

WE DIE HERE!

BY ERHUN OGIEVA

As Jimoh pulled over for the third time he wondered why there were so many check points in Abuja.

“If you run, I go shoot you!” the police officer said immediately he got to Jimoh’s car window. It was the quiet part of dutse. Jimoh obeyed, placing both his hands against the body of his XL truck. “Check the back, yus raise all the plantain wey dey the ending” the same officer was now screaming orders to a few others, his finger tight on the trigger and pointing at Jimoh. “Oga nothing dey there, na plantain wey I carry comot village..” Jimoh got pistol whipped before he could explain further, he just shut up and kept wondering how they knew.

Few minutes after lifting and ransacking, they found the stash, fine green leaves tightly packed together and wrapped in light transparent cellophanes. “Boss, e dey there and e many anyhow” the officer followed to inspect for himself, dragging Jimoh by his sleeve. He touched, tore open and took a deep breath from the package. “This one go high person well, nor be the rubbish wey dem dey sell for this side” he turned and shot Jimoh so abruptly that even his men were shocked and couldn’t hide it.

“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” the officer walked away. The place was amply secluded and Jimoh was bleeding out but one thing kept disturbing his mind.

How did they know?

“What do you mean by the shipment didn’t make it? I confirmed that it landed in Nigeria, where was it ambushed??” Mr Ajasi, millionaire gang boss, queried the foot soldier who was reporting the incident. “They even burned Jimoh sir, it was in dutse sir!” “tell Tomiwa I want to see him, call Jeff and start reaching out. We must fain the bastard wey do this thing” “sure thing sir” was all he said as he ended the call.

Mr Ajasi simply sat, this was war, 3.5million naira worth of Canadian marijuana carted away. By whom? Who had the guts to cross him? Worst of all, how did they know? He had a rat in his camp and death was too small of a reprimand for such person. Mere minutes later, Tomiwa came running up the stairs of Mr Ajasi’s 10 room duplex in Gwarimpa. “I heard, what are we going to do sir?” Tomiwa was not much of a talker, the boss knew this. “Keep killing until we get every kobo back. Start with those kaaba boys, dem don dey fain my trouble since.” “what about in-house sir?” “I’ll handle that one myself, we don’t have much time. Get started.” Tomiwa quietly excused himself, went downstairs and just then his phone rang, he picked up as he stepped into his car.

“I move am go that caravan for maitama side oga”

“but you never tell anybody arbi?”

“Normal, how my money wan take reach me? Before Mr Ajasi kill me make I run.”

“Send your details, I go run the transfer now. Run well o, if me see you, you nor go make am.”

“We dey” the line died and Tomiwa drove off.

The camp house was filthy and abandoned, it was perfect. Tomiwa arrived there and met his boys already assembled, news traveled fast. There were already angry murmurs in the crowd, “who thief bread from who nor get suppose die” “you nor lie at all” one said, riling the other ones up. More and more angry comments, the gang started gyrating, Tomiwa had just arrived. He joined in, the brotherhood was beyond strong. “make una balance” they quieted down. “As e dey be, we give them one step dem take ten. We give dem water drink dem throwey cup.” nods of agreement filled the room “how we wan do their matter?” kunle shouted from amidst the crowd. “Till dem give us our control back, dem go fall one by one” Tomiwa immediately responded. Shouts from every direction, everyone was already set to go out, they all depended on the money to feed their families, take care of their kids born out of wedlock, take care of even their cocaine addictions. Jimoh’s killer had to be found, and they were choosing violence.

“Kunle, carry like three people go my benz, open the boot bring all the goods wey dey there”. Tomiwa shouted orders and threw his keys to the young man and continued psyching up the rest of the gang. “Jimoh get two children wey nor go see their papa again, you go let that kain thing dey?” “no na!!” they kept responding as a unit.

Kunle stepped in, carrying as many guns as his hands would let him, ak-47 riffles, mini Uzis and some locally made shot guns. The other three stepped in with more guns, some 9mm glocks stood out, you could tell the boss took this seriously. The last man entered with nothing but customized daggers and machetes so sharp they’d cut a leaf clean through. More and more hailing fell on Tomiwa’s name as the men spread out to retrieve and spread the “goods” amongst themselves.

“First we go run enter all those kaaba boys, no one go remain until dem talk who comot Jimoh” Tomiwa kept raising spirits as guns and gyration songs flowed through the crowd. “move out!” the men immediately followed. Kunle led a small number of them to bring in the hilux trucks, they’d stolen about 8 of them from the police line up garage. More and more men jumped into trucks as they fired warning shots in the air. Civilians knew what that meant...hide yourself.

The kaaba boys saw nothing coming but a bunch of Mr Ajasi’s men. The trucks hadn’t parked when they jumped off and started spraying bullets into the kaaba camp. Aks’ ruggedly vibrating the hands of the pained, death was going to revive Jimoh, be it true or not. Kunle pulled out a machete, looked if he could see himself in it before chopping off the hand of an unexpected kaaba low life. He cleaned the blood on his own shirt and dove right in again.

“Mudia, nor looseguard o.” Kunle shouted across the room, picking up another 9mm glock. Headshots left and right, he was going to clean his sweat when a very young boy stabbed his forehead, kunle

dropped. Mudia shouted in anguish and ran for the hilux he came in, a small dagger in his hand. He went for the petrol, an eye for an eye. "Guyman, I wan burn all of dem, make una put eye for ground" Mudia said to as many of his people as he could. They'd started losing and something needed to be done, they didn't expect the kaaba boys to all be gathered in one camp. Their number was the only advantage they had over the Ajasi men. Mudia ate a bullet on his way back, he got shot in his stomach but that couldn't deter the mission. "All of una go die and na me must kill una" he muttered to himself. As he struggled to walk, he kept pouring petrol on all their trucks, fridges, anything in his sights that would make a wider fire, Mudia was determined. Bullets kept flying, he saw yet another friend die and he broke a little. He immediately lit the match, the blow back took him along, shredding Mudia and about 40 other kaaba men. The Ajasi escaped only because they were closer to the entrance. Many of them had taken cover. It rained ash and blood as the once noisy camp went completely silent.

Tomiwa had gone to meet with Mr Ajasi after sending the men off to the kaaba camp. "Don't sit" Mr Ajasi said calmly, Tomiwa obeyed. Just then he observed the setting, something had changed just three hours since he left.

It was a new rug.

The boss only changed rugs when he wanted to kill someone.