

AMOBONI

Forward

Amoboni which is Dr. Idachaba's first published play is no doubt a classic. In this play the playwright is able to ingeniously fuse conflict and suspense to sustain interest.

The play deals with the age long human voice of betrayal of trust. It is also a good example of the recurrent theme of conflict of cultures in colonial Africa. It is a story of intrigue and conspiracy. Amoboni is a traditional ruler whose life is committed to the custom and tradition of his people, in his determination to uphold the traditions of his forebears and his worldview he gets into conflict with the colonial administration symbolized by Mr. Muffet the colonial district officer.

The clash leads to tragic consequences when following allegations that he was high handed and arrogant, he decides to take his own life rather than be disgraced and dethroned from office..

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Movement 1

(Blackout. A creeping 'Etube' gong sound heightened only by the ding of gong starts, quite inaudibly and grows to a crescendo which gets exotic, only to stop abruptly. This is followed by the chant, 'Ojowata, Amideju' by the women. This is followed by 'Oleleoo.'. The lights come on to reveal centre stage the towncrier clad in ceremonial African ritual attire as donned by the Igala, achi okpe and ochachi' cap)

Town crier: 'Akoya! akoya! Onu meta. Akoya onu melu Attah yomi Ka wo oja kiicholo belu enyin'. The Attah bids me tell you good people that 5 days from now mark the annual 'ocho' festival, wherein all mortals commune with the departed. You must all ensure your sacrifices are well made. 'Megba'! (This is repeated many times. As he goes out black out. And as lights come on the entire arena is taken up by drumming and singing of various kinds, centrestage is a rather wierdful looking priest he is the Igala chief priest 'Oyoga.' He is holding a mass paraphernalia of oracular consultations. There is a loud blast of trumpet and every body lies on the ground shouting "Gabaidu". As the Attah comes on stage the chant 'Ojogwata' is repeated over and over. Just as everybody is quite, Chief priest leads in a live ram.)

Chief priest: [after some incantations in Igala] the gods watch Over us. Our great ancestors witness today our yearly reunion with them. You ancestors, as you created the world so has it remained, . the one who attempts to break your work only breaks his neck.

In our sleep, we remember you, while we drink, we remember you .And as we perform the Ocho we bring a willing lamb as offering to you great people.

Priest: Gabaidu! The hunter kills, not to eat but to appease the gods (hands him a bow and arrow). As you aim, the gods pull the string. May it herald more and more blessing Ojogwata!.

The people: Amideeju! [repeated over and over. As The Attah takes his arrow, and attempts to shoot. Down stage left Achi and Oyibo in Whispers]

Achi: I told you Oyibo, that this is no ordinary sacrifice. It dates back to the origin of our people, the spiritual and Communal import in those days was quite imperative but you see times have changed, what is the use killing a human being for the sake of other human beings.

Oyibo: Shh, shh, quite Achi, this ceremony is no joke the earlier we get out of here the better for our lives.

Achi: True Oyibo, we must see Muffet immediately. He Keeps saying it is a mere sacrifice. But this sacrifice is not mere. Human heads are at stake and it is unchristianly, retrogressive and native.
(Action back to the festival)

Priest: Gabaidu, as it has been with your forebears, so shall it be. The one who seeks your downfall is himself down because he fights the gods. As you

take this sacrifice, may the blood of the lamb cleanse our land of all pestilence. May it rekindle our force and strength of purpose. And may it make that ethereal link between us and before and future same. May your reign not outlive its grandeur, and as we talk here, the gods lend us support everlasting.
[the crowd shouts Amideju:Ejo Gwano Ichefio, the Attah picks his arrow aims at the sacrifice and as he throws there is a blackout which is preceded by Shouts of Oleloo!]. *[The collaborators five in number gather in a hut for a meeting]*

Achi: My fellow brethren, before we commence this meeting, I would want elder Sule to pray for us.

Sule: Our dear father, we pray that you lead us to a fruitful discussion, you know that where you reign evil will not progress. We, your own children, we shall progress been saying about me. Claims I am disloyal and disrecause it is your promise. Bless all of us in Jesus name. Achi Now, to the crux of the matter. You all know what Gabaidu has bespectful.

Sule and others: Yes, Exactly we heard so.

Achi: Then you may have heard how he promised to deal with me for refusing to bow to him. A mere mortal. Well, I would not bow to any being except the Most High.

Akogu: Achi and brothers but I advise you to be careful in This matter, a man does not joke with the tail of a

crocodile. And you know how Amoboni is, do I need to emphasize.

Achi: You need not be scared of that. When a child challenges an older uncle for a fight, know you that he has another big uncle behind him. Mr. Muffet has promised me all the support I shall need for this fight.

Akogu: I see, but how do you envisage the support of Muffet in this issue Amoboni is one of us, he lives with us and controls power. Muffet lives in Kaduna.

Achi: Though he lives in kaduna, his power reigns here, he is the D.O. It is not like in old times. Perhaps you do not know that he has powers to remove Amoboni

Sule: You don't mean it but can it happen.

Achi: Of course sule, the power to discipline, he can remove him and replace him with another fellow. Tell me for how long shall we have such a proud fellow as king, there ought to be limit to tradition. Because he occupies the sacred seat he treats other people as not important. It is time to teach him a lesson. I shall leave for kaduna, first thing in the morning. Make sure he doesn't know of this plan.

All: Okay.

Achi: Tell the other councilors about my plan but don't let those other ones know

Movement 11

(ATTAH'S palace. The stage is bare except for the throne of the Attah. As he moves in he is accompanied by the praise singer who punctuates the air with his incessant chants, hailing and praises. As the drums herald his entry he moves on stage replendishly with calculated majestic steps; every body lies prostrate)

Attah: My dear chiefs, I have called you here to thank you all for the successful hosting of this year's Ocho feast. I am also more pleased to announce the acceptance of our offering by the gods. However, some people, of our soil do not want the land to prosper. They have decided to condemn those things that have given life and breath to us since creation. They say that I kill people and animals for no just reasons.

Onu Egume: It's the job of the traitors. All they want is a little present from Enefu. And for these they will open their mouths to describe how their father makes loves to their mother

Onu Ankpa: Gabaidu, you 'll do well to ignore them. It is ignorance that makes them trifle with tradition. May our ancestors continue to lead you on and on in your drive to put our land in its right place.

Attah: Their drumming shall not long continue because the battle is near. When we shall see who wins, the gods or men. The stew pot shall be tampered with,

the taste will not remain the same. But I assure you, I will not live to see it. My duty to my people is directed by my forefathers and I shall sacrifice everything to fulfill their desires

P/S:-- "Attah Ojiji Ogbagbada unedo Kia jechu Awo". It is the brave who attempts to slap the faeces of a child. The ash of a burnt forest shall forever remain the make-up of the baby monkey. The goat, even if it runs a million miles shall never sweat. Whoever chews kola must remember to swallow water. (He stops as the Attah sits down)

Attah: *[to one of his councilor] Otubeje, bring the rogue in. [Oyibo the traitor is brought in shaking and begging. Immediately he appears in the presence of the Attah, he is down lying prostrate]*

Oyibo for a long time you have been a cause of distress to many homes. In spite of your good parentage, you pick delight in stealing people's goats and chickens which you sell at very cheap prices. Today Oyibo, you were found spying on me and the ocho, with a strange man. you an Igala son. Why?

Oyibo: Gabaidu, I'm sorry, I shall never repeat it. Have mercy your Highness, it is the devil's temptation. I promise to desist from further acts of knavery. It's the Enefu, he promised me lots of money.

Attah: Otubeje.

Otubeje: Gabaidu [prostrating]

Attah: Give this man 20 lashes of the cane, take him to my palace and let him remain a palace attendant so that I can keep a steady watch over him.

Otubeje: *[bringing out a cane] Oya! Oyibo lie down [he begins to lash Oyibo who shouts and writhes in pain. Elelooo! As the lashing finishes he is taken to the inner chambers]*

Attah: Otubuje, bring in Achi. (as he is brought in,. he is defiant and remorseless).

Attah: Achi, the other day I realized that you did not attend the Ocho festival. Yet on another day along Ajaka Road your vehicle was overloaded with Gbolojoko, his wife and many others you did not realize it could jeopardize human lives.

Achi: Gabaidu (not prostrating) it is not true. I did not refuse to attend the festival .I only traveled to visit my in-laws at Okenya and to say that I overload my vehicle is also false of you. I don't like such allegations.

Onu Egume: Imagine. Quite Achi, you... mean, you can talk to his Highness anyway you like?. You don't have the courtesy of even kneeling down. You stand straight and talk to his highness. Worse still, you tell him to his face he is lying. Your highness, this fool must be taught a lesson.

Achi If that is all you called me for I am going away please. (He walks out)

Onu Egume: Gabaidu that man, you have to watch him. You really have to watch him.

Adah: Gabaidu, I have just been told that Mr. Muffet is here on tour of Igala Kingdom and he intends to see you Gabaidu.

Attah: That's fine, so the whitean, Mr. Muffet wants to visit me. Let him in, he is most welcome [Muffet is brought in a chair by two N.A. Policemen in shorts and starched tops. As Muffet walks in, he moves to greet the Attah who remains seated on his exalted throne] you.. are welcome Mr. Muffet. Please sit down Otubeje, please provide for him drinks and kola [drinks are brought and served for Mr. Muffet and entourage].

Mr. Muffet: [after the drinks] Mr. Omoboni-gabaidu, I have come on tour of the kingdom and have decided to pay you homage since, we the British recognize the import of your natural rulership over your people.

Attah: Thank you very much, Muffet. I have always said that the British knows his nose from him mouth.

Mr. muffet: Thank you. In addition Gabaidu, I want to advise you on reports I have received about you. It has come to the knowledge of the administration that Your Highness indulges in heathen and dangerous

sacrifices, such as human sacrifice and animal abuse. This is adulterous and unacceptable to the queen of England.

Attah: My dear Muffet, why do you poke your nose into issues you do not understand .May I know if a communal cyclic ritual which gives life and breath to the society is sacrilege. Mr. Muffet, I am an Igala man, this is Igala Kingdom.

The land you are standing on is Igala. The tradition has been handed down from generation to generation. My great forebears did it, before they danced to join their own forebears who had performed it. This thing is Life. If you undermine it, you undermine existence. You will kill a million lives. The people know the essence of the ritual and they not only accept it but also identify with it. I am sure none of my kinsmen here has complained about this ritual. It is a communal act of progenition and procreation. Any attempt to dabble with it will result in undue complacency and confusion.

Muffet: Well, well, Mr. Oboni, this administration has no evidence yet against you but as I tell you when we have evidence we shall deal with it properly .This administration shall not take undue use of power and privileges see my point Oboni and deal with your customs or is it tradition, carefully.

Attah: [Getting irritable] our customs and traditions are ours and not yours. Any attempt Muffet to infiltrate

into what is ours shall be tantamount to cultural abuse and bastardization. You can't break a circle and call it a circle. Nor a chain and still call it one. You can't kill a tribe and make it breath. There is no killing tradition: It is life.

Muffet: Alright guards, let's get out of here. This man is heathen. I never knew he is adamant and illiterate [as he moves out].

Praise /Singer: "Attah Ojiji Nyalukogo. Olimalon emonuki lin che" who is the Mallam, to teach Obifa its ifa? Who is the child to teach the father the art of love-making after all is it not the father that begot the child...? Tell them Gabaidu, tell them, those who do not understand that it is difficult to count the hen's teeth though it eats corn.

P/s: [begins the chant Ojogwata and the chorus follows Amideju, Amideju Oleleoo. As Attah moves 3 steps towards his inner room he stops and looks back. Everybody falls to the ground].

Attah: My people, I must commune with our fathers now . when the bush rat comes out at noon, know that it is pursued by an evil omen..
It must not work. It must be nibbed in the bud. Igala must live, Igala must continue. Ene Okpakpa? (refereeing to the praise singer) call me the Oyoga (There is black out)

Movement III

[Achi in the house of Muffet down stage left]

Muffet: Achi, the sacrilegious tendencies of Omoboni must cease with prompt action. I cannot remain as a representative of the Crown in this native place and watch such human abuses. Can you imagine that native bushman saying that human ritual brings life. Such disregard for British efforts in this God forsaken place!.

Achi: I told you time without number the man's arrogance is more than that of the peacock, of all Attahs of this Kingdom, he still remains the most brutish proud and wicked. Think sir, he is a wizard. He has magic powers Sometime, he makes land flow over water and uses it as bridge.

The Chorus: "Eka Attah ma chen ba ke ko e ko oo". What the Attah doesn't achieve, he has only refused to achieve [during.. this time, there is a flash back Attah moves on stage where there is water. He and his entourage are unable to cross]

The People: Gabaidu, we can't advance to the other side the river is big we might drown.

Attah: My people, it is only the silly child that is ignorant of his father's strength. If he hasn't seen him fight, he must have watched him till the soil.
[Pause]

Attah: By the powers of my ancestors. I order a patch of land on this water to enable me pass. [stage effect is used and they cross to the other side. Back to Achi and Mrs.Muffet]
Mrs. Muffet Achi, where did this happen?

Achi: It happened at Alloma in Ofu area of the kingdom and it is still there today. A bridge without a raft. A bridge of land. Mrs. Muffet: Wonderful, Achi you don't really mean it!

Achi: That's not all One day, he was visiting a village a leaf fell from a tree and landed on his head. He cursed the tree and till today the tree is dried up.

Mr. Muffet: This is unbelievable

Achi: Another day he was touring the kingdom, a man refused to greet him and pay homage. He ordered the man to be crippled and he was instantly crippled [flash back: chorus ' Ei ka Attah ma chen ba ke ko e keooo'. The Attah is moving with his entourage everybody lies prostrate. A man is seated sewing on a machine].

Aman: Nnamdi won't you come off that thing and prostrate for our ruler? He is the king of the land. And everything therein, the land and people belong to him.

Nnamdi: Please leave me alone, I am an Ibo man and there is nothing like Chief in our place [before he finishes

speaking the body guards of the Attah rush on him and give him a severe beating as he is on the floor the Attah moves on stage]

Attah: Otubeje, what is the cause of this chaos here.

Otubeje: Gabaidu! He refused to prostrate and greet you.

Attah: My friend, is it true that you refused to greet your royal father.

Nnamdi: Oga sir, we don't bend to greet in my land.

Attah: Why don't you live in your land? You are a disobedient stranger in my land. For that reason you shall be punished. From now on you shall prostrate on the floor [at that moment Nnamdi falls to the ground and becomes instantly crippled]

Praise: Ogbaikolo. Churchulor Agboni, ownu ma kpo ragboni, etc [action moves back to Muffets house].

Mrs. Muffet: Darling, this sort of people must change. Imaging Queen Elizabeth meeting such a savage, I am mean she will be embarrassed. Couldn't you get rid of him?

Achi: This is it sir, you must get rid of him. You must. If not, he will get rid of you and your entire administration. I tell you. He is wicked and devilish.

Muffet:

I'll get rid of the native bastard. I'll sure get him. I will be pragmatic and systematic, you know British intelligence. First I'll summon a meeting of all chiefs. I shall make it point blank that I will not tolerate any acts of insubordination or fetishism henceforth. Achi write a letter to the Sultan of Sokoto, Emir of Illorin, Gwarzu of Kaduna and Attah Igala.

Achi Yes sir, I will do that immediately [a side.] Amoboni must pay dearly for his arrogance.

Movement IV

[the Attah's place in council]

Attah: Oyoga, what do you see?

Oyoga: [With incantations] terrible, Gabaidu when I throw 2, I see 3 on the ground; when I remove 1, it remains only 1.

Attah: Oyoga, of all my councilors you know you are the most trusted. Your honesty and sense of fact can never be equated. Your courage is likened only to me, as friends., tell your lord what you see.

Oyoga: Gabaidu than like friends, you are our common enemy and Gabaidu the Enefu is your collaborator, for you won't make peace with the Enefu.

The Enefu in his own pride will not tolerate you. So that when two elephants fight, it is only the grass that suffers your people. I saw the Enefu on your throat with a strange epileptic desire to undo you. You will not give up. So, struggle with him until Gabaidu you give up. He wins; you also win but your people they suffer like the grass.

Attah: The Enefu, he can't wrestle me to any point. I shall deal him a blow you shall see, I will sting him and it will hurt him hard. Do not worry oyoga; my ancestor shall never fail me [enter.. The women]

- America: Gabaidu I and my other sister have decided to bring you a gift Gabaidu,.
- Attah: What gift could you bring to me good mothers, Covered from head to toe.
- Metuwu: A gift Gabaidu, I know you ll' like a beautiful rose Gabaidu just fresh from the flower. A boneless fish Gabaidu young and willing to be bent .
- Metuwu: [Blocking Atabo] no my lord unless you pay a fee. What you are about to behold is golden.
- Atabo: Alright, you know what to do. Pay what you will and lets' have a look.
- Atabo: Okay, mothers, here [giving them some money and removing the cloth a young beautiful Queen is revealed]
- Attah: Ah! See, Ataboh this must be a special design of the gods.
- Amaria: A present form us Gabaidu. She will rub oil on your back at night. And make your fire for you.
- Attah: Come, beautiful daughter. Who is your father.
- Rametu: Idachaba, your Highness Idachaba the fisherman.
- Attah: Ameria please take her in and take proper care of her . Atabo, go and tell Idachaba I want to see

him.

All: Gabaidu [just then chief Atakpa runs in]

Atakpa: Gabaidu! [prostrating] Gabaidu, the situation is serious they have pledged never to pay any tax to anybody either dead or alive. And to show their seriousness, they are all holding guns, matchets and cutlass [as he demonstrate it the chiefs laugh] . It is no laughing matter, Gabaidu. They say that they are afflicted with Yaws and Jigger and government does nothing to alleviate the scourge. You need to see them Gabaidu jumping here and there like toads on rampage.

Atabo: And they Promised to kill any body who appears between range of their village.

Attah: I will be going there today. In fact now, when is it heard that a wife refuse the husband, of course she seeks divorce.

P/s: '[Attah Ogbaikolo, Ache, kinyo own ajuwe tokpe Ojolo choni Ojiwn meruwn]' the wine that kills the drunkard starts as thirst, but in ecstasy of joy shall before long kill the goat. The people of Awo, Gabaidu shall know the difference between a native dog and an Alsatian [as he is about to stumble out]. America Your lordship, please don't go there those people are mean. [To the counselors] please prevail on him not to go there. They might kill him they are wicked. You know what an armed village can do to a

single man. Please beg my lord not to go.
[she is begging and weeping]

Attah: Woman, what is the matter. When have you started dictating my official functions for me. The political functions of this kingdom is mine. I go anywhere I wish to go at my won dictates and not yours. Ojali [wife moves in and takes her out. The Attah moves down. black out].

Movement v

[Lights come on to reveal Awo village, men, women, children everybody is hopping here and there is general chaos. The people limp because of the jigger infection. The men sharpen their knives and brandish their guns]

Odekina: My people, for a long time, we been have taunted, victimized and oppressed by government still we have not enjoyed any privileges. No amenities of any sort and we are always downtrodden. I ask you my people, is there any tribe that pays more tax than we.

People: No!!

Odekina: We shall henceforth not pay any tax. Even if Omoboni comes here, we shall tell him to go back and tell the whiteman his friends that we shall not pay anymore taxes. We shall not tolerate any vices of continued extortion and exploitation [he starts the song "Awuya a no ma ro kokalo] this song is carried on and on. (They dance in a circle.)

Am'oboni: Kai, kai, me we chaka (there is total quite/silence]
omi Amoboni Akola, I am Ameh Oboni

People: All prostrate

Attah: I have been with you here for a long time. I heard the speech of Odekina and I agree that you are exploited but does a man steal his own yams. Certainly not, if he does he is foolish. My

mother, Ache comes from this town. I was born and bred here how then can I aid the white man to exploit you my people. Does a father tell his child to play with fire. If anything, I have tried all I can to solve your problems. Already, I told the white man in strong terms that he should establish for you a school. As for the Jiggers, I hereby use the powers conferred on me by ancestors to extinct them. You shall never, I mean never have any jiggers here nor in any part of Igala land and I advise you not to do anything disastrous, if you do, you will never develop I speak to you as your father.

I want you all, to surrender your guns. [they all begin to drop their guns] now I have a booklet of receipts here and as example, I will now pay 2.00 (he pays to p/s and he is issued a receipt] everybody will pay then we can say to government do this and that for us. [they all look into their pockets and begin to pay].

p/s:

“Nyalukogo olimma jun emoun klinche! Adagba kedono olawnun ya miodo. Agbon n own ma kpe ragboni. Ogwuachechu yoyo choje minye' [He begins a song 'ukpamo dalo amo unedo kina chomimo'. The situations because festive. They all dance out].

Movement vi

Mrs. Muffet: [calling her house boy] polycap, Poly carp, common dress up the tablets, fix the chairs and make sure you hurry the chiefs are coming over today for the conference. It's a busy day for Muffy and I don't want no mistakes .(Hausa music rents the air, the Sultan arrives. Mr. and Mrs. Muffet hurry to the door and try as much as possible to put up a radiant look by wearing a rather plastic smile].

Muffet: Ha ha ha Sultan, you are welcome! You are welcome! You are most welcome!

Sultan: Sank, sank yu, Beri much Sank you.

Muffet: How is the family and the kids.

Sultan: Pine Sank you za kids and my pibe they are all pine. How are you Madam Muppet?

Mrs. Muffet: I am alright, you are welcome. Please, come and take your seat [as he is sitting down, Yoruba drumming rents air as Emir of Ilorin arrives]

Muffet: Welcome Oba. You are most welcome to the Conference

Oba: Omoshe omo mi, when I got your letter of invitation to this meeting, I just said it sir, [he laughs] how is your omoge oshe oda benye [he is continually laughing]

Mrs muffet: Oba please sit down you are welcome [the Obong of Calabar arrives]

Oba: Omoshe omo mi When I got our letter of invitation to this meeting I just said it is a long time I have seen you, so I decided I should come, sir, [he laughs's] how is your omoge oshe da benye [he is continually laughing].

Mrs. Muffet: Oba please sit down you are welcome. You are most Welcome.

Obong: O jes, when me hear of meeting, me come say jes, we go jam for Kaduna junction.

Mrs. Muffet: Welcome , please sit, [the trumpet of the Attah blast out to announce his arrival. The praise singer at his best.]

P/s: “Attah Ojiji, olataa anana gbe Attah ogbem- gbem- igba ela, own ma dumela oko” etc [Mr. and Mrs. Muffet move to greet the Attah. Mrs. Muffet attempt to shake hands with the Attah who shoves her hand aside or refuses to shake her. Mrs. Muffet blushes]

P/s: “Ogbegbe ile kai Ege ju obagu e me kia lapan...”

Muffet: Omoboni, you are welcome, you are most welcome please sit down. [Attah goes on to sit down]. It is my greatest pleasure on behalf of the Queen an the crown to welcome you here. I have invited you to

discuss excruciation problems of State. More so, the tendency for abuse of fundamental human rights and privileges. I will first of all open the meeting with the anthem.

Can we please stand up and take off our hats for anthem.[all the chiefs stand remove their caps except Attah who remains seated]

Amoboni remove your hat and let's say the anthem.

p/s: [who is seated outside] Attah Ogbaikolo. Attah Ojiji
... Idu kianyi imoto ailo. Ojiji

Sultan: Amoboni Danbanza kafir, Ingr.. say remove your cap you leapam you no depia ko?

Amoboni: Mouth organ of the batuure. I am Attah Igala, I am Head of my people.. I can't unveil my own head. It is a disgrace not only to me but to my entire people living and dead. It is impossible if I remove my cap hell will be let loose.

Obong: Ojes Attah yours remove it because of we.

Oba: Omoboni, let us not waste time on this small issue. Just remove the Kinikon and let's discuss.

Attah: The man who invites ants to his house invites maggots. If you all say I should remove it I hereby remove it [as he lift it, bees begin stinging the Chiefs, all the Chiefs including Muffet begin to shout and curse and the meeting is scattered the Attah is untouched. Only him and his praise singer

remain and the praise singer sings his praise]

p/s: 'Ikeleku achiya adowo chobala agba' The rat doesn't meddle with the beard of the cat. If it does, it is not consumed. "Okekele a dago ofe ugba kia cholubor' An infant twine doesn't provide shade under an iroko tree Gabaidu Attah Okuta Kichi Ibiku ma kpali okuta a tegu uwo" a man does not mount a mountain with a stone tied round his neck [They move out as the praise singing continues gradually, muffed, the chiefs and his wife sneak in one after the other cursing Amoboni]

Muffed: I'll teach that fetish a lesson. To use magic against Me and my household. This is sorcery. It is wicked and evil.

Achi: Sir, I have told you this man is not good. He is the devil's incarnate. He is very mean and wicked.

Muffed: My dear chiefs (calling them together from their ruffled positions) Angrily). From now on, this administration shall not have an idiot as king of an innocent people. I'll disgrace him. I shall have him removed from office immediately. This irate senselessness must not continue.

Achi! Find for me any educated well behaved person and he shall be the next Attah.

[Achi appearing from behind]

Muffed: Achi, come on lets us get over to Idah. Are you sure

like you told me that this man has no support out there in headquarters

Achi: I told you many will dance at his removal

Muffet: Alright, let us go. [as muffet drives in to Idah, car stops at the outskirts quickly a meeting is convened as people converge most of them councilors. Achi is seen whispering to most of them]

Muffet:- Well I have called you here for us to take some vital decision. As is the practice of democratic cultures of Europe, I urge you to express your desire on this issue, how many of you want Amoboni removed as Attah [the chiefs just look no response] how many of you will want him to stay. There is argument among the chiefs some in favour, some against. [Achi whispers to Muffet]

Muffet: Now, let us all close our eyes. If you want Amoboni removed as Attah raise your hands [Muffet counts majority though hands are not up] now, let us open our eyes. You have voted to remove him and he is hereby removed. I shall bring you a new Attah by next week [as grudges and murmuring are heard]

Achi: [aside] yes anybody. What about the traditional rotation. To hell with tradition.

ACTION MOVES TO DEKINA.

Onu Dekinna: My people, as you aware, the Attah visits us today.
I beg you to conduct yourselves properly. You all must be sanctified in readiness for his arrival. No man should have or harbour any grudges against his brother because the gods visit us today.

*[There is a blast of the trumpet] I told you he is here already
[as the Attah enters everybody is prostrate shouting Gabaidu]*

Attah: [now centre stage] my people, I thank you very much for this warm reception. I have always revered and saluted your courage and repute, and you have acted same. [the people, shout oga yoo] the unity and force of the people shall never be intimidated or erased by any alien forces. Generation to generation, tradition will continue.
Igala must exist in spite of what anybody intends
The people Gabadu! May you live long. May you not outlive your reign.

Attah: Yes; my people. The ancestors forbid that I outlive the tradition and will of my people. My people, disgrace starts where honour stop. I intend to live for tradition and may I die before tradition dies.
Tradition, my people, is not only existence, it is life.

People: Gabaidu! Forever, Forever your name shall remain, even among children yet unborn.

Attah: Thank you once more. I shall see you later in the

morning to find out how you have been faring.

Citizen: May you live long. May your presence continue to bring for us greater and greater fruits, my lord I gave a problem.

Amoboni: My good son, What kind of problem is it.

Citizen: Nothing like headache or stomach ache, it is my imagination. As I see you, I am happy yet confused. I have dreamt at least 6 times that you traveled one day and the kingdom could not rest. Once a heavy fight ensued between your brothers over who should ride your horse. And your horse Gabaidu it was sick so sick, yet it appeared beautiful. The two of your children quarreled endlessly. The other met his brother for help he was thrown out. The other refused to speak Igala. I think he said he was an Huasa man.

Amoboni: My Son, Your Story intrigues me a lot but is it over.

Citizen: Gabaidu! Not yet. Thank you because you listen to me a mere farmer, in my dream, I saw another man with your kind of hat but not your heart. Only the rich could talk to him and it was what mattered most.

Two of his sons fought and in between the fight he gave the other big blows. Yet they both thought he was their father.

Amoboni: Stop. You make me sick. Your dream is a puzzle, yet I can see it clearly. I knew it. The Oyoga saw it. When a chain is broken, it is no longer complete. But must I undertake to bear the blames, must I break the chains. Signs are signs. I must think. Fight between brothers like strangers. The white man and I, my son I will explain it tomorrow .

Student: My other brothers and I have come to salute you Gabaidu we are grateful for what you did for us. We have all graduated and are doing well. I have bagged my MBB and John Ateboh here is an architect. [they are introduced]

Attah: May our ancestors be praised. We live in times of conflict and strife but the good farmer plants where it is fertile. No one conspire against the natural force of good.
It may only be delayed. Many of you shall prosper. But you must always remember to carry your other brother along, help them to be like you so that the land shall prosper. Always stand for the land in business, justice, politics and agriculture. Strive for the land in whatever is due to the land.

All: Thank you Gabaidu may you live long.

Movement viii

[lights come on to reveal only Amoboni on stage he is meditating. A guard comes in prostrating.]

Guard: Gabaidu may you live long.

Attah: Ochuma, what is the problems.

Ochuma: The entire place is under siege

Attah: Impossible! Who dare take the Lion's den. Who, tell me, who.

Guard: The Enefu gabaidu. Policemen are all over the place and they say they under instructions to arrest you and send you on exile.

Attah: So Muffet has finally shown his teeth. My palace is under siege and the lion cannot enter his den. Impossible! I say impossible. No one attempts to arrest the air. If he does he breaks his head. Ochuma, go tell them that I will ride home tomorrow and I shall come back in a grand style. No one stop me from roosting at home. I am king of this land. And there is no other king apart from me. I will sting.. Muffet and I will sting him hard. Ochuma, call me the Onu Dekina, then go home tell them what I gave told you. [As Ochuma goes out] I cannot enter my own father's palace. I shall beat him, his gun and bullets. I'll get him [Onu enters]

Onu: Gabaidu, I m here.

Attah: Onu listen, I have received information that the palace is barricade by the white man and his force. I am not saying let's go and fight it is not wise. But listen! You must dress me up in the morning in my full royal attire and carry me shoulder high to my palace. Call my praise singer, he shall follow me to my palace singing and dancing. Then shall I complete my triumph, only then would I have stung British imperial insensitivity and ignorance. Do what I have told you and you'll have your joy.

Onu: Alright good night, but don't you think you could be arrested and killed. Just stay here, gabaidu and we build up forces to fight him.

Attah: Good night don't forget all I have told you. You shall see me in the morning, fully transformed for my triumphant entry into the palace [Onu goes out, leaving only Omoboni. Dim lights come on] ye, ancestors, I salute your edifying spirit.

There is a time in man's life when honour is internalized in tradition. And life becomes only a past time. From generation to generation, age to age, season to season is this truth established that only when an Attah dances to join his ancestors is he dethroned, but enthroned spiritually. My father danced to you as an Attah his own great, great fathers also danced to you while on throne. Never has an, Attah been installed when one sits on the

throne. It has never happened before I know or am wrong. As I see you, I am beginning to dance the great dance.

As I stretch my hands to wine and dine with you, I know I am vindicated. I did not only protect your bequeathed legacy but built around it a castle of awe and glory. But will this castle stand. I fear to look behind me because I see a vacuum, an abyss of anti-tradition and life. The collective will of my people shall it for long be collected or scattered. I feel like a song, but I can't sing, I know I am on my way. So I say here am I [over this speech there is a dirge going on. When he is finished, there is blackout. Then the song icha kolo odiniya kocho is Sung].

Amoboni *[suddenly the lights come on and there is fast drumming and singing. The stage is once more barricaded with armed policemen. Muffet is personally in control; supervising all movements and taking precautions. A group of people is singing and carrying a wrapped human length bundle. They are singing ukpadalamo unedu kina chomi mo].*

Muffet--- what the hell is going here?

Praise singer: Enefu, we are today reconciled with your administration and as you can see, we wish you a prosperous rule. We mean no harm, we only sing in praise of our godhead, Ogbaikolo. Please tell your men to allow us into the palace.

Muffet: By the why, what are you carrying over there.

p/s:

A present, Enefu from the gods and the people to
You, he who already dines and wines

dancing with his fore bears. He brings you a present
your worship. You know you are stronger than he
and the collective will so he says tell Muffet the
fights is over. And let him take this present. It is for
my people that I make this present and the gods
accept it. Enefu they do. That's why we are joyous
and happy. It brings life Enefu and we will continue
to enjoy the bounties of our present. We mean no
harm for what can a drum do in a war.[they are
allowed in drumming and singing , getting serious]
sometime ignorance is better. It avoids
complacency and concussion. I know of a truth, one
who would die to save his tribe, he who is king alive
and dead. Gabaidu .(removing the cloth]

Muffet:

Omoboni! (he is visibly shocked) Alright Guards,
thanks heaven. Why, we have won lets get out of
here! We have indeed won. And listen, tomorrow
morning, I will bring for you a new Attah.

P/S:

Stop, Muffet, you can't bring us a new Attah you
cannot stop the flow of the circle. Tradition will
continue. The gulf may be dark today, they will
bring it to light ,only us can appoint our King oh
gods! Muffet get out. I say get out

Blackout