get paid and that was all that mattered. They sat face to face with Tomiwa.

"Do you have the money?" one officer asked immediately they sat. Tomiwa concluded that he had to be the spokesperson of the group or at least the boldest. "It's all in the bag" he simply said pushing 500 thousand in unmarked bills under the pub table. The man opened the bag and his smile confirmed Tomiwa's speculation, these men were hungry, they would be loyal to who ever paid the most. He noticed the man on the left was timid, he was probably going to be cheated and given the smallest of three cuts, that was his target.

He watched as they left him sitting there. "Gordons, we dey come yus now o, make we buy something for front."

This was the time to make his move.

"I know say money na the problem, what if I tell you say I fit settle you and your family wella" Gordons had this confused looked on his face, a 'why was this guy talking to me' look, but he heard money already so all that was propaganda. "I dey hear you" he quietly said back.

"Na whether I fit put mind for your body"

"Follow me cap, you go find out." Tomiwa went on to convince the officer to switch sides.

He was the least suspicious in the group, all he had to do was get Tomiwa the route the shipment was going to pass through. He'd supply man power and an escape route.

"Gordons make we come dey go o, day don dark too much. Oga, tell your boss say we don settle everything" spokesperson said loudly. Tomiwa simply smiled and collected Gordons' number.

Phone rings

"oga, na me. Gordons!"

"how e be?" Tomiwa replied, sitting up on his bed. It was just past 6 in the morning.

"na today that shipment dey come o, your boss call my oga yesterday. E go don dey the checkpoint for dutse around all those 4 o'clock this evening."

"good man, nor let your phone off o"

"sure thing. My boss say e go be red plantain truck, so put eye for ground"

"Send your details, make I bless you small"

"is a chair there!"

Tomiwa just laughed and ended the call.

He hurried and made a straight phone call to Maiko, his cousin. Maiko had quite the infamous reputation, he handled all types of dirty jobs. From kidnapping alongside mutilation down to jacking trucks, which was all Tomiwa needed from him. Maiko was more experienced in stuff like this than he was. Maiko agreed without wasting time, he already had his police outfit from previous jobs.

"So the checkpoint at dutse is not until like 12 miles down. We could make a fake checkpoint easily. Rendezvous by 3:30, make you for nor waste time. Immediately you secure am, buzz me"

“Understood, I’ll be in touch”.

“Wilfred, Uyi and Foster, three of una naim go follow me for this work.” Maiko quietly told them as he reached for an early morning brew from his mini fridge.

“Money sweet ooooo” Uyi was going to burst into a song, happy because he was picked today.

“Around which time oga?”

“3 o’clock we move, na for dutse”

“In and out na?”

“As usual.”

They went to change to their uniforms, the police system was already a joke so impersonation was too easy. Maiko was too smart for his own good. Uyi on the other hand kept teasing Wilfred’s mustache “ you know bread wey rat nor chop finish?”

“Ehn”

“ naim your bear-bear resemble”

They moved out by exactly 3, their sirens on top the small black truck, foster drove the truck for transferring the contents of the burst. Small handguns passed around as Maiko turned on the radio, Ojuegba by Wizkid was playing. “Add belle! Add belle!” Uyi shouted from the back seat. The ride went on as 97.3 kept playing indigenous songs. They passed a secluded path to escape the actual checkpoint and camped theirs just 3miles down.

And right on queue, 4:13 pm, a red truck with plantains heaped on it ventured into their landscape. They tapped Uyi, he was always dosing off in serious situations.

“Call foster. Tell am make e dey ready”

“Yes boss”. The truck got close and maiko signaled it to park. The man looked no than 35, wore a red shirt.

“Come down as I dey look you. If you run I go shoot you!” Maiko shouted as he got to the man’s window. He was obedient, even trembling a little. Maiko pointed the gun against his head, his finger tight around the trigger. “Check the back, yus raise all the plantain wey dey the ending” he screamed orders at Uyi and Wilfred. Just then foster was pulling over. Maiko shot the man so abruptly the other three men were shocked.

“Una go dey do like women, pack everything enter the other truck e! If you finish, burn wetin be e name join the truck, I dey come” Maiko walked away to call Tomiwa.

Not two hours after that, Maiko called Mr Ajasi.

Why not? He was going to probably make much more money and he did. He was paid three times what Tomiwa offered, what he didn't know was Mr Ajasi would come for his head for killing Jimoh.

"Maureen please call two boys to change the rug" Mr Ajasi quietly spoke to his personal assistant.

"To which one sir?"

"Definitely the red"

"Yes sir" Mr Ajasi had his customized 9mm clock out and was doing a little maintenance on it. Tomiwa was his responsibility, he had bitten more than just the hands of who fed him. "Tell Tomiwa to meet me" he simply said to Maureen. She nodded and put the call through. Mr Ajasi walked back to his office, a wide red fur rug beneath his feet, he sat and calmly waited for his right hand man.

An unexpected Tomiwa walked up the steps until he arrived at Mr Ajasi's office. He was about to sit when Mr Ajasi said "Don't sit." He had to stop halfway but he obeyed instantly. Just then he noticed the rug was red, the boss never changed the rug unless someone was going to be killed. Still on the train of thought Mr Ajasi shot his shoulder straight through "you too foolish" Mr Ajasi said calmly as he stood up. Tomiwa tried his best to not cry out, his hand pressed against his bleeding shoulder.

Headshot

Mr Ajasi had pulled the trigger again, Tomiwa dropped to the floor, the crimson of his blood blending perfectly with the rug.

"Call Jeffrey to clean this up".

"Yes sir." It was just another Thursday for Maureen.