

MERCY OLUWAFUNMITO ADEBISI

SAPPHIRE

A NOVEL



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By

MERCY OLUWAFUNMITO ADEBISI

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SAPPHIRE

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to...

- God Almighty: Who alone has made this a reality.
- Every Godly Parent: Continue to train up those children in the way of the Lord.
- All ‘Sapphires’ out there: Keep Shining for Jesus.

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It would be really meaningless writing a book without a reader, so I say 'thank you' to you reading this book. I pray that the Lord will perfect all that concerns you, Amen.

EXCERPT

“Can you trust me with Sapphire?”

Megan smiled nervously; “Sapphire has always been yours Lord.” She paused and smiled broadly as beautiful recollections flooded her mind.

“You gave her to us; you have kept and showed her your love right from infancy; you gave Sapphire an amazing knowledge of you. Lord, I have already trusted Sapphire to you. She is all yours as long as she lives and also eternally to dwell with you in heaven.”

He smiled; “Yes I know.” His face became serious once again. “Megan, can you trust her with me; to be with me a whole lot earlier than none of you ever thought or imagined?”

PROLOGUE

SUMMER 2012

“Mummy, mummy.”

Four year old Sapphire called out from her playroom and soon her little footsteps drew nearer towards the kitchen where her mother was washing the dishes. Megan hissed in protest as she tried to figure out why the girl called for her attention. One thing was sure; Sapphire had once again got tired of her video songs.

She dropped the plate she was washing, rinsed her hands and moved towards the gas cooker to check the food she was boiling.

“Victory, victory hallelujah...” Sapphire sang as she entered the kitchen. She stilled when she realized her mother was engrossed in her own world. She moved toward the Gas cooker where her mother was trying to figure out if the food was cooked or not. Megan still didn’t acknowledge her presence.

“Mummy, Mummy.” The girl called again before reaching out to pat her mother’s leg.

“Yes, baby. What is it?” The woman covered the pot with its lid before staring down at her daughter.

“Bible Story.” Sapphire replied holding up her small picture Bible to her.

“I knew it!” Megan muttered under her breath.

“Sapphire, you know what?” She called as little eyes peered up at her with rapt attention.

“Daddy will be back from work anytime soon and I still have some few things to put together for Lunch. Could you just read it on your own today? Please!” As she spoke, Megan located a small stool and assisted the girl to sit on it.

Sapphire pouted in protest; “Mummy, Aunty said I’m reading rubbish.”

“Just keep opening it. OK.” Megan said. Sapphire nodded in response and focused back on the Bible.

Megan hastened back to the sink. She dipped her hand into the washing water and continued with the dishes. Frequently she looked back to catch a glimpse of her daughter opening each page and staring at the pictures thoughtfully. Megan smiled; her little girl was a bundle of Wonder.

Few years earlier when she had discovered she was expecting, she had started speaking to the life in her womb like she would to a little child. As soon as the pregnancy was two months, she started praying for her and declaring great things into her life. At five months, she would sit and tell her Bible Stories. She also taught her songs. At that point, her husband was amazed at her attitude but Megan knew she was sowing a seed into the life of her child. She wouldn’t spend much time but in those minutes the child in her womb would remain calm ‘listening’.

One of the days she knew it wasn’t all in vain was when she was 7 months gone and was in a lot of discomfort. The little one in her was probably so excited or really uncomfortable about something. She and her husband tried everything but her own body wasn’t comforted in any way. A song she would always sing then came to her mind and she had not even finished singing the first line when things calmed.

Her husband had looked at her that day and said; “Looks like someone has been having a good time with her mother.”

A day after Sapphire was born, her maternal grandmother had been giving her a warm bath when she started crying; Megan started singing the song and Sapphire had stopped to listen. There were days she would be working and singing the song. Sapphire would not take her eyes off her mother for those moments except she fell asleep. As she grew, she would even mumble words after her mother in her own way.

The Bible Story sections with her never stopped. Megan would tell her stories while feeding her and whenever she had the opportunity to be alone with her daughter. She also made sure to keep tab of each story she had told her making it in such a way that she told the child each story at least three times. She would play songs for her to listen and as young as she was, Sapphire began to develop a special interest for Don Moen’s songs. Her young daughter grew on with the word of God as a special interest.

At her tender age, Sapphire found it uncomfortable to sit still with video songs or games for long as she gets bored so fast and would come running to her for her ‘Bible Story’. The girl didn’t mind not playing with other kids as long as she had her Picture Bible with her.

“Mummy.” Sapphire called jolting Megan back to the present.

She turned to look at her; “Yes dear.”

Her daughter looked like she wanted to cry; “It’s boring.”

“It’s boring?” Megan frowned

“Yes!” the girl nodded.

“Sapphire, are you saying the Bible is boring?” Megan looked at her questionably.

“No but it’s not boring if you tell me.” She replied in her trusting voice.

Megan smiled; “OK. I understand. Which one should I narrate to you?”

“This.” Sapphire replied standing up to show her mother the page that had caught her interest.

“OK. That’s the story of Peter.”

“I know Peter.” The girl said and grinned widely.

Megan pouted jokingly; “Really?”

“The one that said he did not know Jesus.” she replied confidently.

“Are you sure?” Megan squint her eyes at her daughter.

“Yes! He even said it three times. Mummy, but you told me the story yourself.” She retorted, looking at Megan as if trying to figure out why she was acting the way she was.

“Sapphire, clap for yourself.” Megan said and the girl jammed her hands together.

“Mummy, Jesus is happy.” She whispered.

Megan looked shocked; “Hmm, How do you know that?”

“I know Jesus is happy because I did not forget the Bible Story.”

Megan laughed; “Oh! That’s great.”

She moved to quickly check what she was cooking; “Sapphire, hold on; Let me check what I’m cooking.”

“Okay Ma.” Her daughter replied with a wide smile and she returned to her previous position.

“Thank you Lord for Sapphire.” Megan said silently.

“OK. So it happened that after Jesus fed the people with five loaves of bread and two fishes he told the disciples to be going so that he would send the people away.” Megan began without checking to see if the girl was listening.

“After that, he went to pray for sometime. By the time he was done, his disciples were already in the ship so he walked towards them on the sea. And you know what? The wind was blowing.”

“However, the disciples thought he was a spirit. They were so afraid and eventually Jesus told them he was the one and that they shouldn’t be afraid.” Megan stopped to look back at her daughter. All her attention was fixed on her.

Megan frowned thoughtfully; “Sapphire, why do you think Jesus was able to walk on a large amount of water like that?”

“Momma, Jesus is powerful. He made the water so he knows the water will obey him.” She replied confidently with a smile.

“Good girl. So as I was saying, Peter then told Jesus to tell him to come; Jesus granted his request and told him to come. Peter then came out of the big boat and started walking to Jesus.”

“Ha! Momma, Peter will drown in the water now. The water may not obey him.” Sapphire said with pity before slightly looking at the picture in front of her.

Megan chuckled; “No, he didn’t because Jesus was the one that told him to come.”

Her daughter looked back at her with pure bliss. “Okay, he knows that Jesus will not let him drown?” She dashed her eyelids as she spoke.

“Yes. But as Peter was walking on, he looked at the wind; he became so afraid and he began to sink. He began to enter the water.”

“Momma, what did Jesus now do?” She stared at her mother with eagerness.

“Well, Peter knew he was in trouble so he cried ‘Jesus, save me.’

“Did Jesus answer?”

“Jesus ...” She started to say when someone knocked at the door.

“Well, looks like Daddy is back.” She said to Sapphire and walked out of the kitchen.

“Hold on.” She called out as she walked towards the sitting room.

The girl trotted after her happily.

“Welcome sweetheart.” Megan greeted her husband as soon as she opened the front door.

“Good evening darling. How was your day?” John Anderson replied as he drew his wife in for a hug and a brief peck. Behind her Sapphire struggled to reach him.

“Daddy, hug me also.” The little girl shouted out as Megan collected his suitcase and moved away to let the two of them catch up.

“My princess, how are you?”

Sapphire smiled shyly; “Fine. Daddy, how are you too?”

“I’m fine but I am terribly hungry.” he replied as he sat down on the Sofa with Sapphire in his arms.

“Let me get back to the kitchen. Sapphire had my attention for sometime today but your meal should be ready in some minutes.” Megan said as she hurried back to the kitchen.

“Momma, what happened to Peter?” Sapphire called after her mother.

“Ask your Dad.” Megan shouted back.

“What’s that?” She heard him ask the girl and listened as Sapphire did a summary of what her mother had narrated to her.

Megan smiled! The girl was a good listener.

“So Daddy, did Jesus save Peter?”

“Yes! Jesus stretched his hand and caught him. But Jesus corrected him that he was beginning to doubt him. His trust in God wavered at that point.”

“Wavered?” The little girl sounded confused.

“OK, I mean his trust in God was not strong at that time.”

Sapphire frowned; “Daddy, you like using Big words. Mummy uses simple words.”

John chuckled; “That is why she is your Mother and I am your Father. So what did you learn from this story?”

Sapphire looked up at him with a wide smile and said; “I should trust Jesus. Jesus cannot lie like Peter said he did not know Jesus. If Jesus knows me, he will say he knows me and he will help me.”

“That’s my princess. Give yourself a big clap.” Her father said to her pleasure and she applauded herself.

In the kitchen, Megan moved towards the plate rack and selected three plates. “Sapphire, come and give me a hand.” She called out.

The girl entered the kitchen excitedly and moved towards her.

She stretched the plates to her; “Take this to the Dining Table.”

The girl collected it, turned and walked off singing.

“Be careful!” Megan shouted after her as her husband entered the Kitchen. He threw his wife a tiring smile; “Darling, I’m famished.”

“I’m sorry. I just have to dish the meal.” She apologized.

He nodded and peeped to see what she was about dishing out; “Good job here.”

Megan blushed; “Thank you.”

His eyes caught a covered dish on the kitchen table; “Are we needing this?” He pointed towards it.

“Yes please.” She replied. He carried it and walked out of the kitchen.

In minutes the meal was served and the family settled down to eat.

“Daddy, Let me pray” The couple looked at each other.

“Okay Sapphire. Remember I'm hungry so please go straight to the point.” John said.

“You can talk to God about your friends later, OK.” he added quickly.

“Hmm. OK.” she replied as they closed our eyes.

“In Jesus name, thank you Jesus for bringing Daddy back safely. Thank you for this food. Bless this food for us in Jesus name. Daddy said I should not pray for my friends now but Jesus you know that Bimpe may not have food to eat at home because her Mommy is sick and she told me her Daddy said there is no money. Please provide food for Bimpe also. In Jesus name we have prayed.”

“Amen.” They chorused round the table.

Sapphire looked at her father apologetically; “Daddy, I’m sorry. I had to pray for Bimpe.”

John grinned; “Sweetheart, it’s alright. You just made God happy you know.”

“Really?” she asked with widened eyes.

“Yes. Now eat your food.” he replied. Megan looked at her husband and daughter thoughtfully.

John dropped the spoon he had just took and looked at his wife; “Thanks sweetheart.”

She cleared her throat before answering; “You are welcome.” She started eating after that.

John burst into laughter; “Not for the food. I mean I’m thankful for the meal but I’m saying thank you for our daughter.” he explained and reached for her hand.

Megan blushed! “Well...” How should one respond to such compliment? She looked at Sapphire as she ate her food.

John continued; “Those moments of your labour was not in vain. Yeah, I know we still have a lot to do for her but the seed of the Word have been planted in her and I pray nothing will take the love of God from her heart in Jesus name.”

“Amen. The Lord has been faithful. It has been worth it actually.” She finally spoke.

“Yes.” John replied before continuing his meal.

“Daddy, I want to go for the Children outreach in the Church but Mrs Anabelle said I’m too little and that I will be crying. Please help me tell her I will not be a cry baby. I want to listen to Pastor ‘Kumsuyi’.” Sapphire said with muttered amidst the food in her mouth.

Her parents laughed; “His name is not Pastor Kumsuyi but Pastor Kumuyi.” her father corrected.

“Okay but tell Mrs Anabelle. Okay?”

“I will but don’t you sleep when the Pastor is preaching?” Megan asked.

“You know Pastor Uses big words like Daddy.” she stopped then shook her head. “No, more than Daddy; so I fall asleep along the line but I love how he opens the Bible and preach.”

“Mummy writes very well when he is preaching. I want to be a preacher too when I am grown like you.” She smiled.

Before either John or Megan could react to that, she continued; “But Mummy, you said Samuel preach when he was small. Daddy, I want to preach. Okay? I want to preach.”

“Sapphire, don’t worry. You will be an instrument in God’s hands in Jesus name.” Her father replied.

She stilled; “Amen. But Daddy what is instrument? Does God have instruments too?” Megan burst out laughing.

John shook his head; “Sweetheart, you’ll understand OK.”

Sapphire looked at her parents for seconds before answering; “OK Daddy.” She turned her attention back to her meal.

“Inquisitive, right?” John asked from beside his wife. Both were looking at her with various thoughts on their mind.

Megan turned to her husband and with a gentle smile replied; “Yes. Wonderfully inquisitive.”

CHAPTER 1

4 YEARS LATER – SEPTEMBER 2016

“Happy birthday to you;
Happy birthday to you;
Happy birthday Sapphire;
Happy birthday to you.”

The Andersons sang for their daughter immediately after the family devotion on the morning of September 11th.

“Thank you Mum and Dad. I really appreciate it.” Sapphire said bowing slightly.

“I can’t believe my princess is 8 years old just like that.” John Anderson said, holding his hands up in form of an imaginary spectacle.

Sapphire laughed loudly, clutching her tummy as she did.

“Well, baby girl.” Her mother Megan started as she stood up to bring out a wrapped parcel from behind the sofa.

“Mum! Why is this so big?” She said making towards her mother.

“We know it’s small.” Her Father said with a wide smile on his face.

“Daddy, I don’t even know what is in there yet.”

“This is from both of us. Happy Birthday, Sapphire.” Megan said as she handed the big parcel to her and pulled her in for a brief hug.

“Thank you so much Mummy. Thank you Dad.”

“Can I open it now?” She asked excited.

“Well...” her Mum started as she looked at her father.

“Open it and tell us what you think about it.” John pointed towards the gift.

He and Megan watched as their daughter struggled with the gift. She tore at the material used to wrap it.

“Mum, this is heavy.”

“And why does this shape look strange? Hmm!”

She tore the wrapper and... “Mum, it’s a Violin! Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.” She screamed excitedly.

“How did you come up with this?” she asked dashing her eyelids at her father.

“Your Mother just didn’t stop talking about how she thought you would really love to play a violin.” He said shoving his shoulder up a bit.

“I notice the way you look at the Violinists in Church and I have realized that you have a special love for Don Moen’s songs because he is a Violinist.” Her mother added smiling.

“Mum! I love you.” She said rushing over to hug her.

“And me?” Her father asked feigning jealousy.

“I love you too Dad and Thanks.”

“You are God’s precious gift to us, Sweetheart. Don’t ever forget we love you.” Her mother said patting her back slightly.

“I won’t Mum.” She said looking up at her.

A thought crossed her mind. She smiled.

“And why that smile?” Her mum asked looking at her carefully.

“Well...” she laughed. “I just wondered if God could give me a gift too.”

John smiled at his daughter’s words.

“Well, I know he does things for me but maybe he could also give me something for my birthday.” She said with sincerity in her voice.

Megan laughed; “You could ask him because God is faithful and he loves sincere people.”

“Okay. I will give it a try.”

“And let us know whatever happens.” John said.

“Alright.” Sapphire responded.

“Let us pray?” John said as Sapphire knelt down in front of them and he prayed for his daughter’s new age.

As they prayed, the 8 year old girl began to imagine how it would feel like to receive a birthday gift from God. She just couldn’t wait to discover that.

Sapphire entered the garden happily.

The only thing that caught her interest was a swing.

In few minutes she had positioned herself on it, using her weight to move it back and forth.

With each glide, the swing moved faster and higher.

“Hello Child.” A voice called out few meters from the swing.

She slowed down without answering but leapt off the swing suddenly.

She stopped to catch her breath as she stared at the man who now stood in front of her.

“Good afternoon Sir.” She said still breathing heavily.

“Such a wonderful place to relax.” He said as he took few steps away from the swing.

“Yes. This place reflects God’s work a lot. Isn’t God wonderful?” She looked at the man for a response.

“Of course, he is.” He replied as he looked around him with satisfaction.

“Walk with me.” He called out as he moved few steps again.

Sapphire trotted after him.

“Why is he so fast?” She thought as she tried to catch up with him.

“Shall I slow down then?” he asked to her amazement.

He looked back at her with a smile as she gazed at him in awe.

“Wow!” she finally said not finding the right words to describe how amazed she was.

“There is actually someone I know who is all knowing like this.” Sapphire said looking at him thoughtfully.

“No...” She shook her head quickly as she tried to walk past him.

“I’m not that special to him that he would show me things like this.”

He smiled.

“You are.”

“How can you know that?” she asked surprised.

“You shouldn’t doubt me after what happened minutes ago.”

“Well, Mum mentioned something one day about testing every spirit. I can't just believe everything I hear.” She said with a serious tone.

“There goes Sapphire the good listener.” He laughed lightly.

“You know my name?” She stopped suddenly.

“Well to the reason for this visit. I have a gift for you.” He said with a face that made it difficult for Sapphire to figure out his mood.

“Wow, thank you.” She said as she stared at his hands to see something shining.

“I didn’t see that all this while.” She thought.

“But I’m not going to give you now.” He said to her surprise as He walked past her.

“But why Sir?” She asked walking after him quickly; not too pleased to hear he wasn't giving her the gift.

He kept silent for sometime as they walked on.

“You aren’t fit to own the gift yet. You are presently like a man who lived many years ago.” He finally answered as her little mind tried to process his words.

“Okay. I don’t really understand but if I know the name of the man I could ask around about him.”

“No.” he said suddenly making her stop abruptly.

“Only your parents can know about this visit. They have some information about the man that will help.” He added quickly.

“Okay Sir.”

“Cornelius! That’s his name.” he said as he started to walk off.

“Cornelius?” she said as she started walking after him but he seemed to be becoming more faster with each step as the distance between them increased rapidly.

“And the gift?” she asked when she realized he was moving so fast and she definitely wouldn't be able to do keep up with him.

“You’ll get it as soon as you do the right thing. Don’t forget to find out about Cornelius.” He said not shouting but she seemed to hear him clearly despite the wide distance between them.

“Go back home.” He commanded as she turned thoughtfully.

“Cornelius! Cornelius!” She muttered as she walked off.

Megan dropped the Christian Women magazine she was reading as she looked up at the wall clock.

It was 6:00pm. It was high time her daughter woke up from her siesta to do her homeworks.

She stood up from the sofa swiftly and went towards Sapphire’s room.

She opened the door to her daughter's room, entered and closed it back softly.

She was still fast asleep.

Megan moved closer to her.

“Sapphire. You need to do your homework.” She said tapping her up to wake her.

"Sapphire!"

“Cornelius!” The girl muttered from her sleep.

Megan stopped for a minute.

“Cornelius!” She said again this time frowning her face thoughtfully from her sleep.

“A dream?” Megan thought as she tapped her daughter once more.

“Sapphire, wake up.” she called again sitting beside her gently.

“Yes!” her daughter replied as she opened her eyes.

“You need to do your homeworks.” Megan said tapping her again.

“Alright Mum.” She said still laying down but rubbing at her left eye furiously.

“It was a dream.” Sapphire said looking at her mum.

“Yeah. You were mentioning a name from your sleep. You want to talk about it?”

“Where is Dad?” she asked trying to sit up.

“He’s asleep. You prefer talking to him?” Megan asked surprised.

“No. I will tell you both.”

“Okay, you can tell us later then.” Her mother said as she moved to rise up from her bed.

“No, Mum. This is what I saw.” She began as she explained everything to her mum.

“So Cornelius is the key?” Megan asked after listening to her daughter.

“Yes. There is a lesson I need to learn from him.” Sapphire said nodding her head.

“First, Cornelius is a bible character.” Megan said.

“So I have to study the Bible then?”

“Its more than that. Why don’t you pray God leads us to the answer?”

“Mum, are you saying that man is Jesus Christ?” she asked gaping at her mum.

“I didn’t say that but I do know that dream is divine. What matters now is getting to know what you need to learn about Cornelius.”

“Okay, Mum. Thanks.” She said as her mother made to leave her room.

As soon as Megan stepped out of the room, she went straight to the room she shared with her husband to wake him up.

“What is the general thing we know about Cornelius?”

John asked his wife as soon as she had recounted everything to him.

“Cornelius was a devout man, he feared God and prayed to God always but he hadn’t done something that was important.” Megan replied.

“Which is why The Lord showed him a vision to send for Peter.” added John.

“There is something we have been missing out for a long time that the Lord is pointing out to us.” Megan said.

“How about we stop trying to use our head and go back to the scriptures.”

“Yes. Let me get our Bibles.”

Megan stood up and went towards their study Table to get their Bibles.

“It should be Acts chapter 10. I’m sure we’ll see something. The Lord will open our eyes.”

Thirty minutes passed as the couple studied the Chapter over and over again.

Knock! Knock!

“Mum!” Sapphire called from outside their door.

“Come in dear.”

She entered the room with her Bible and a jotter.

“I have been reading about Cornelius. Daddy, what if I’m like Cornelius.”

“What do you mean?” her Father asked.

“I’m not been boastful but like Cornelius I love God and I pray but maybe I haven’t done something important.”

“Which is?” her mother asked.

“I don't know really but I feel you need to be to me who Peter was to Cornelius that day. You are the one to help direct me do what I need to do.”

John looked back at the Bible Chapter quickly as a Bible verse dropped in his mind.

"But we are all as an unclean thing , and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. Isaiah 64:6."

Understanding dawned on him.

"Sweetheart, I think I understand." John said suddenly.

"Has Sapphire really ever given her life to Christ at one point of her life?" he asked his wife.

She didn't respond.

"Isn't she just religious and devout but not born again?" he asked again as his wife shook her head in understanding.

"We missed something this important. Lord, we are sorry." Megan said soberly.

"Mum, does that mean if I had perhaps died I would still have gone to hell?" asked Sapphire in horror.

"Sadly, Yes. Good acts and religious activities cannot get one to heaven, only Salvation through Jesus Christ can." her mother explained.

"Okay. So what do I do?" The young girl asked gently.

"Come and sit down here." John patted the chair in front of him as she moved closer to him.

Megan prayed silently within her as her husband explained the importance of Salvation and confessing the Lord as her personal Lord and Saviour.

“So Sapphire, are you ready to give your life to Christ?” John asked his daughter.

“Yes, Daddy. I’m ready.”

“Thank you Jesus.” Megan said as her husband led their daughter to Christ.

“Thanks, Mum. Thanks, Dad.”

“Glory be to God. Sapphire no matter what happens remember God loves you. He didn’t let you keep giving yourself false hope because right now he is indeed your hope of Glory.”

Megan thanked the Lord silently for bringing the matter of Sapphire’s salvation to their attention. The religious activities wouldn’t have taken the young girl far and all their labour would have been futile.

Her future would have also been a mirage.

“For today, I will forever be grateful Lord.” Megan said soberly.

2 WEEKS LATER

“Oh how I love Jesus.
Oh how I love Jesus.
Oh how I love Jesus.
Because he first loves me.”

Sapphire played on her violin as she sang along.

She was sitting on her bed with her music notebook in front of her.

“I missed the last line again.” she said frowning slightly.

“It’s d r f m r d.” A male voice said gently in the room.

Sapphire looked up to see a familiar man standing and leaning on the door.

“Wow! The man who could read my thoughts. How did you get into my room?” she asked so happy to see him.

“Do you know music too?” she asked again without waiting for him to respond.

“Well I could go anywhere I want to anytime and I am so wise than you can imagine.” he replied walking towards her bed.

“Wow. So? How do I play the notes I keep forgetting.” she asked eager to hear more from him.

“Since you are playing on G major which is the fourth string, it should be this way.” He said as he collected the violin from her and played gently for her to see.

"You are the best!" she said as he handed it back to her.

"Let me see you play it now." He said.

She smiled shyly as she carefully played the last line again under his scrutiny.

"You did well." He nodded his head in approval.

“Thank you. I pray I don’t forget it again.” she said.

“Well, if you would ever forget anything about this song it wouldn’t be that line I just taught you.”

“Oh! Alright.” She said dropping the violin beside her bed.

She sat with her legs crossed as she looked at the man again.

She wished she could ask him who he was but she kept quiet.

“Here.” He said stretching out something to her.

Sapphire looked down at his hands to see the most beautiful spectacle she had ever seen.

It was made of pure gold and it was shining brightly.

“Wow! This is beautiful.” she said excitedly.

“Yes, it is. It has been with me for a long time and I have planned to give to you. I was waiting for the right moment for you to have it.”

“Me?” she asked .

“I don’t know how I will use it?”

"What if its stolen from me?"

"How can you trust me with this beautiful treasure?" she asked with shaken voice, dashing her eyelids furiously as she spoke.

“You will be taught how to use it as each day goes by." he started as he spoke with gentle but firm voice.

"I have sent a teacher to you, he will guide you; he will teach you the right way to use it."

"It won't be stolen from you, if you don't place it carelessly where the enemy will have access to it."

"Treasure it but don't treasure it above me."

"Preserve it and don't let it be dirtied in any way. You will soon realize what it means and you will know the right way to use it." he concluded.

"Oh!" Sapphire said as she stretched forth her trembling hands to accept it.

He placed a hand on her shoulder as peace flooded her heart; with his other hand he placed the shiny object gently in her hands.

"It can never be blur if you use it cautiously. The Bible..." He said pointing to her Bible on her study table; "will remain a guide to you. Remember, don't lose it; as this is a treasure that should be used the right way." He said as the young girl listened.

"I don't know what to say but thank you Sir. God will help me." she said softly.

"Yes, he will definitely help you but my daughter, don't refuse his help or take his grace for granted." He said as he gave her a final pat on her small shoulder.

He turned around and walked towards the door.

Sapphire looked down to admire the rare treasure in her hands. She lifted up her head seconds later to discover he was gone.

"Thank you Jesus." She cried out from within her as her body shook furiously.

“Thank you Jesus.” Sapphire voiced out from her sleep.

She looked at the wall clock. It was only 2am in the morning.

She looked at her Study Table and saw her Bible right where the man pointed to.

She looked around for her violin.

She saw it placed gently beside her bed.

Had she placed it there last night without knowing? She wondered.

She picked it up in a bid to find out something.

Since her parents gifted her the violin she had only attended instrumental class thrice and hadn’t even started playing Musical Cords.

“Oh how I love Jesus...”

She played as the violin made unpleasant sounds.

She decided to jump to the last line.

“Because he first loves me.”

She sang as she played smoothly.

She stopped as she stared at her hands in awe.

She played yet again and yet there was no mistake.

Tears drooped down her tiny face as she dropped her violin and plopped down to her knees.

The little girl went back to sleep after praying for sometime.

“Good morning Sapphire.” her mother called out immediately she entered her room at daybreak.

“Good morning Mum.” Sapphire replied before she could close the door.

“Oh someone is awake already.” she said surprised to see her daughter reading at her table.

“Yeah, I woke up around 5:30am just like that so I did my morning devotion.” she said.

“I’m happy to hear that. Meet us in the living room for the family devotion.”

“Alright Mum.” she replied as she stood up from the chair.

“Mum, Dad I have something to tell you.” Sapphire said as soon as they ended their morning devotional prayers.

“Alright. We're listening.” her mother replied.

Both parents listened as she recounted what happened during the night.

“Sapphire, have you realized you are a special girl?” her father asked as soon as she was done.

“Yes. Something like that.” she said silently.

“I pray you won’t fail God in Jesus name.” her father prayed.

“Amen. So God gave me my birthday gift?” she asked smiling.

“Yes. And we will have to find out how you are to make use of it and everything that comes along with it.” Her mother answered.

“Hmm. I guess you are right. Shall we just let God lead the way?” John said.

“Yes. Lets see what the Lord has in store for you.” her mother

Husband and wife looked at each other as a silent message passed between them.

God was trusting them to be of help to their young daughter. And has their eyes held each other for seconds, with determination in their hearts they decided they would do and give their best not to fail God.

CHAPTER 2

(3 weeks After: - The Early Hours of October 2 2016.)

“Good morning LA, this is Kinsman Jane reporting to you from Charis D TV Station.”

“Breaking News. - Popular Hollywood Actress and Winner of Jockbel Art World 2018 award, Sarah Lann was found dead in her apartment in the early hours of today by her younger sister Jane Lann.”

“Eyewitness accounts states that the twenty eight year old lady returned from a celebration party organised by her friends at around 1:30am this morning. She was said to have returned drunk and so had been drove back to her hotel by a hired Chauffeur. Security Personnel's reported at the Crime Scene and Investigations are still ongoing as to if a foul play is involved.”

“We promise to keep you updated on the incident.”

(Brief Switch on the Screen.)

“Good day LA and how has been your day?”

“Our team received a tip about thirty minutes ago that the autopsy report of the deceased Sarah Lann has been handed over to the Investigation Unit of the LA Station. Due to the uptight movement at the Station presently, it looks like the autopsy report holds a clue to the death of the Actress. However our correspondence, Luke Jokers is presently at the Los Angeles Coroner's office. We will be linking up with him immediately.”

“This is Luke Jokers reporting live from the Coroner’s office. The Coroner has agreed to give us some minute’s audience.”

“We heard the Autopsy report is now available. How true is that Sir?” the reporter asked.

“Oh yes. The Report is out and has been handed over to the Investigation Team.”

“Please Sir; can you share with us what you have found out?”

“Hmm. The truth is this Case is a bit complicated but the autopsy results showed traces of poison.”

“Oh! Is it that she committed suicide or what?”

“We can’t conclude just yet but the Laboratory told us that the substance takes up to 2 hours after ingestion before it kicks into action. We can actually say she was poisoned at the party. We however need to wait for the Team’s conclusion.”

“Thank you for the info Sir, but are there suspects yet?”

“No. For now, everyone who was at the party is a suspect most especially the people who organised it.”

“I see.”

“Dear viewers, thank you for joining us on this special news broadcast. We promise to keep you updated as the case is unveiled.”

“Luke Jokers, reporting for Charis D TV Station.”

Sapphire turned on her bed.

She opened her eyes.

It was all a Dream.

“Sarah Lann.” she said sleepily as she stood up and went towards her study table.

She used her left hand to search through the materials on the table for some minutes before she eventually found her pen and her jotter.

SARAH LANN

She wrote in the jotter before she went back to bed.

Same Day (10am)

“Sapphire, you seem distracted today. What is on your mind?” Mrs Jones her class teacher asked as she walked past Sapphire's seat.

“You haven’t even started solving the questions I gave you.” she said peering at her through her spectacles.

“I am sorry Ma.” Sapphire said as she tried to ease her mind away from the dream she had during the night.

She sighed as she started solving the questions.

“Brrr !” a phone vibrated on the teacher’s table.

Mrs Jones went towards it and sighed; “Instagram notifications. These Celebrities just want us to know what's happening to them every minute. No private life at all.”

Sapphire stopped upon hearing that as a plan formed in her head.

She waited till the older woman walked towards her direction again before engaging her in a discussion.

“Excuse me Ma’am.” She called as soon as she got to her side.

“Yes. Is there a problem?” She asked with a suspicious glare.

“I was wondering if one can send messages on instagram?” Sapphire asked quietly.

“Yes, you can.” She said quickly before adding; “It’s just like any social media only that you really have a peep into some people’s lives there. You may not really understand me.”

Sapphire nodded.

She knew what her next step would be.

Megan smiled as her daughter rushed into the house that afternoon. She looked excited.

“Hi Mum.”

“Welcome darling.”

“Please can you lend me your phone?” she asked immediately she sat beside her mother.

“Hmm! That’s odd.” Megan frowned at her. “And why do you need my phone?”

“I just need to send a message to someone. That’s all.” she pleaded.

“Sapphire, don’t let me regret giving you my phone.”

“Here you go.” She added as she handed her cellphone over.

“Thanks Mum.” she said happily as she collected the phone.

She was about going to her room when she turned; “Do you have what I can use to browse?”

“Yeah. Let me switch it on for you.” Megan replied as her daughter passed her the phone.

Sapphire watched as her mother turned on the data connection. She collected the phone hurriedly and moved to go to her room.

“Sapphire, come back here!” Megan called out.

“Mum!” She retorted back.

“Don’t Mum me. Use it in my presence. What do you want to do online? Like, I don’t get.”

“Mummy, you don’t understand.” She argued.

“Sapphire I Don’t. So make me understand.”

“I just need to send a message to someone?” She pleaded.

“With my data subscription?”

“Yes, Mummy. Trust me please.” She pleaded.

“Hmm! Sapphire, make sure I don’t regret this.”

“You are amazing, Mum.” She said as she gave her mother a peck and ran off.

Megan watched her thoughtfully as she left the sitting room.

Sapphire entered her room and sat down on her bed.

She stared at her mother’s phone as she wondered what to do.

“Instagram.” She said as she searched through the phone for the Application.

She found it and selected its Icon.

The Application opened as she searched for the search button.

She clicked and she typed; “Sarah Lann.”

A profile popped up as she stared at the image of the lady.

“She’s so beautiful.” she said softly as she selected the account to check for the last post.

When you can’t just contain the joy of you being nominated as the Winner of Jockbel Art World 2018 Award and you still find it hard to believe.

Award Ceremony holds Oct 3. #Watch out for me.

#Sarah Lann Shines

Sapphire read under the picture of the Actress that was posted.

She checked for the date it was posted.

“September 30. Meaning the Award is tomorrow.”

“God what should I do? I just can't send her a message that will freak her out.”

“Clum!”

“New Stories.” showed at the top of the page signifying a new post.

It was a selfie of the Actress with three other women.

*When your friends just told you they got something planned for you.
My girls' rock.*

“Would that be the Celebration Party?” Sapphire thought as she clicked on Sarah's profile again.

She searched for the ‘Message’ button.

She clicked it as she prayed silently within her.

Good Afternoon Ma. Congratulations on being awarded. She typed.

She clicked ‘Send’.

Clum!

Another post.

Selfie with my Kid Sis Jane.

I love her a lot only she bores me with Church stuff. □ □

She's amazing anyways. □
I love you Cutie Pie. □ □ □

“That means her sister is a Christian.” Sapphire concluded.

She went to check if Sarah had read the message but she hadn't.

“This is a Bad Idea.”

She hissed as she dropped the phone.

“Clum!”

She grabbed the phone quickly.

‘New Message from Sarah Lann.’

Her eyes widened as she opened the message. *Yeah, Gal. Thanks.*

Sapphire typed. *Have you considered ever listening to your sister?*

Sapphire saw the ‘seen’ mark almost immediately.

Sarah Lann is Typing.

Sapphire smiled.

Oh! Are you one of the Jesus freak? I haven't really given it much thought.

Maybe you should. Sapphire typed back.

Alright. Gotta go. Got a lot of prep for tomorrow.

Alright Ma'am. She replied.

Sapphire paused as she started typing again.

I'm Sapphire, an 8 year old girl.

Sarah: Lol. Don't tell me you grabbed your Mum's phone. I used to do that too, you know. Be a good girl and return it.

Sapphire paused before typing;

Could you please not go for the Celebration Party with your friends?

Sapphire bit her lips as she quickly looked for a delete button. It was too late as a reply came in almost immediately.

I never posted that. Did I? Sarah asked.

No! Sapphire replied.

So how did you know?

I guess I just know.

OK. Thanks anyway. My sister sometimes know things I don't tell her too.

Oh! Maybe you should really consider being a Jesus woman.

Little girl, you don't know how life is. Say Hi to your mother for me. Bye.

And that was it.

"I will pray for her." Sapphire thought.

"There is nothing impossible for God to do. A miracle can happen."

She sighed as she clicked ‘Exit’ and left her room for the sitting room.

Megan eyed her daughter suspiciously as she handed her the phone sheepishly.

“What’s with you?” She asked.

“I’m fine. That reminds me Mum, my packet of Pencil is almost exhausted.”

“Alright dear. I will get you a new one tomorrow.”

Sapphire nodded in reply as she returned to her room.

(October 3: 2pm)

The School bus stopped at the Junction to the Anderson’s house.

Sapphire alighted hurriedly and ran down the street.

She opened the door to their house swiftly and banged it close.

Megan jumped!

“Why the rush?” She asked.

“Sorry, Mum but could you please switch to the TV Station where they show stuffs about celebrities?” She said as she grabbed the remote control and handed it to her mother.

“What’s up?” Her mother frowned.

“An Award Ceremony is going on presently so I want to see how it’s being done.” She replied.

“Have you been listening to the kids in your class?”

“Mum, please.”

“Anyways, i think i know the right station for that.”

“Thank you.” Sapphire replied anxiously as she sat on the Tiled Floor.

Megan changed the Station.

“That’s her.” Sapphire said in awe as her eyes caught the Actress as she walked down the red carpet.

“You know Sarah?” Megan asked surprised.

“Yeah.” She replied absentmindedly.

Megan didn’t probe her any longer as they watched the Trophy being presented to Sarah.

Cameras clicked as the Actress posed with several other celebrities.

As people congratulated her with hugs and shakes alike, the Video Camera caught Sarah’s younger sister Jane; sitting with a cup of fruit juice in her right hand.

Sapphire had no difficulty recognising her since she had seen the picture the young lady took with her sister.

As Sapphire watched, she observed Jane was staring towards a particular direction lost in thought.

The Camera widened.

Directly in Jane's line of view were the three women who took Selfie with Sarah.

They were talking in whispers as they looked towards Sarah's direction.

The background music of the Performing Artist continued as Sapphire watched Jane rise up and walked towards her elder sister.

Sapphire tapped her right thigh twice as an understanding dawned on her.

Jane could tell something was off.

"Celebrities life!" Megan muttered as she looked at her daughter for few minutes.

Sapphire looked lost in thought.

"Sweetheart, care to share your thoughts?"

"Mum, Jesus died for everyone right?"

"Yes, daughter."

"Then," she started as she turned to her mother with her eyes now teary; "why don't these Celebrities live for Jesus. Can't someone tell them the truth?"

"Sapphire, the truth is some of them probably have relatives who are believers but they don't just want to listen or live by the truth."

"Like Sarah!" Sapphire taugt as a tear dropped.

“Daughter, all hope is not lost on them. The Lord will have Mercy upon whom he will have Mercy. A miracle can happen.” Megan said as she pulled her daughter up to sit beside her.

She gave her a hug.

“Mummy, It has to.” Sapphire whispered as her mother picked the remote and switched off the TV.

Sapphire closed her eyes as she concluded all she could do was pray and trust God.

(Same day; 5pm.)

Sarah Lann walked out of the Big Hall towards the hotel just few minutes away.

Congratulatory greetings came from several people most of whom she didn't even recognise.

She arrived at the hotel and climbed up the stairs towards her Suites. She needed to use the Restroom quickly.

She opened the door to the Suite she shared with Jane using the Automated card and entered.

Jane knelt beside the bed praying.

Sarah sighed.

She removed her high heels and walked barefooted into the bathroom.

In few minutes she was done, she returned to the room to see her sister rising from her kneeling position with a worried look on her face.

Sarah stopped.

“Jane, are you OK?”

“Sis, could you sit here for few minutes?”

“Alright.” Sarah replied as she sat on the bed. Jane sat beside her.

“Okay, shoot.” Sarah said.

“I’m worried about you.”

“Oh yeah! Baby, I’m fine.” Sarah smiled as she made to stand up.

Jane pulled her back.

“Sarah, you are in danger. I can’t place it but as soon as the Award Ceremony is over please let’s check out of the hotel and just go back to the Apartment. Please.”

Sarah stared at her sister in disbelief.

“That’s not possible. The girls planned a party for me and I have to be there.” She blurted out before standing up.

She bent as she struggled with putting her right feet back into the heel.

“See that’s the problem. I have a bad feeling about that party. Don’t go.” Jane shouted.

Sarah stopped.

She stretched her phone towards the bed to pick her clutch purse.

She removed her phone hurriedly.

Her sister watched as she frantically pressed the phone.

Jane was beginning to get scared.

“What is it?”

“You know one of my fans that didn’t know about the Celebration Party sent me a message not to go.” She said as she now had one leg of her heel on.

“Isn’t that strange?”

She asked as she handed her phone to her sister.

She removed the heel and threw it at a corner as she paced the room thoughtfully.

Jane read through the chat in silence.

“And here I am also trying to convince you not to go.”

“Alright.” She stopped pacing as she moved towards the window and stared outside the hotel. She could see the hall from where she stood. Music still played softly.

“Jane, Not going is not the issue but I will lose face in front of my friends and all the guests. I can’t afford that happening.” She finally said as she shook her head and walked away from the window.

“My Manager worked so hard on this ceremony for me. I can't just blow things up.” She added as she looked at her sister.

“Think about it.” Jane said as she stood up and went towards the door.

Sarah sat on the bed lost in thought.

Her sister stopped before she opened the door; “Sis, please don’t let what people will say affect your decision. It’s your life we’re talking about here.”

She stepped out after that but unknown to her sister she stood just outside the door praying silently.

Sarah picked her phone slowly as she once again went through her chat with Sapphire.

Various thoughts went through her mind as she stared at the phone.

Should she really leave as Jane advised?

What would she gain at the party anyway except for some drinks and meals. Yeah, maybe media attention. It wouldn’t be nice if something happened and she ended up wishing she had listened to Jane.

She dialed Jane’s cell phone.

It rang from outside the room.

“So you have been there all these while?” Sarah asked as soon as Jane picked up.

“Anyway, let’s pack up.”

“Really?” Jane opened the door happily and stepped into the room.

“Yeah! I don’t really feel like it again. The fact that a 8 year old warned me is something I can’t toil with.” Sarah replied with a thin smile.

“She used her Mother’s phone?” Jane asked.

“Yeah. I guess.”

“That girl must be a special girl.”

“Yeah! Let’s pack up before the girls walk though the door and make me change my mind.”

Jane smiled as they both set to work.

As soon as they had gotten all their belongings, Jane secretly contacted the Parking Valet and collected their car keys.

The two sisters successfully sneaked their way out of the hotel with their luggage and drove back to their Penthouse downtown.

“Home sweet home.” Sarah said as she dropped her phone and purse on the centre table and sat down.

Jane grabbed the phone quickly.

“What’s it?” Sarah asked eyeing her suspiciously.

“Can you put off your phone?”

“Well, that’s not a bad idea.”

She replied as she collected it back and turned it off by herself.

“Wanna crash. Good night Jane.” Sarah said as she went up the stairs.

“You will not crash in Jesus name. Good night.”

“Whatever!” Sarah laughed as she strolled towards her room.

(October 4. 09:00am)

“Good morning Holy Spirit.” Jane said as soon as she woke up.

She yawned as she stood up and walked towards the bathroom.

She opened the door to the bathroom and entered. The sound of running water could be heard as she washed her face and walked back into the room.

She picked her Bible and Jotter and was about leaving the room when her eyes caught her phone.

She deliberated within her whether to take the phone with her or not. She eventually picked it up and left the room.

As she walked down the stairs to the sitting room, she turned on her phone.

The phone vibrated so much as messages rushed in.

“We must have caused quite an uproar last night.”

She laughed as her eye caught a message from her sister’s manager.

*What is this about a murder at Sarah’s Celebration Party? Is she safe?
Reply me ASAP.*

“What is Brooke talking about now?” Jane frowned as she sat on the sofa and crossed her legs.

She decided to go online.

The various comments she read almost made her dizzy.

JK : Someone tell me Sarah didn't plan this? How come people died at her own party?

Mag girl: Where was she when it was happening?

Clement: Sarah wherever you are hiding, the world is waiting for an explanation.

Dave the Rapper: Why did she leave the Hotel last night without letting her friends know?

Peace: OMG! □What's this about people dieing? Is Sarah Lann still alive?

She couldn't read anymore.

“Jesus! What's all these?” Jane said as she decided to see what the reporters were saying.

She switched on the television set quickly.

“Good morning LA. This is Jerry Courage reporting from MRI Station.”

“Breaking News. Celebration Party for the Winner of The Jockbel Art World 2018 Award turned upside down as a guest dropped dead and three others are presently in critical conditions. Speculations are that the guests were poisoned but how and what was poisoned is still unknown.

Strange however it is that Sarah Lann herself was not at the Party. Why would the Celebrant not be at a Party that is meant to be for her?"

"What are these people insinuating for God's sake?" She shouted as she stood up and ran back upstairs to wake her sister.

The two ran down the Stairs in few minutes as Sarah listened in shock as the news was emphasised again.

Her head was beginning to ache her.

"Check this out!" Jane said showing her people's comments on Instagram.

"What are these people saying? Can't anyone think about the fact that I could have been among those injured?" She asked in despair.

"Or you were really the target?" her sister replied thoughtfully.

"Oh! I can't just comprehend all these." Sarah could only say as she gave her sister an astonished look.

"Thank you Lord Jesus." Jane said as Sarah started weeping.

"Sis, tell me about your Jesus. I need to have him badly. He stopped me from waiting for that party."

"Really Sarah?" Jane replied with joy flooding her heart as she moved close to her sister.

With Jane as her Counsellor, Sarah Lann eventually gave her life to Christ that morning.

Several Kilometres and hours away, the Anderson family also sat in front of their television set watching a rerun of the news.

Sapphire didn't know when tears flowed down her eyes as she thanked the Lord for rescuing Sarah.

Sapphire made sure she followed the news of the investigation and within two weeks, the case was wrapped up with Sarah escaping been charged as the Brain behind the Crime.

Sarah's friends were arrested for Attempted Murder of Sarah and The murder of the Guest that died.

News also picked up the fact that Sarah was taking some months off the screen as she had found a new life in Christ.

As one of the broadcast session held as regards the case was rounding up, a post from Sarah's Instagram page was shared where she simply wrote;

"I will forever be grateful for the two special girls the Lord used for me. Thank you."

The anchor rounded up with the statement; "The two girls she referred to still remain known only to her. Her fans are however grateful to these anonymous girls."

"I pray she really gets serious with God." Meghan commented as her husband nodded his head in agreement.

Sapphire stood up silently and went to her room to spend sometime to thank God for the miracle she had prayed for.

The next morning as Megan handed over Sapphire's lunch box to her daughter, the eight year old looked at her Father thoughtfully as he had his breakfast.

“Dad.”

“Yes dear.”

“Could you please not travel tomorrow?”

Her mother stopped.

“Sapphire, who told you he was travelling?”

“Ermm! Sapphire, you were already asleep by the time I and your mom were discussing that.” Her Dad said as he looked at her for an explanation.

“Well let’s just say I know somethings somehow.”

Her mother sighed.

“Okay. Hurry so the bus won’t leave you behind. We’ll discuss that when you get back.” Her mother said and the couple watched their daughter walk out of the house.

John shot his wife a questioning look.

“I think she had a dream.” She said as she moved towards the table to join her husband.

Prrrr!

Her phone vibrated on the dining table notifying her of a new message.

“Oh! My data connection is still switched on?”

She checked the notification as she read;

“New message from Sarah Lann!”

“You’re kidding. Sarah Lann sent me a message?”

Her husband stopped for a minute before he continued eating.

She however viewed the message and read;

I will forever be grateful for how the Lord used you to rescue me. I am now a Jesus Woman too. Lol!☐ Sapphire, you are an amazing and a special girl.☐ I hope your parents know what a rare gem you are. Feel free to contact me if you need anything. Thank you very much, sweetheart.☐☐

“What!” Megan screamed as her husband stared at her in shock.

“What is it?”

“Sarah Lann sent Sapphire a message.”

“I don’t get you dear.”

Megan strolled up to see previous chats.

She read with her mouth agape.

“Lord Jesus!” she said not able to comprehend what she was reading.

“Did Sapphire say you should not travel?” she asked immediately.

“Yeah.”

“Sweetheart, you are not going anywhere tomorrow.”

“Really? Hand me the phone first.” He collected the phone as he also read through.

Megan watched her husband as he went through the chat.

“Okay. So our daughter has a perception of things to come.” he finally said.

“The golden spectacles?” Her mother recollected.

“I see!” John said in amazement.

“But the meeting I’m scheduled for is a really important one for me and the Company as a whole.” he explained.

“Let’s just trust God to take control.” his wife said.

“Let’s have few minutes of prayer. We are running Late for work.” he said as he stood up and joined hands with his wife.

Both then prayed for a miracle.

The miracle manifested when during the Working Hours of that same day, John was informed that the Meeting had been postponed till further notice.

He explained to Megan and Sapphire what he was told at the office before they went to bed that night. The couple also spend some time talking to their daughter and telling her to inform them if she discovers she has a foreknowledge of anything and she can’t comprehend it.

The family then prayed together thanking God for yet another miracle.

It was no little shock to John the following day when during the 12:00 Lunchtime News it was reported that a petrol filled tanker caught fire at an highway in the middle of a Traffic leading to the loss of many lives and properties.

At the Cafe table where John sat he realised he would have been on his way for the meeting when the fire accident took place.

He texted his wife immediately.

“Did you see the news?”

“Yeah. I just can’t stop thanking God for his faithfulness.”

She replied few minutes later.

“Sapphire is indeed a Wonder.” He typed.

“I will forever be grateful to God for the opportunity given to us to be her parents. God will help us to guide her in the right way.” She replied.

“Amen. Yes, he will.” he replied as he finished his lunch hurriedly.

CHAPTER 3

2 YEARS LATER: 2018

“Please let’s all calm down.”

The American air hostess said the umpteenth time to the passengers of Beeline 2017 but they wouldn’t have none of it.

“What the hell is happening in here?”

“Get us out of here?”

“About six people disappeared just like that and you expect us to stay calm?”

The passengers all wanted to be heard at the same time.

A young lady looked at all the passengers. She shook her head in dismay.

“If only these people understand what has happened?” She sighed heavily as her mind flashed back to what had occurred minutes ago.

The Aircraft had being in the air for about an hour when an Irish Air hostess came to announce to them that they would be having their Lunch soon. She was about telling them to enjoy their meal when something happened.

In place of where the Irish lady stood, laid her heap of clothes.

The passengers screamed.

“Did any one see that?” A young man had shouted.

“Oh No!” Another man shouted from behind the plane as the passengers all panicked.

“The old man sitting beside me is gone too.”

The young lady had turned to look at her side gently.

Her seat partner was gone too.

She widened her eyes as realisation dawned on her on what had really happened.

“No... It can’t be.” She had argued as she shook her head dizzily.

Something buzzed so loudly from a part of the plane at that moment jolting her to the present. The other passengers also fell in silence.

The lady opened her eyes to observe what was going on.

The air hostess who had been trying to calm the passengers since her colleague disappeared sighed before moving to figure out what had made the sound.

She stopped.

She pulled her ear pods closer to her ears as she listened to someone from the other end. She then turned back to the passengers.

“Can I have your attention please?” She asked.

“The pilot is preparing to make an emergency landing in Boston so could you please fasten your seat belt.”

The lady grabbed her seat belt shakingly and closed her eyes.

It had really happened.

What her parents had always told her about had happened.

She wasn't a Believer but she had listened to her Father preach so many times to understand what had played out before her eyes.

Even the man that sat beside her had tried to preach to her but she wouldn't have none of it.

If only she had listened to that last message.

Hadn't her Father mentioned that the Rapture occurring meant the time of Grace was over?

"Ha! I am doomed." She shouted out as several pair of eyes turned to stare at her.

The plane landed in few minutes and they disembarked from the plane.

It was quite a struggle as everyone wanted to leave the 'strange' plane as fast as they could.

As soon as the lady stepped her feet on the floor of the airport, she looked around as ruins of aircrafts laid around.

"The pilots were about taking off when they disappeared. It caused quite a crash."

A man in security uniform explained to her without her asking questions as he walked by.

It seemed like the Rapture had really happened.

She walked out of the airport hastily to the main road with her backpack behind her.

Everywhere was in chaos.

There was traffic and she needed a cab badly.

She spotted a man walking towards her in a fast pace.

“What is happening?” She asked him as soon as he moved closer to her.

“There have been accidents at the front. You don’t want to see it.” He replied.

“Someone told me the world is really ending. Looks like the Jesus people were right after all. If one of them were here I would tell him he is foolish to be a part of this.” He added soberly.

“You are right. I am foolish.” She said silently as she looked around like a stray cat.

The man gawked at her and walked away.

“Ha!!!” She shouted.

“I thought there was still time to live right. God have Mercy.”

“Mercy, Lord I didn’t see this coming.”

She cried as she knelt on the road not minding that it's surface was hot against her knees.

“Jesus please!” She screamed.

Krrrrrrrrrr!!!

Sapphire jerked from her sleep.

Krrrrrrrrrrrr!!!

The alarm sounded so loud this time that she opened her eyes.

“Jesus!” she said as she stared at the air for sometime.

She was in tears already.

“That was a dream.” The ten year old said thankfully before putting out her hand to stop the alarm.

She sat up as her mind did a flashback on what she had seen.

Yes, she hadn’t seen herself in the dream but it had looked so real.

“God what is this dream about?”

She knew about heaven and hell but she didn’t have an idea of what the dream was about.

“Ha. Please don’t let me go to Hell.” she prayed in tears as she finally pulled her cover clothe away and dragged herself off the bed.

She knelt down to have her morning devotion but she couldn't concentrate as the dream stayed with her till she had no choice but to find her way to her parents room around 6am.

It was a Saturday so she prayed silently that her parents wouldn't mind her early visit.

Megan sighed for the third time since Sapphire had started explaining what she had seen.

John was doing good by asking their daughter questions from time to time. She knew the dream was about the Rapture and Megan could not help but think that they had once again failed by not mentioning something this important to their daughter.

Yes, she was born again.

She knew about Heaven and Hell but they hadn't really taught her of the fact that apart from being called home by God, one day Saints that are still alive would also be caught up in the Rapture.

Their daughter had just lived with the knowledge that she could die anytime but not the knowledge that Christ could also come to take the Saints home anytime.

Her daughter was looking forward to going home to God without the knowledge that if God wishes she might not even see death as all.

In short, she was not expecting Christ's coming.

“God, please let her understand what you are trying to tell her.” Megan prayed silently closing her eyes briefly.

When she opened her eyes, her husband and daughter were staring at her.

“Is she through?” She asked her husband.

“Yes.” He replied as he tried to decipher what was going through his wife’s mind.

“Mom, are you alright?” Sapphire asked concerned.

“Well, I am just thinking about how we haven’t talked about this before?” She said looking at her husband eyeball to eyeball.

“I understand what you mean.” John said silently to his wife.

“Okay. So what do you think?” Sapphire asked.

“You should ask what do I know or rather what the Bible says about what you saw?” John corrected his daughter gently.

“First of all Dad, what did I see?” Sapphire asked with furrowed brow.

“The dream is simply pointing your attention to the Rapture. The coming of Christ to call his people home.”

“Okay. So you are saying apart from dying and going to Heaven, Christ can come to call me home?” She asked looking at her mother briefly before directing her attention back to John.

“Not one person alone but all the Saints.” he explained.

“Okay.”

“Sapphire, you know God has a Timetable for the whole world. The world is not going to remain like this forever.” he started.

“Yes, I know.”

“God wants things to go back to how he originally planned it to be before Sin came through Adam and Eve but that can’t happen with this corrupt world. There is going to be a new earth and a new heaven but there are some events that will happen before that.” he explained.

“Like the Judgement day?” Sapphire asked.

“Yes, but there are still events before that.” he added quickly before turning to his wife.

“Sweetheart, when is the next discipleship training starting? She really needs to attend.”

“Pastor Jace mentioned it to me one day too but I told him we haven't discussed it.” she answered thoughtfully.

“Okay. We are going to have her join them when the next class starts.” John informed his wife.

“Alright. So Sapphire, the event that will bring an end to this age that we are in is the Rapture. What you saw is just a replica of how confused people will be after the Rapture.” He explained.

“Only True Believers will make it in the Rapture. Let's check out what the Bible says.”

“Let's read Matthew 24:36-44 then you'll understand what the rapture is all about.”

“It says But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”

“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know

this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

“It’s going to be sudden.” Sapphire commented. It was beginning to make sense to her.

“Yes. Let’s also see I Corinthians 15:51-52. Can you read what is in there?” John asked.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

“How about I Thessalonians 4:15-18?” he asked.

“1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 says For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

“Hmm, I see.” Sapphire said as she looked through the lines of the verses again.

“As Saints we need to be prepared so the event wouldn’t catch us unawares. Like one shouldn’t be doing something a Believer shouldn’t do.” John added.

“What now happens if one does not make it?” the girl was asked thoughtfully.

“Wait! There will be confusion everywhere?” she added quickly.

“Hmm. Sapphire, the situation will be so terrible. Matthew 24:21 summarises it up in a way we can understand. It says ‘For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.’” he explained.

“You see any Christian that knows about the Rapture and does not make it will have great regrets because it’s going to be a time of suffering for the whole world at that time. After the believers have been caught up, the Anti Christ will then be revealed and he will be in Control of the whole world. Let's check out Revelation 13:7,8,9 12-18.”

Megan reached for her Bible that had since been closed and opened quickly to read.

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of

the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”

“And you know what happens when one has taken the mark?” John asked Sapphire.

“What?”

“Move on to Chapter 14 verse 9 to 11.”

Sapphire read; “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

“Now let’s go to Chapter 22:6-7.” John continued;

“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

“Sapphire, listen to the word of Wisdom in verse 11 of that same Chapter 22.”

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” he concluded.

“Oh! One must not toil with sin at all.” Sapphire said bluntly.

“Yes, my daughter.” John replied satisfied he had been able to answer the young girl’s questions.

“But Dad, I don’t know if my friends and schoolmates know all these. Some of them don’t even act like there is God.” Sapphire said tears blurring her eyes.

“I don’t want to miss the rapture but I wouldn’t want my friends to miss it too.” she added her voice softening a bit.

“You know you should tell your friends about Christ. Isaiah 52:7 tells us that ‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!’” Megan counselled

“Alright. Thanks Mum. Thanks Dad.” She said as she stood up from the Chair.

“Are you satisfied now?” Her mother asked.

“Oh Mum, Never Been.” She replied sincerely, laughing long and deep.

“I’m glad. Come and give me a hug. God will help us all.” Megan said.

“Amen.” She replied as she hugged her mum.

“I need to finish up my devotion.” She announced as she found her way out of her parents room.

“Alright. Take your time dear.” Megan called out as Sapphire closed the door behind her.

“Thank you Holy Spirit.” Megan said as she turned back to studying one of the Verses her husband had referred to minutes ago.

“Love, what do you think?” John asked his wife.

“Well, John...” she started as she dropped her Bible silently, stood up and sat down beside her husband.

John looked at his wife in awe. She hadn’t called him by name in a long time.

He watched as she took his left hand with both of her hands and gazed up at him as her eyes twinkled with adoration.

“Sweetheart, you did great. I’m not sure I could have answered her that way.”

John smiled.

“Hmm but the Discipleship class will be much more beneficial to her.” he said.

“You are right.” She said nodding.

“But before that, we have our own Pastor here.” she said nuzzling close to him.

John couldn’t take it anymore. He smiled broadly.

“My Pastor.” She giggled as John pulled her closer.

She turned in his arms and smiled. “Don’t you have things to do today?”

John kissed her neck and laughed as she giggled some more.

“Not really.” he replied.

“But I could spend this morning with you.” He added winking his left eye.

Megan blushed.

“Well, I have my Father in Heaven to talk to in few minutes.” She said regrettably as she moved out of his arms to stand up but stole a glance at her husband.

Their eyes met.

He smiled.

“You are one amazing woman, Mrs Anderson.”

“What do you think about having another amazing girl?” he asked.

Megan looked at him and chuckled as understanding dawned on her.

“We haven’t really tried, have we?” he asked with a thin smile.

“Sweetheart, Sapphire is 10. But it would really be amazing right?” She asked with an encouraging smile as her husband smiled and nodded in return.

“It would be amazing.” He replied softly as he sent appreciation to God for his little family and also a petition that he wouldn’t mind an addition.

Mrs Smith the Room Teacher for the grade 3 students finished marking the assignment notebooks and yawned.

She heaved a sigh of relief as she packed the books together and pushed them to a corner of the table. She would distribute it to the students as soon as they got back from their Lunch Break.

She stood up to make her trip to the Dining hall when one of her coworker's Frank came in.

"To the dining hall i guess?" He said as he greeted her.

"You couldn't be more right. How is today going for you?" She sat back concluding he came to see her as he leaned on the door.

"Not bad. Only I just witnessed a new rich girl throwing a fit about joining our school in Mrs Ruby's Office. Such a spoilt brat. I noticed her fingers were even painted." he said with a frown on his face.

"Hmm. Mrs Ruby wouldn't put up with that for sure." Mrs Smith replied blankly.

"Yeah. By the way, you might want to skip your trip to the Hall for now. Mrs Ruby wants you."

He said as her eyes widened in surprise.

"What? And you were here talking with me. Oh Frank!" She said as she hurried to her feet.

"Sorry." Frank muttered in reply as he watched her walk out of the class quickly.

She half ran to the Headmistress office.

As she passed the entrance to the dining hall, she noticed that some students mostly females were clustered at a corner of the hall.

“This girls ought to be having their meal. What are they up to?” she thought as she stopped abruptly.

“Well. I need to make sure things are going well with the students too. Mrs Ruby wouldn’t mind that.” She said as she turned around and made a beeline for that part of the hall.

The students didn’t see her coming as all eyes were fixed on someone standing at the centre.

She moved closer to see one of her students Sapphire talking intensely as her school mates listened with rapt attention.

One girl noticed her then. “Mrs Smith is here.”

The woman watched as the students all looked towards her as they made a escape for their normal seats.

“Sapphire, can you explain what was happening?” She asked the young girl who looked in no way threatened by her presence.

“Well Mrs Smith, I was only telling them a story.” She replied gently.

“About what Miss?”

“The coming of Christ.” She replied without mincing words.

Mrs Smith sighed. She was a believer yes but the young girl standing up and speaking inside the school dining hall was more than her.

“Sapphire!” she called as she moved closer to the young girl so closer only the girl would hear what she had to say.

“You are doing a good job talking about Christ.” She said smiling in a bid to make the girl comfortable.

Sapphire looked rather awed and amazed.

“Thank you Ma.”

“But Sapphire, I would want you to do so with wisdom. You wouldn’t want some students saying you were scaring them with talks of hell.”

“Oh! I never thought of that.”

“You might not know but the school does not appreciate gathering students together like you did. I’m not discouraging you but you can talk to your mates one on one.” She implored.

“Oh! I will heed your counsel. Thank you Mrs Smith.” Sapphire replied.

“Alright. I have Mrs Ruby to catch up with. See you after your Lunch Break.” She said smiling as she left the girl.

Sapphire nodded in understanding and turned away.

Mrs Smith had only walked a few steps when she stopped and turned back to look at the girl.

The girl had not been shy or afraid to talk about her faith. When last had she an adult done that?

She had intentionally made the girl understand that she could talk to people one on one.

As a matter of fact, she herself had wanted to start a fellowship when she got to the school but was opposed. Her Job had even be threatened.

The last thing she would want was Sapphire going through something in any bit similar to her own experience.

“Lord have Mercy. Even I need to work on more one on one talk to people.”

She said as she hurried to Mrs Ruby’s office.

She was ushered in by the Secretary as soon as she got there.

Just as Frank reported, a girl and her parents were in the office.

“Join us Mrs Smith. We have been awaiting your presence.” Mrs Ruby said and the meeting commenced.

By the time Mrs Smith left the office she had a new student walking grudgingly behind her.

CHAPTER FOUR

Megan entered the dining room with her dinner served in a stainless plate. She pulled out a chair from her usual spot and slid into it. Sapphire was already seated at the other end of the table with her own meal in front of her. John had gone for a Men's meeting in the Church and had not returned home.

As Megan sat, Sapphire who had started eating without waiting for her mother to join her, did not in any way acknowledge her mother's presence.

Her excuse for eating early was she didn't want to retire to bed late.

Megan stretched forth her left hand and pulled a mug that had been placed on the table earlier by her daughter close to her side of the table.

With her right hand, she carried a glass jar that she had poured the fruit juice she made during the day and poured enough for herself into the mug without spilling a drop.

She set the Jar back on the table and gave it a light push towards her daughter.

Sapphire still didn't mutter a word.

Megan frowned but chose to ignore her daughter before closing her eyes to say a silent prayer on her meal and started eating.

As she ate, she stole glances at her daughter who looked like she was miles away. She wondered how rough her day in school must have been for her to be so moody.

"Sapphire!" She called sharply.

The girl jolted back to the present moment looking up at her mother in shock.

“Why are you so lost in thought?” She asked.

Without replying, Sapphire shifted in her chair, pulled the glass jar nearer, poured part of the juice into her cup, picked up the cup, drank all the juice and finally dropped the cup back on the table.

Megan gaped at her daughter’s act. When had Sapphire turned her to an On Air personality?

Sapphire gulped.

Megan frowned.

“I’m sorry.” She knew she was already getting on her mother’s nerves. “A lot happened in school today.” She said looking back at the food in front of her.

A lot? Megan couldn’t even tell if it was something good or the other way round. “Okay.” She decided she was going to let the girl speak on her own.

She waited.

“I talked to some students in my class today.” Sapphire added rewarding her patience.

“Wow. That’s a good thing.” She smiled.

But why wasn’t her daughter excited? She had to find out.

“So?” The girl had to keep talking.

“Mrs Smith saw us gathered and came to check us out. She then told me to talk to people one on one.” She finally looked up at her mother.

Oh No! “You gathered students together?” No doubt Megan was shocked.

“No Ma. Well, i started with two of my friends and the students just started coming one after the other.” Sapphire explained.

“Oh I see. So did they understand you?” She wondered if the girl had been given a discouraging response.

“I think they did until I talked one on one with Jane. I had just spoken for few minutes when she started laughing at me weirdly.” Sapphire bit her lower lip awkwardly.

“Hmm. Who is Jane?” Megan pressed on softly.

“A new student.” She squeezed her face. “She just joined us today but to everyone’s surprise Mrs Smith changed my seat partner. Jane now sits with me.” She used her spoon to stir her food thoughtfully.

Megan waited in silence and it was no little joy when her daughter continued.

“The girl is so stubborn. She had 1001 reasons why she shouldn't be in our school.” She hissed.

“Okay. But you can be a good influence to her. Who knows if that was why she was made your seat partner?”

The 10 year old lightened up a bit. “You mean Mrs Smith expects me to talk to her?”

“Could be.” She encouraged with a broad smile.

“Hmm. It’s alright.” Sapphire replied once again lost in thought.

“God will give you the wisdom.” Megan prayed.

“Amen.” The girl replied thoughtfully, affirming within herself that she indeed needed wisdom.

Tuesday morning found Sapphire and Jane sitting together in the school bus.

“Hi Jane.” Sapphire had greeted Jane as soon as the other girl entered the bus, hoping to strike up a friendly Conversation.

“Hi Jesus girl.” Jane called out loudly from where she stood beside the line Sapphire sat, having difficulty deciding whether to sit beside her or not.

Sapphire smiled, flashing her well set teeth to pass the message that she didn’t mind.

“Way to go.” Jane said loudly taking the seat beside her hurriedly.

“Do you look forward to school work?” Sapphire asked warmly.

“Well, Mum warned me to stay out of trouble so I am going to try to do so.” Jane replied with a straight face.

“At least for once let me be a good girl everyone admires and wants to be friends with. No one will love to be a friend to a troublemaker.” She added.

“Hmm, you are right. I for one wouldn’t want to be seen with a girl like that.” Sapphire stopped for a second, realising her words could pass the wrong message.

“Sorry I said that.” She shouldn’t have said that. She gave herself a mock up slap on her cheek.

Jane laughed loudly. “No problem. So friends?” She put out her hand for a shake.

“Of course.” Sapphire replied taking her hand in hers.

“As long as you don’t bore me with talks about the judgement day.” Jane added with a serious face.

“Jane, I won’t promise that.”

“You really believe all those stuff?” Jane was now staring at her like she had developed horns.

“Yes, I do.”

“It’s okay.” She replied.

The bus stopped in front of the school at that juncture and the new friends found their way out of the bus into the school.

All through that day, Mrs Smith couldn't help but notice that the girls had become so close. Jane didn't cause trouble as the teacher had feared she would.

As the bell rang to signify the end of the day, Mrs Smith watched as her students hurried out of the class. Sapphire and Jane were among the last set of students to leave the class.

“Girls, come over here.” She called with a smile.

“What have you two been up to?” The girls trotted over to her table.

Sapphire was concerned. “We didn’t disturb the class, did we?”

“Not at all. It’s just that I’m wondering what’s up.”

“Well, we are friends. Isn’t that what you wanted MA? For her to tell me of the judgement day?” Jane blurted out.

“Jane.” Sapphire gasped. “I’m sorry Ma.” She apologised to the older woman quickly.

“It’s okay Sapphire.” Mrs Smith smiled in understanding.

“Jane, I just want her to be a positive influence to you.”

“Well, she’s doing that well. I’m staying out of trouble.” The girl rolled her eyes.

Mrs Smith sighed; “That’s good. Jane, could you please wait outside for some minutes?”

“No problem Mrs Smith.” She carried her lunch box and walked out.

The teacher watched her go before she turned her attention to Sapphire.

“How is she doing?”

“Well, she can be stubborn a bit. And she talks a lot too.” Sapphire smiled.

“I see. Inasmuch as I want you to be an influence to her. I want you to also be careful.”

“Alright Ma.”

“If you feel you can’t sit with her any longer, I can make her sit alone at the back.” Mrs Smith said bluntly.

Sapphire’s eyes widened in surprise. “Oh. No worries Ma.”

“Alright. Say Hi to your mother for me.” She patted the girl’s shoulder dismissing her.

“Bye Ma.” Sapphire bowed before leaving the room.

“So what did she talk to you about?” Jane asked as soon as Sapphire met her outside the school building.

“Just some words of advice. Mrs Smith does that a lot.” Sapphire still had her teacher’s words on her mind.

“I see. But she hasn’t done that to me.” Jane argued.

“She will one day.” Sapphire patted her on her shoulder.

“If you say so.” Jane shrugged as they made the rest of their trip to the school bus in silent.

They had in no time sat down when the School Prefect Boy entered the bus and sat down.

Jane turned to her friend excitedly. “That reminds me. Sapphire, you have not introduced me to your boyfriend yet.”

Sapphire looked at her questionably. Boyfriend? Still she replied; “I have many friends who are boys and you have met them already.”

Jane laughed loudly; “Girl, you are funny.”

Sapphire stared at her innocently.

“Don’t tell me you don’t have a boyfriend?” Jane gaped at her; “You are going to get married and have babies one day.”

Sapphire frowned. What does she have to do with Babies? Even her mother still called her a baby. She had heard enough. “At least I’m not getting married now. What do boyfriends and girlfriends do together by the way?” She asked.

“A lot Sapphire. You have someone to talk to.” Jane said dreamily.

“If it’s that, I can talk to you or my Mum.” the other girl said conclusively.

“No. It isn’t the same, girl.” Jane hissed. She continued; “Well it isn’t necessary it’s boys you like. I have watched videos of girls liking each other and in that you don’t have to be afraid of getting pregnant.”

“Oh! I see.” Shocked was an understatement of how Sapphire she felt. She wondered how much her friend knew and hoped she could just drop the subject.

She was not convenient having the conversation at all. It just didn’t feel right to her.

She sighed as Jane continued; “I could teach you something’s. My Cousin taught me some little things girls can do together. Though she told me my parents must not know.”

Sapphire frowned; “It must be bad then.”

“No, I feel good. It’s just you know, parents don’t want you to enjoy life so early.” She shrugged.

“I see.” Sapphire nodded.

“So you just have to decide if it’s a boy you want or a girl.” Sapphire stared at her thoughtfully before saying; “Okay.”

“It isn’t okay at all. Don’t listen to her.” A voice whispered to Sapphire as she agreed within herself.

“It really doesn’t feel right.” she muttered under her breath.

“You are beautiful by the way.” Jane commented again.

Gush! If Jane should really continue with that type of conversation, she might be forced to lose it.

“Jane, Thank you.” She chuckled.

Jane smiled back and both girls were soon lost in their own world.

Noises caused by the other students prevailed over the quietness of the girls as Sapphire stared outside the school bus.

She looked at Jane few minutes later to see her reading a magazine. She relaxed against her seat and closed her eyes.

“I hate all these talks from within me. Why do I feel like I should have nothing to do with Jane again?”

“Maybe I will take Mrs Smith’s counsel. I will also ask Mum about what Jane said.” She concluded within herself.

The bus soon stopped at the junction to their house. Sapphire waved goodbye to Jane and started a slow walk to their house.

Jane's words played over in her mind as she walked home.

As she neared their residence, the open window blinds revealed her mother was home. In few minutes she was standing in front of the door. She knocked and waited for her mother to open up for her.

"Welcome dear." Megan greeted but she noticed her daughter didn't look happy.

She groaned. What was it about Sapphire and bad days in school?

"Good afternoon Ma." Sapphire muttered closing the door behind her.

"How was school today?" Megan really wanted to know.

"Fine... It's just... Never mind." She moved to go to her room.

Megan took some steps to follow her and decided against it; "Sapphire come back here."

The girl stopped and walked back to where her mother stood.

Megan's smile turned tender as she put out her hand and stroked her hair; "What is it?"

Sapphire sighed; "Well, Jane said something about you not wanting me to enjoy life early."

She raised her hand out. "I am not following." What was her daughter talking about?

“Not you. I mean parents generally.” Sapphire explained biting her lower lip awkwardly.

Megan sighed. “Let’s sit down first.” She pulled her daughter after her and together they sat on the settee.

“Can you tell me what led to that conclusion?” Megan asked.

“She was saying things about boyfriends; that we’ll get married and have babies one day.” Sapphire whispered, watching her mother's face to gauge her reaction.

“Oh! Is that all?” She asked her daughter.

“I guess that’s all and she was looking at me funny like...” Sapphire paused.

“Like what?” She raised her eyes questionably.

“Like she liked me.”

“Of course she’s supposed to like you. Isn’t she your friend?” Meghan asked with furrowed brow.

“No. It felt wrong.” Sapphire shook her head in protest.

Ask her if there is more?

“Is there more to talk about?” Meghan asked patiently.

Sapphire frowned as Jane’s words came rushing back.

“No. It isn’t the same, girl.”

“Well it isn’t necessary it’s boys you like. I have watched videos of girls liking each other and in that you don’t have to be afraid of getting pregnant.”

“I could teach you something’s. My Cousin taught me something girls can do together though she told me my parents must not know.”

“No, I feel good. It’s just you know, parents don’t want you to enjoy life so early.”

Sapphire sighed. “Well, she just wants me to decide if it’s a boy or a girl I want.”

What? Megan had heard enough.

“Sapphire! Listen to me carefully.”

The girl shifted uncomfortably under her mother’s sharp gaze.

“You need to be careful of this girl. What is her name again?”

“Jane. You are not going to tell Mrs Smith right?”

“No.” But is that what her daughter was worried about?

Sapphire sat up a bit and crossed her legs.

“Well, not yet; but I may be forced to, if I learn this type of discussion persists between you two.”

“Okay Ma.” Sapphire looked up at her mother’s face, wiggling her fingers as she did.

“Daughter, first of all I need you to know with the whole of your being that all that Jane discussed with you as you just recounted to me now is a Lie from the pit of hell.” Megan was not going to mince words at all.

“Alright Mum.”

“God hates the people who involve in such dirty things and I’m sure you wouldn’t want him to hate you, Right?”

“No Ma.” Sapphire replied.

“Good! So anytime Jane talks about things like this, just tell her you are not interested.”

“It might not be easy but I want you to forget that you had that discussion with her today.”

Sapphire dashed her eyelids furiously at that moment.

“Yes! Don’t even bother to ruminate on it. Do you get me?”

“Yes Mum.” Sapphire nodded.

“You know what? Get your Bible and let’s see what God has to say about these things Jane talked about.”

“Alright Ma.” Sapphire said as she stood up and walked quickly to her room.

Megan stood up briefly to also pick up hers from where it was on the center table.

She flipped through the pages as she searched for Bible Verses she could use to buttress her points.

“Father, help me to tell her in a way she will understand.”

“This girl is growing so fast Lord. Keep her from the part of destruction.” Megan prayed silently.

Sapphire walked in at that moment but Megan did not notice.

“Mum! Are you alright?”

“Yes dear.” She replied with a thin smile.

“Have your seat.” Megan said.

Sapphire used her feet to push her lunch box which she had earlier dropped on the floor out of her path before sitting beside her mother.

“You are going to open your Bible but I will read from The Amplified Version on my phone.” Her mother said as she picked up her phone from the centre table.

“Let's check 1 Corinthians 6:18-19” Megan said.

Megan read;”Run away from sexual immorality [in any form, whether thought or behavior, whether visual or written]. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the one who is sexually immoral sins against his own body.”

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you, whom you have [received as a gift] from God, and that you are not your own [property]?”

She needed to explain. “Sapphire, this boyfriend stuff that Jane is talking about has no name but Fornication. Which is called sexual immorality here. Check your Bible what is the first sentence?”

“Flee Fornication.” Sapphire replied.

“Good. Sapphire, you can now see for yourself that it is a Sin.” Megan said.

“Did Jane ask you if you were not going to get married later on in life?” She asked her daughter.

Sapphire smiled with a questioning look. “How did you know?”

“That’s one of the many excuses people offer to why they go into ungodly relationships.” Megan said with a smirk on her face.

“Oh!” Her daughter marvelled.

“Yeah! Come to think of it. Why would you involve in a relationship when you are not ready to get married?”

“Even young adults that get involved in it and it’s not that they are in courtship are committing fornication.”

Sapphire shook her head thoughtfully.

Megan had not even finished. “Sapphire, when I and your Dad started courting, it was solely with marriage as a motive and trust me, we were always reporting to our pastors and Counsellors.”

“All these things Jane spoke to you about, I’m sure her parents must not even know about it.” There was definitely no sane person who would want his child to be involved in such things.

Sapphire nodded in agreement.

Megan continued; “Apart from that, God hates it.”

“And for Christ’s sake, how did a girl so young as Jane get exposed like that? What is this world becoming to Lord?” She clutched her head for few seconds as if it ached her.

“Maybe someone told her too.” Sapphire chipped in.

“Sapphire just know this. The Holy Spirit dwells in your body. He hates it when you do and think about dirty things.”

“Sweetheart, because you love God, you don’t need to have anything to do with those boys.” She said quietly.

“Jane is the one trying to tell you about boys now. A time will come when those boys themselves will want to be your friend and try to act friendly. Sapphire, you need to be wise.” Her mother pleaded.

“You need to be wise.” She said again as Sapphire looked at her intently.

“Let’s read Galatians 5:19 also.” She added.

Sapphire was now determined to do what was right as she opened her Bible in a special way. The Leaves of the Bible made flapping sounds as she opened in haste.

“I read;” Megan started, “Now the practices of the sinful nature are clearly evident: they are sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality (total irresponsibility, lack of self-control), idolatry, sorcery, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions [that promote heresies], envy, drunkenness, riotous behavior, and other things like these. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

“Sapphire, did you see the word fornication?”

“Yes Ma’am.”

“What did the Bible say will happen to such people?” Did the girl understand what she was reading at all?

Sapphire didn’t answer immediately as she looked through the verses briefly before talking. “They won’t inherit the kingdom of God.”

Meghan smiled proudly.

“Mummy, I don’t wanna go to hell.” Sapphire said soberly.

“Then you must flee anything ungodly like fornication. Do you understand me?”

“Yes Ma’am.” She replied with understanding.

“Sapphire, before we pray together let me show you something in Romans 1:32.”

“I want you to listen carefully to this. It says knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

“Oh!” Sapphire exclaimed.

“Note this: It says it’s not only those that do it but even those who like and support those that do them.” She explained.

“You don’t need to be envious of those boys and girls or ever imagine that you were like people like that.” She added.

“Mum, I won’t do that. I love being born again.” Her daughter replied firmly.

“Great!” Megan smiled. “So avoid unnecessary talks about boys or boyfriend. It can be defiling and will make you unclean.”

“I felt that way today.” Sapphire agreed.

“That’s just it. When your Spirit man isn’t comfortable with something, you should know it isn’t right for you. That’s one of the ways the Holy Spirit speaks to us.” Her mother explained.

“Alright Ma. Mum, I don’t want to disappoint God.” Sapphire said soberly.

“You won’t by his grace.” Megan said as she placed both Her Bible and her phone on the table in front of them.

“Let us pray.” Megan began as the Telephone bleeped at that moment.

“Let me get that.” She stood up and walked towards the Dining table where the phone was placed.

“That's the first time someone will be calling us on that this year. I wonder who that is.” Sapphire thought aloud.

“The more reason I need to pick this.” Megan replied with a smile before picking up the receiver.

“Good Afternoon, this is The Anderson's Residence.” Megan greeted.

“Good day Ma. Glad I’m on to the right home.” A childish voice responded from the other end.

Was that a kid? Megan frowned.

“Well, great.” She replied carefully thinking through on who it might be.

“Can I speak to Sapphire?” the person asked.

“Just like that?” She whispered to herself with a smirk on her face before saying; “You may have to let me know who is on the line first.”

“Oh! This is Jane.”

Jane? Is it who I think it is? She looked towards her daughter.

“What is it?” Sapphire mouthed.

“I’m Sapphire’s friend.” The girl added jolting Megan back to the present.

“Awesome. And how did you get our number?” Did she to get parents pull strings for her at the school? She needed to know.

“That! I checked the GA White pages Phone Book online.”

“Okay.” Megan fell silent after that, wondering what the girl would say next.

“Can I speak to Sapphire?” Megan raised her brow in question. Well, the girl would have to deal with her today.

“You know what! You might want to talk to me. I will deliver your message.” Megan said.

“Alright. Is that a good idea?” Jane asked.

“Trust me. My baby wouldn’t mind.” She replied.

The girl grunted a bit before talking on. For few minutes, Megan listened to the girl talk. Whatever Jane said had Megan rolling her eyes in disgust and tapping her left foot absentmindedly.

“Will you allow her?” Jane asked after she was done talking.

Megan sighed. “Well, you will know that in school tomorrow.”

“Alright. Bye.” The girl said coldly.

“Greet your parents for me. Sweetie.”

“Maybe I will leave a message for them.” Jane replied. “I would be asleep before they arrive anyway. And when I wake up, they are gone.” She added.

“Oh! Bye Jane.” Megan said and the girl ended the call without replying.

“Jane?” Sapphire asked as soon as her mother dropped the receiver.

Megan smiled thoughtfully as she walked back to where Sapphire sat.

“What did she say?” Sapphire asked again.

“I don’t think I like what she told me. She didn’t sound like a respectful girl on phone too.” Megan frowned.

“That’s Jane for you. Well, what will she know in school tomorrow?” She persisted.

Megan sat back thoughtfully as Sapphire stared at her impatiently.

“Mum?”

“We’ll talk about it over dinner alright?”

Sapphire frowned.

“Trust me, I will tell you and your Dad what she said.”

Sapphire sighed; “Alright.”

“We were about praying. Let’s do that please.” Megan said as Sapphire closed her eyes in response.

“Sapphire, I want you to pray for yourself that the Lord will help you.” Megan started as Sapphire prayed along silently.

“Pray that you will not do contrary to the will and plan of God in Jesus name.”

“Pray that the Lord will help you to flee every form of immorality in Jesus name.”

“You will not give room for defilement.”

“In Jesus name we have prayed.”

“Amen.” Sapphire replied and Megan rounded up the prayer.

“Thanks Mum.” Sapphire said as she carried her lunch box and stood up.

“Mum, you’re telling me what Jane told you during dinner.” She added.

“Of course.” Megan smiled as she watched her girl walk out of the sitting room.

“Lord, what should I do?” Meghan thought back to her discussion with Jane.

“I want to tell her to come over to my place after school tomorrow. We could talk and I could show her something’s. She could also talk to me about Jesus, if she wishes.” Jane had said.

Meghan sighed. What are the things Jane had planned to show her daughter? Truth be told, she will do her best to make sure her daughter had nothing to do with the girl again.

She stopped for some seconds as she remembered Jane's reply when she had told her to extend her greetings to her parents.

The girl could be having a lonely childhood. Her parents must be so busy that they have no idea their daughter had been exposed to so much.

Who does the girl stay with at home? Perhaps they have people to assist them around the house or probably some relatives influenced the girl.

Absentmindedly, Megan pushed herself more into the chair and slung her feet over the arm.

Inasmuch as she wanted well for Jane, she would never want to risk the safety of her daughter.

"Lord, teach me what to do." She prayed as she planted her feet on the floor swiftly and went to the kitchen with plans to work on dinner.

She would discuss things with her husband upon his arrival most preferably in Sapphire's absence. She hoped he would see things the way she did.

To her understanding, Sapphire should have had nothing to do with Jane in the first place.

CHAPTER FIVE

Meghan woke up to the sound of her 5am alarm the next morning and the first thing that came to her mind was the fact that her daughter would be going to her friend's house after school.

She had discussed the issue with her husband after he came back from work and he had not seen anything wrong in Sapphire spending time with her friend. He had even reassured her that their daughter could be trusted.

Meghan looked beside her at John who was fast asleep.

She stood up silently, pulled her night wear tighter and found her way to the bathroom.

Sound of running water could be heard as she washed her face and brushed her teeth to avoid her nodding off during devotion.

She hummed a song of worship as she cleaned up as once again she felt a troubled thought stare within her.

“Why do I feel reluctant in letting Sapphire visit Jane?” She asked herself.

She pushed the thought away as she rinsed her mouth and returned to the bedroom.

Pulling the plastic chair from under the study table noiselessly, she sat down to pray when a muffled voice called out from the bed behind her. “Good morning beautiful.”

“Good morning Sir.” She replied with a smile. “I didn't know you are awake.”

“Well, your movement in the bathroom woke me up.” He replied as he stood up slowly and went to the bathroom.

By the time he came back in, his wife had started her morning devotion.

He walked over to where she sat, picked up his Bible from the Study table, before walking back to his side of the bed. Before long, he was on his knees talking to his maker.

About two hour later, Meghan was rushing in and out of the kitchen to make sure breakfast was ready and each of them could set out for the day.

Her husband walked into the kitchen to also check out things. He was working on his tie.

“Mum, My lunch box.” Sapphire shouted from the sitting room where she was putting a finishing touch to the arrangement of her schoolbooks into her backpack.

“Hold on.” Megan called back as she entered the living room again.

“Mum, should I take change of clothes since I’ll be visiting Jane’s after school?” Husband and wife looked at each other in silence as their daughter looked at them for answers.

Megan shrugged. “I don’t think that is necessary. Today is Friday so I’ll work on laundry tomorrow.”

“Alright Mum.”

“Here is your lunch” Megan said as she dropped the food flask on the table and Sapphire moved towards it. She quickly packed it with her

water bottle into her lunch box. Megan also packed hers and her husband's.

"Mum, I need to hurry so I'll not miss the bus." Sapphire told her mum.

"Okay. Come over here Sapphire." Sapphire walked towards her mum.

Megan laid a hand on her daughter's shoulder as she began. "The truth is I'm a bit reluctant in letting you visit Jane but I trust that the Lord will be with you. Daughter, I also need you to be careful."

Sapphire smiled. "I will Mum." She gave her mum a peck before moving to go.

"And mine?" Her dad asked feigning displeasure.

Sapphire laughed. She hurried to him and hugged him.

"Bye sweetheart." Her Dad said.

"Have a great working day." She said as she turned to go.

"Thanks for reminding us we have a long working day ahead of us." Megan smiled.

Sapphire hurried out of the house to catch the bus and she was just on time because as she neared the bus stop the school bus arrived.

It was with great delight she told Jane her parents had permitted her to visit with Jane after school.

As soon as Sapphire stepped into Jane's home, the first thing she did was gasp in astonishment.

She looked around the living room in awe as Jane blabbed on about her parents not been at home and always coming in late at night.

“Your home is beautiful.” Sapphire said dreamily.

Jane gawked. “Well, thanks.”

“And big.” Sapphire completed.

“That I agree on. It’s usually lonesome being in here alone. Thanks for Susan.” She said referring to the housemaid who took care of things around the house.

The lady in question entered just then. “Welcome Miss.”

Sapphire stared at the Dark plump lady who was also staring back at her.

“She’s African?” Sapphire whispered to Jane who smiled in response. “And there is the same look i had on my face the first time I met her.”

Susan coughed reminding them of her presence.

“What is it for lunch?” Jane asked the maid.

“Chicken and dumplings.”

“My favorite.” Jane said excitedly.

“I still have the meal mum packed for my lunch.” Sapphire put in.

“Okay. She can help you heat it up and dish it out.” Jane said.

“Alright.” Sapphire replied as she handed her lunch box to Susan who went towards a place Sapphire thought would be the kitchen.

She couldn't help but think that Jane handled things a bit like an adult.

"Let's eat first before we go to my room." Jane said as Sapphire jolted back.

Sapphire smiled. "Okay." "Are you not going to put off your uniform?" She asked her friend.

"I'll do that after our meal; at least you are also in yours."

Jane strode towards the Dining area with Sapphire in tow. Before long, Susan arrived with their meals all served.

Sapphire thanked her and the girls started eating. Out of habit, she prayed silently on her meal before eating.

"What does your mother do?" Sapphire asked as they ate.

"My Mum is the Director of Mark and Steel Military Company in this City."

"Wow." Sapphire said. "How often do you now have time together?"

Jane frowned. "We used to when I was much younger; that was when she was still finding her way up but now..." The girl shrugged. "She does not even know you are here and might never know."

"She is that busy?"

"Yeah. Dad's even worse. I haven't seen him in like two weeks."

Sapphire stared at her in surprise. "He works in a far place?" She asked wondering if he was always on transit.

Jane hissed. “I wished he were. He sleeps in this house every night but we don’t see a lot. Mum does well to check on me when she gets back from work. Dad doesn’t.”

Sapphire shook her head. “Then how do they cope?”

“You mean as husband and wife?” Sapphire nodded.

“I don’t know. I guess that’s why I am the only child. I wonder how they had me.” Jane said with muffled voice because of the food in her mouth.

“There was a day Susan mentioned that my mum was suspecting that Dad was cheating on her with his secretary. She didn’t even dash an eyelid.”

Sapphire stared at Jane in shock.

She sighed. “Do your parents go to Church?”

Jane frowned. “No! I have never been to one myself.”

Soon they were done with their meal and headed up to Jane’s room.

“Your room is beautiful.” Sapphire commented as soon as they got in.

The room looked girlish especially with the wall’s pink color. Beautiful paper flowers were also attached to it.

“Thank you.” Jane replied as she grabbed a laptop from her study table.

“I didn’t know you have a laptop?” Sapphire sounded surprised.

“Mum got it for my ninth birthday even though she told me Dad objected. He said I was too young to have one. Well who cares. I get to watch movies anytime I want.”

After switching on the laptop and waiting for it to boot, Jane put off her school uniform and with her undergarments alone on her, carried the laptop and laid on the bed.

Sapphire stood watching.

“Are you going to keep standing?” Jane asked in annoyance.

“Well, what are we going to do?” Sapphire asked back.

“Have fun of course. I want to show you something’s.”

Sapphire sighed before moving to lie beside Jane.

“Can you please put off your uniform?” Jane asked point blank.

“And why?” Sapphire asked without dashing an eyelid.

“Common we are indoors.” Jane said with a frown.

Sapphire sighed as she worked to removing her clothes. Something stared inside of her that she wouldn’t like what Jane was up to.

“Let me play a video for you.” Jane said as Sapphire nodded and moved to spread her clothes across the study chair.

Soft moans came from the Laptop and Sapphire frowned.

“What’s that?” she asked as she dropped her uniform on the chair and walked towards Jane. The other girl didn’t answer and Sapphire quickly laid beside her to see for herself.

What she saw made her jaw drop.

“Are those ladies kissing each other?”

“What does it look like?” Jane asked arbitrarily.

Sapphire sighed. She shouldn’t be watching this.

She watched as the ladies removed their clothes.

“What are they doing?”

“You’ll see for yourself. Why are you acting like a kid?”

“Well, we are kids.” Sapphire sighed. What was going on?

Was this the video Jane was talking about when she said she had watched girls loving each other?

As she looked on at the screen feeling guilty, she suddenly felt Jane’s hand between her legs. She went still.

She was still trying to find her words when the girl worked her hand into her panties.

“Jane, what are you...” She couldn’t even complete the question as Jane was now moaning in pleasure.

“Just follow my lead. This is wonderful.”

By the time Sapphire was putting on her uniform and leaving Jane’s room they had done unimaginable things with each other.

She walked out to the living room without waiting for Jane. She just couldn’t put away the guilty feeling that lay heavy on her chest.

“Here is your lunchbox.” Susan called after her.

She turned to collect it.

“Young girls!” Susan said before hissing.

Sapphire heard and realized the older lady knew about what had happened.

She was still trying to place how she might have known so quickly when Jane came down the stairs fully dressed.

“I have told Seth he’ll drop you off.” She said referring to their family driver not noticing Sapphire’s thoughtful feature.

They walked out of the house in silence as the driver brought the car upfront. Sapphire moved to enter the vehicle in distaste.

“Aren’t you going to bid me goodbye?” Jane asked with a smirk.

“Bye.” Sapphire muttered without looking back at her. She just wanted to get home.

Before she could move further, Jane grabbed her from behind and turned her roughly towards her.

“Sapphire, it’s because it’s a first for you. You’ll get used to it. Okay?” She said before pulling her into a suffocating hug.

Sapphire gawked. Get used to it? She assured herself there would never be a next time. Soon Jane let her go.

“See you on Monday.” She finally said with a thin smile and entered the vehicle.

“Where are we heading to?” Seth asked with an irritating smile as soon as she entered the vehicle.

She gave him their home address which he filled in the GPS and fell silent.

She closed her eyes as she had a flashback to the things that had happened in Jane’s room.

She just wanted to forget it all. Jane had even acted like she was an expert in such things.

She asked herself why she had let Jane get her involved. A tear escaped her eyes and she cleaned it off quickly.

Her mother would be disappointed if she told her what had happened.

And God?

God!

“What have i done?” She asked in whisper as more tears flowed from her eyes.

“Are you alright?” Seth asked with a smirk on his face.

She frowned as she opened her eyes. What was it about this man that put her on guard?

“Yes. Thank you Sir.” She looked up to see Seth staring at her through the front mirror.

“Is anything the problem Sir?” She asked.

“At least you talk with respect.”

Sapphire lifted her brow in question.

“I know about what happened.” He added having that disgusting smile once again.

Sapphire sighed. How was he aware? Even Susan knew.

She frowned thoughtfully. Was there CCTV’s in that house?

She hissed. Why hadn’t she thought of that?

She recoiled to see the vehicle was already few minutes to their house: Precisely at the last bend to their house. The vehicle stopped.

What was happening again?

She looked at Seth questionably.

“We are still some houses away from our house.” Their house was down the street and she was too worn out to trek the rest of the way.

He didn’t answer immediately. She watched as he opened the driver’s door and got out of the vehicle.

Sapphire was becoming suspicious as he opened the door at the other end of the backseat and entered the vehicle.

Immediately Seth entered and banged the door close, for some reason all the doors clicked locked.

She pushed towards the side door and gripped the handle in fear. It didn’t open and that confirmed what she had heard.

“What are you doing?” She screamed out.

“You didn’t scream when it was Jane. You made sounds of pleasure that I can still remember.”

“Were you watching?” She asked with a glare, praying someone would come down the street at that instance.

“That little witch doesn’t know her father installed CCTV’s in the house. He just never checks it out.” He hissed.

And why would Jane’s Dad do that? She sighed. That was even none of her concern. What mattered was how she would escape the man who was now staring at her in a dangerous way.

She watched in distaste as he licked his lips.

Hadn’t the man in “Stolen heart” a movie she watched on Fox TV without her mother’s permission also did that before he raped and killed one of the casts?

She shivered in fear. Was this man about to rape her?

Her mother had told her enough stories to know she wasn’t safe at that moment.

She was caught unawares when he grabbed her and pulled her towards himself.

“Get your hands off me. Help!” She screamed as she beat his hands with the little strength she had. He eventually stopped struggling with her.

She watched as he struggled to decide what to do with her.

“Jane does it with me. It isn’t painful.” He finally said.

Sapphire stopped.

“Jane?” She asked with a shaky voice.

“Yes.” He nodded thinking he was now getting to her.

“And the girl is quite experienced.” He replied and as he noticed she was still trying to process what he had said, he worked his hands into her cloths.

Sapphire’s head pounded. Who was Jane really?

Seth lifted himself up and moved to pull her under him.

“Get off me.” She screamed. “Are you crazy? This is broad daylight.”

“I do it with her in broad daylight.” He muttered.

“I’m not Jane.” She said in anger. And before she knew it, she stretched her right hand to grab her lunch box.

Seth didn’t see it coming.

She hit it hard against his head.

He screamed.

“God please I know I shouldn’t be violent but please rescue me.” She prayed as she hit him the second time.

“Stop.” He shouted out as he hit his back against the door giving Sapphire room to sit up.

“Open the door.” She shouted.

He cursed under his breath as he brought out the automated car key from his pocket and unlocked the door.

With her hold still on her lunch box, she used her other hand to pull the door handle and the door opened.

She lifted herself and got out of the vehicle quickly.

As soon as her feet touched the ground, she grabbed her backpack and lunchbox and turned to go.

Seth got out of the vehicle. “Let me get you home.” He said using his hand to nurse his now swollen forehead.

“Thanks Seth.” she said and turned to him with a glare.

She straightened her uniform and walked away from the vehicle.

“Will you please not tell Jane? I have to keep my job.” He said as he took a step towards her.

“Like I care! You are all bunch of fornicators.” She shouted at him as she turned to go.

“Then what are you? A hypocrite?” He asked, laughing out in mockery.

Those words struck her heart like arrows.

Tears flowed out of her eyes without control as she hurried down the street in anger and frustration.

She was not angry at Jane or Seth.

She was angry at herself.

Seth was right.

She was a hypocrite.

She hadn't even struggled with Jane.

“God, I’m sorry.” She whispered silently as she cried all the way home.

CHAPTER SIX

“I owe it all to Jesus; I owe it all to him...” Megan sang as she worked around the house, mostly packing her families dirty clothing’s in preparation for the laundry she would be doing the next day.

As she sang, she remembered to commit her daughter into God’s hands. Suddenly, someone banged at the door.

“Hold on.” She called out as she took a steady walk towards the living room. The bang continued as if the person at the door was furious.

Megan frowned. Sapphire and John would never knock that way.

“Will you please not pull down my door?” She said firmly before reaching the door. The knock stopped.

She hissed as she removed the lock and opened the door.

There in front of the door stood Sapphire in tears.

Megan blinked in surprise.

“Come here.” she whispered as she opened her arms.

“Mum” Sapphire called running into her mother for a hug.

Time ticked on as Mother and daughter remained like that for sometime. Sapphire didn’t stop crying.

Eventually, Megan loosened her hold and pulled her into the house with her. She locked the door behind them. She collected her daughter’s backpack and lunch box and made her sit on the settee.

She couldn't help but wonder what had happened.

Had the girls fought?

Had Jane hurt her? She sighed.

Sapphire kept on crying without saying a word, leaving Megan to imagine many things.

"Mum, I need a shower. I feel dirty." Sapphire said amidst tears.

Megan was more confused.

She shrugged. Her daughter knew she could trust her with anything and she didn't want to act desperate.

"Okay." She said as she assisted the girl up to her room. As soon as they entered the room, Sapphire went straight to her bathroom.

Megan waited but kept pacing her daughter's room. Not too long she started hearing Sapphire talking and weeping from the bathroom.

She stopped. Was Sapphire praying in the bathroom?

Her daughter had mentioned that she was feeling dirty.

Her heartbeat quickened. Had her daughter been raped?

She shook her head in protest.

No, it couldn't be.

Had Jane come through to her words of showing Sapphire things? She prayed not.

“Lord, I hope we haven’t made a terrible mistake by letting Sapphire visit Jane’s house.” She prayed quietly.

Sapphire stepped out of her bathroom at that moment with her towel wrapped round her body. Megan moved towards her and aided her to her bed.

Mother and daughter sat gazing at each other waiting for who would start the dialogue that was bound to happen.

Megan couldn’t stand it anymore. “What happened?”

That question seems to set off another ocean of tears. Megan began to wonder what her daughter had been through.

“Mum, Jane is a really bad girl.” Sapphire whispered.

Megan kept mute but her thoughts were in chaos.

God! I shouldn’t have let her go.

Jane hurt my daughter right?

“Mum, you aren’t saying anything.” Sapphire urged.

“What happened?” She asked as she brushed off a tear that had dropped.

“Will God forgive me?” Sapphire whimpered. “I was supposed to influence her but she got me to do dirty things.”

Megan’s heart thumped within her. “Go on.” She urged and listened as her daughter recounted to her all that happened from the moment she set foot into Jane’s home to her ordeal with Seth.

“Mum, Seth is right.” Sapphire admitted in tears.

Megan was doing her best not to break down in front of her daughter but the tears kept flowing.

She sniffled. “Sapphire, how about you rest a bit? I need to do something.” Sapphire looked at her in surprise.

“Much more than what I have to say, you need to ask God for forgiveness.” She explained.

Sapphire squirmed in her seat. “I have said I’m sorry so many times but I don’t know.”

Megan sighed. “God hates it when his children fall into sin. But he hates it more when they don’t realize they have done wrong and repent. He is our father and he always forgives our wrongs.”

“Alright Mum. I’m sorry I insisted I wanted to go.” Sapphire wiggled her fingers awkwardly.

“I’m sorry too. I should have known the Lord was trying to warn me this morning when I woke up with that burden and reluctance to let you go.” Megan said regrettably.

“Daddy also permitted me.”

“You know some times we are not sensitive to the Spirit’s instruction.” Megan replied sadly.

Sapphire now had a determined look on her face. “I need to ask God for forgiveness. I need to tell him how sorry I am.”

“That’s the right thing to do. I will check back on you.”

“Okay Ma.” She replied as Megan stood and excused herself.

As soon as Sapphire was left alone, she got down on her knees and in tears confessed her wrong doing. She told the Lord to forgive her for being careless and also promised not to walk with ungodly friends any longer.

By the time she rose up from that position, she knew with the whole of her heart that her Heavenly Father had forgiven her.

Megan sat at the study table in the room she shared with her husband as she thought back to all Sapphire had recounted to her.

In tears, she thanked the Lord that Seth hadn't succeeded in what he had desired to do to her daughter.

She asked that the Lord forgive her for not been sensitive enough and that he forgive and help Sapphire not to be discouraged by what had transpired. She sincerely prayed that the Lord give her the right words for her daughter.

Megan couldn't help but pray for Jane that the Lord had mercy on the girl and deliver her from the yoke of sexual sin.

After the prayer, she felt she was now in the right state to talk to Sapphire.

She stood up and picked her Bible from the study table. Suddenly, she felt the urge to throw up. She dropped her Bible and hurried to the bathroom. In seconds, the contents of her stomach had being deposited into the toilet basin.

"What is wrong with me?" She exhaled as she cleaned her mouth with running water and went out of the bathroom.

She picked her Bible back from where she had dropped it and left the room.

She hummed as she walked towards her daughter's room. She knocked briefly, opened the door and entered. Sapphire was sitting at her study table with her Bible in front of her.

“Mum, are you alright? You don't look good.” Sapphire asked as Megan sat down on her bed and bid her to come.

“It's nothing to worry about. I just threw up. I will be fine.” She reassured as her daughter stood up from the study table and sat beside her.

“Okay.” Sapphire looked at her mother in a funny way.

Megan glared back at her. “What is it?”

Sapphire had a wide smile on her face. “Nothing.”

Megan then told her they would be spending sometime to study the Bible. Before they began, Megan prayed that the Lord speak through his word and grant them clear understanding of his words.

“Let's start with I John 1:9.” Megan began and both opened to that part of the Bible. “It says if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

“Sapphire, first of all I want to reassure you that since you have confessed and seek forgiveness from God, he has forgiven you.”

“Since God has forgiven you, who is the devil that he should accuse you? Or Sapphire, who are you that you should hold that act against yourself or remain in anger against yourself?”

“When the Devil tries to accuse you, tell him to his face that God has forgiven you and remind him that old things are passed away and all things are made new.”

“When you remember this fall, don’t be angry at yourself or in this case hold it against Seth or Jane. Like God has forgiven you, forgive them and also forgive yourself. If you still hold this day against yourself, you will not be able to accomplish the great things you ought to achieve. So let it be in the whole of your being that you are forgiven. Do you understand?”

“Yes Ma.” Sapphire replied.

“Good.” Both went on to study and discuss Romans 1:27, 31; Mark 9:43, 45 and I Corinthians 9:27.

Megan concluded her words by saying; “Sapphire, you need to detach yourself from Jane. You are not to hate her but to be candid you girls can’t be friends. It’s an unequal yoke. And then you need to pray for her. God died for her too you know.”

Sapphire nodded in agreement as Megan asked thoughtfully; “How can Seth take advantage of a girl young enough to be his sister?”

Sapphire hissed. “I’m going to ask Mrs. Smith to change my seat partner.”

Megan had no problem with that. In fact she smiled. “As you wish.”

“Why are you smiling?” Sapphire blinked.

Megan laughed. “Remember you were worried if I was going to approach Mrs. Smith just last week. What a twist.”

Sapphire smiled in agreement as they both heard footsteps from outside the room.

“That would be your Dad. He probably had to use his key. ” Megan whispered. John might have knocked but since they weren’t in the Living room plus they were discussing they wouldn’t have heard.

“Who is home?” John called out from the hallway.

“Come over here.” Megan called back.

“Okay Sweetie.” He replied from outside the door and he soon opened the door and entered the room.

“Hello Girls. What are you two up to?” He winked.

“Having one of our mother and daughter time.” Megan replied thoughtfully.

John nodded. “Okay. Sapphire, how did your day with Jane go?”

No one talked. Sapphire and Megan just smiled at him but he could grasp that something had happened and he wanted to know.

He looked at his wife questionably.

Megan spoke up. “Sweetheart, a lot happened today.”

“Do I need to sit?” He asked noting Sapphire was not even making any move to talk.

“Please do.” Megan said as she held out the study chair for him to sit.

“Sapphire, you haven’t even welcomed me back from work?” He asked with lined brow.

Sapphire looked down at her Bible “Welcome Dad.”

“Okay. What happened?” he asked his wife in eagerness.

Megan narrated all Sapphire recounted to her when she came back as John listened in Silence. When she was done, he asked Sapphire some questions and she answered.

He looked at his wife and daughter helplessly. “This is too much for me to engross.”

He turned to Sapphire. “And your mother didn’t want you to go?”

Megan placed her hand on his shoulder. “Sweetheart, don’t be weary because of this. We have all learnt from this one.”

He used his right hand to run his hair through. “I can’t believe all these happened to you. Thank God Seth didn’t succeed. I don’t know what I would have done but maybe I would have pressed charges against him.”

Megan pushed herself out of the bed a bit. “Do you think we should contact her parents?”

Sapphire looked at her in disbelief. “Her parents will never be opportune. Let’s just ignore them.” Sapphire even went on to recount all Jane had told her about her parents.

“That home is wrecked.” Megan lamented.

“But that does not change the fact that we need to pray for that girl.” John pointed out. “Let’s just pray for now. God will take control.” And they prayed together as a family.

“Please can we eat out tonight?” was the first statement Megan uttered as soon as they finished praying. She was looking at her husband with pleading eyes.

Sapphire laughed. “Really, Mum?”

“Yes baby. For some reasons, I’m really craving for Boiled Potatoes and Roasted Chicken.” Sapphire stared at her Mother with bulging eyes. John kept gazing at her in surprise.

Sapphire couldn’t control her laughter any longer. “Well, I’m in! We haven’t eaten out in months.”

John stayed seated but was looking at his wife suspiciously.

Meghan’s lips were now set in a pout of mocked annoyance. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

John smiled sweetly. “I’m actually trying to figure things out. The last time you almost tore the house down while trying to roast chicken to eat with boiled potatoes because of your persistent craves was when we were expecting Sapphire.” He smiled widely;

“This is one of your pregnancy turn-ups.”

Sapphire gaped at her mother as Megan stared at her husband with widened eyes. “Are you saying...?” She couldn’t complete the sentence as her daughter kept looking from husband to wife with calculative eyes. “Mum, are you pregnant?”

“Well, we can’t say for sure.” She replied using her right hand to rub her tummy affectionately.

Sapphire was so excited. “But we can know right?” The question was directed to the father this time.

“Of course. A Visit to Dr James will give us the answer we so desire.” He replied with a wide grin.

Sapphire rushed to John excitedly. Before Megan knew it, Father and Daughter were already talking about the sex of the baby and choices of names.

She frowned. “Can we just go get dressed for dinner already?”

They stopped talking and looked at her in awe.

“Please be nice.” She added.

Sapphire and John looked at each other and smiled.

Then they ignored her and continued talking.

“Don’t you get it?” She asked touchily. They looked at her again with amused eyes.

She now had their attention. “The Baby wants to eat Chicken.” She said with puppy eyes as father and daughter burst into laughter.

That night after the Anderson’s came back from eating out, they retired to bed almost immediately.

“Sweetheart, thank you for that sumptuous Dinner.” Megan said before kissing her husband and drifting off to sleep.

Watching her sleep, John traced her lips with his fingers.

Pregnancy made his wife act like a baby sometimes but he loved that.

He smiled at the thought of how much he was going to spend on Boiled Potatoes and Roasted Chicken this time around.

He just hoped she wouldn't wake up during the night one day and demand he got her roasted chicken. That would be interesting.

His smile widened. For her happiness, he would inconvenience himself.

He closed the little distance between them and pecked her on her forehead. John soon drifted off to sleep.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The following Monday, A thoughtful Sapphire walked towards her classroom.

The weekend had gone by so quickly and she couldn't help but wonder how her day would be especially with Jane's presence.

It was a fact that things were going to be awkward between them. She sincerely hoped Jane would just ignore her.

She hissed. Like it was that easy.

She hastened a bit as she thought about the fact that Jane hadn't boarded the school bus that morning. She was concerned but at least it had saved her the embarrassing long minutes that could have transpired between them inside the school bus.

She walked past the Nursery Section of the School and the sight of the little children got her smiling. She would soon be having a sibling. Their family doctor had confirmed it during the weekend. She really hoped it would be a girl.

She entered her class, greeted her teacher and settled into her seat.

Few minutes later, the school bell rang indicating the beginning of classes.

Mrs. Smith had just finished welcoming her students to the new week when Jane walked in sheepishly. She looked unwell.

The whole class couldn't help but stare at her questionably. She murmured her greeting to anyone who cared to listen and walked past the teaching platform to her seat.

"Miss Jane." Mrs. Smith called.

Jane stopped.

With no expression of any emotion, she walked back towards her teacher.

"Good morning Mrs. Smith." Jane stared at her teacher now having an uncomfortable look on her face.

"Are you alright?" The woman asked in concern.

"Yes..." She replied with a croaky voice.

"Care to tell me why you resumed class late?" Mrs. Smith looked at her with raised eyebrow.

"I had a rough night but I will be fine." She replied softly.

"Alright. Go and settle down." The woman dismissed her with her left hand.

Jane nodded in acknowledgement before moving towards the front seat which she shared with Sapphire.

As she got to the seat and was struggling to remove her backpack, she stole a look at Sapphire.

Coincidentally, Sapphire looked up at that moment.

"Hi." Jane muttered before sitting down. Sapphire nodded in response.

There was an awkward silence for some seconds. None spoke to each other again as Mrs. Smith soon started the class.

While they did their class works, their eyes met at consecutive times but neither of them said a word.

What both girls were oblivious to was the fact that Mrs Smith was watching them thoughtfully and wondering what was off about them.

“Sapphire;” Mrs Smith called as she started the correction of the exercise she had told her students to do.

“Yes Ma.” The girl stood up in response.

“Please read the first question to us and provide the answer.” Mrs. Smith said with a sharp gaze.

Sapphire lifted up her book and did as she was told. As she answered the question, she could feel Jane’s boring stare beside her.

From the corner of her eyes, Sapphire watched as Jane grabbed a water bottle from her backpack as if trying not to get caught and drank from it quietly.

She frowned. Jane rarely brought water to school.

“Thank you Sapphire.” Mrs. Smith smiled as Sapphire sat down. “If you know you got the answer to that question wrong, write the correct one which I will be writing on the board now.” She turned her back to her students as greater percentage of the students picked their pens to write.

Sapphire also did the same when suddenly she heard Jane gasp beside her.

She stopped to look at the girl.

Jane was clutching at her stomach, her face turning white.

Sapphire frowned. She just couldn't ignore her.

"Are you alright?" She whispered in concern.

Jane shook her head as she gripped her stomach tighter.

"My stomach hurts." She whispered with muffled voice.

Sapphire didn't have time to react as Mrs. Smith chose that moment to notice her. "Sapphire, I have been wondering why you girls have ignored each other since morning but I can see I was wrong as you are now having side discussions. Care to give the class a gist?"

The class snarled in amusement.

Sapphire shook her head apologetically. "Its just Jane is in pains." A hush fell over the class.

"Oh!" Mrs. Smith dropped her teaching note and marker on her table and rushed towards the girls.

Jane was already in tears.

"This is not good. Let me get her to the School Clinic." She pulled the girl up and guided her out of the classroom.

As they were about stepping out, Jane stopped. Sapphire looked up at towards that direction and wondered what was happening.

"Sapphire;" Jane called before she eventually turned to have a better view of her face.

What was Jane doing? She looked on without muttering a word.

“I’m sorry.” The other girl said quietly.

What?

Sapphire stood up as the rest of the class watched on.

Tearfully, she moved towards Jane and their teacher and pulled the girl in for a hug. At that, Jane started sniffing.

“I forgive you.” Sapphire whispered to her ears.

“Sapphire, I know. But I’m not apologizing for the past.” She whispered back.

Really? Sapphire sighed. Would Jane ever change?

“I’m apologizing for the future.”

Sapphire stiffened against the girl.

“We need to get going.” Mrs. Smith said pulling the girls apart.

Worried, Sapphire looked at Jane. What did she mean by that?

The other girl smiled at her dejectedly and turned to Mrs. Smith.

Sapphire could only watch as the teacher helped Jane out of the class.

For seconds she stood at that spot lost in thought. What was wrong with Jane exactly? Why had she apologized that way and what was it about that smile that gave her a creepy feeling? Something wasn’t right.

Five minutes later, she was pacing the front of their class when Mrs. Smith rushed back in and told the whole class Jane's stomach was not in anyway relieving her. The teacher grabbed the girl's backpack and said her mother was around to take her to the hospital.

Sapphire stood still as she figured that with Jane's mother being present in the school already; the situation was definitely pretty serious. She muttered a silent prayer for Jane as Mrs. Smith walked past her in a dash.

The woman stopped and regarded her with a smile. "I understand you are feeling sorry for your friend. She'll be back to school in no time. You guys can sort things out later."

Sapphire smiled back gratefully and Mrs. Smith left.

Sapphire couldn't help but shiver at the thought that Mrs. Smith could be wrong this time.

Would she ever see Jane again?

She bit her lips thoughtfully. Where that thought had cropped from she had no idea.

It had been two weeks and no one had since seen or heard from Jane.

Sapphire never stopped bringing the girl to God in prayer. She had even called the number Jane used to call their landline few weeks before but nobody answered the phone.

Twice, she had begged her mother to take her to Jane's home and her mother had agreed.

The house was literally empty when they got there, save for the security man. Even though they pleaded with him, he had refused to give them any update about the girl's wellbeing.

Sapphire sighed. Was Jane doing well?

The school bell rang, jolting her back. School was closed for that day.

She packed her notebooks from her locker into her backpack and stood up to leave her class.

Suddenly, a sharp pain lunged at her lower abdomen and she gasped in pain.

In a flash, she was back on her seat.

What was wrong with her?

Sitting down for some seconds, she felt relief surge through her body.

She breathed heavily as she wondered what was it about the pain that gave her an uneasy feeling. That was the fifth time such would happen that day.

She relaxed as she remembered she hadn't carried her lunch box.

She bent down to grab it when another pain lunged again.

This time, she cried out.

Mrs. Smith who was also preparing to leave the class looked up at her. "Are you OK?"

"My stomach has been hurting me since daybreak." She grumbled.

The older woman frowned thoughtfully. “Oh dear, please get treated when you get home.”

“I will do that. Thank you Ma.” Sapphire nodded as she packed her things and moved to go.

Mrs. Smith’s next words stopped her. “But that’s strange.”

“What is?” Sapphire looked back at her.

Mrs. Smith pouted. “Two weeks ago, it was Jane. What is happening to you girls?”

Sapphire scowled. What was Mrs. Smith implying?

“I thought Jane said she had stomach pain? The area where I am having discomfort is kind of my lower abdomen.”

Her teacher’s frown deepened; “Well, it turned out it was her lower abdomen.”

Sapphire’s eyes widened at those words.

Whatever was happening, she had no idea.

Jane’s words and actions from two weeks came flooding her mind.

“Lord Jesus, please take control.” She prayed silently.

She didn’t have time to think for long as she hurried off remembering she had to catch the school bus back home.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Sapphire crawled out of her bed with tears fighting its way out of her eyes. Immediately after her lunch, she had retired to her room for her siesta so she could work on her assignments later in the evening.

As she walked out of her room, she clutched her stomach in pain while also listening for movements to know exactly where her mother was around the house.

“In here.” Megan called from the living room having heard a door being opened and shut.

A tearful Sapphire walked into the room noting the fact that her mother was listening to a sermon on her phone.

“Mum;” She called with croaked voice.

“Hope you slept well?” Megan asked as she looked up at her daughter. She stopped. “Have you been crying?”

“My stomach hurts.” Sapphire replied, tearing up even more.

“Sorry dear; Come sit beside me.” Megan patted the space beside her as she watched her daughter take forced steps towards her. “When did you start feeling uncomfortable?”

Sapphire coughed before answering. “Since daybreak.”

Megan didn’t like that. “You should have told me.”

“I’m sorry Ma. I just felt I would be relieved in no time. I was wrong. I have had to go to the restroom thrice today. I feel so sick.” She explained.

Mother and daughter kept quiet for sometime as Sapphire shifted uneasily beside her Mother. “Mum, something doesn’t feel right.”

Megan looked confused and Sapphire sighed quietly before speaking on. “Jane had to leave school two weeks ago because of stomach pain. She was weeping profusely.”

Megan stared at her daughter with squinted eyes. “What do you mean?”

“Never mind. It’s just...” She couldn’t help but wonder if the stomach pain had anything to do with what had happened between her and Jane weeks ago.

“Where exactly does it hurt you?” Her mother asked interjecting her thoughts.

“Here.” She replied as she absentmindedly directed her right hand towards the lower part of her waist.

Megan stretched forth her hand. “Here?” She suddenly applied pressure on the spot.

“Mum!” Sapphire screamed out loud and fell against her mother. Megan’s heart thumped.

“Sapphire.” She called in misery.

No response.

She waved her right hand over the child's face to confirm her suspicion. Her daughter was out.

Scared out of her wit, she laid the girl down on the settee with her face up. She hurriedly picked up her phone and called her husband’s office line.

“Sweetheart, Sapphire blacked out.” She said as soon as she knew he was listening.

“What happened?” He asked with a calm voice.

Megan moved to stand directly under the ceiling fan as she was suddenly feeling hot. “She told me she had stomach pain, diarrhea and... and...” She stammered.

“Sweetheart, I need you to calm down.” He whispered.

“I...”

“Think of the child you are carrying. You need to stay calm.”

Megan sighed. No wonder she was feeling hot and dizzy. She had almost forgotten she was weeks gone.

John continued; “You are frightened; I can hear it in your voice. Your hands are probably so sweaty by now.”

Megan looked down at her hands. He was right. “You guessed right.” She whispered.

“Well, I...” He started to say when she cut in again. “John, Sapphire also said she was feeling sick and...”

“Megan;” He called.

“Yes.” She was on the verge of tears now.

“Are you okay?” He asked softly.

“I don’t know. I’m feeling hot and dizzy. John, please come home.”

“Alright. I will be with you in less than 5minutes. Stay calm sweetheart. Sapphire will be fine.” He said as she listened to his movements at the other end. He asked her to get dressed before he got back.

“Alright.” She replied as she ended the call.

She looked at her daughter’s still body anxiously before hurrying towards the bedroom she shared with her husband.

In less than a minute, she was back in the sitting room. She moved to adjust her daughter’s clothing when she realized the girl was burning up. She hurried to Sapphire’s room and soon returned with her towel and a basin of water.

As she cleaned her daughter, she prayed silently but couldn’t help but wonder when John would arrive.

Megan had just finished throwing the water she used away and was returning to her daughter’s side when John rushed in.

She watched in silence as he checked their daughter’s pulse and without much ado lifted the girl up his shoulders and hurried outside the house.

Megan rushed after him with her Clutch Purse in hand. She locked the door behind her and assisted him in positioning their daughter in the backseat of his vehicle. Husband and wife got in the car hurriedly and the vehicle was soon out on the road. It was with no little prayer they got to the Hospital they frequented as a Family.

John had already called their Family Consultant ahead so it was no surprise that Dr James was waiting at the entrance of the Emergency Ward with a gurney and two other ER nurses when they arrived.

The nurses assisted in getting Sapphire out of the car and in settling her on the gurney. The couple held hands as they watched their daughter being wheeled off by the nurses even as the Doctor promised that all was going to be well.

Dr James soon returned minutes later to inform them she was stable but they had to run some tests to find out what was wrong. John hurried to make payments for the tests and as soon as he returned to the Reception and sat down beside his wife, she shifted towards him silently.

He looked up at her face and he guessing her silent plea to be held, reached out to her with his right hand and pulled her to him.

She laid her head on her husband's chest quietly: Closing her eyes to savor the moment.

"How are you feeling?" He asked quietly.

She sighed with her eyes still closed. "Strangely tired."

"We'll be fine. Sapphire is fine." He reassured as he rubbed her shoulder with his free hand.

Thirty minutes went by but neither had Dr James nor any of the nurses approached them.

Megan opened her eyes; "I don't think i can sit here not knowing what's going on."

"Hmmm." John murmured quietly.

"Can I go to the Hospital chapel?" She asked without turning to look at his face.

"Need to consult the Greatest Authority?" He asked softly.

“Something like that.” She replied.

“I would never stop you, he gave you to me.” She heard a smile in his voice so she slowly lifted her head off her husband’s chest and looked at him. He was grinning widely.

“What is it?” She asked.

“You look beautiful for a strangely tired woman.”

She blushed. She moved to ease out of his hold.

“Not so fast, beautiful.” Confused, she looked up at him but before she could ask him what he meant, he leaned in and brushed his lips against hers: so quick it could be missed by the people around them. She smiled as he loosened his hold on her. “Go talk to Our Father.”

She nodded as she stood up.

“We’ll have our own talk here. Someone needs to be around when the Doctor comes for us. I will find you when he comes out.” He added tiredly.

“Thank you.” She replied before walking away.

Megan entered the Building noiselessly and looked around. She sighed in relief when she realized she was the only one inside the Chapel. Immediately she stepped in, she felt herself relaxed and wondered why.

The sanctuary was beautiful no doubt but there was something about the atmosphere.

It felt Divine.

For the next few minutes, she could talk to her Heavenly Father without any distraction. She could cry her heart out if need be.

Yes! She was very much in God's Presence.

She looked around the building as it was the first time she would step foot in it. She had always known the hospital had a chapel but never had any reason to enter the building; until that moment.

She noted the fact that the Benches were arranged in three Columns, with the middle one directly opposite the Pulpit.

She moved towards the left and the middle column, and eventually found herself walking between the two columns. Silence prevailed in the building save for the sound of the heel of her flat sandals against the tiled floor. She walked towards the altar determinedly but stopped few rows away from it. She turned and slowly entered the third row of the middle column. As soon as she hit the bench, she felt tears roll uncontrollably down her face.

Staring at the altar in silence, she said; "Lord, I'm sorry but I'm scared."

"I'm scared the doctor will say my girl is really sick." She closed her eyes as if in pain.

"I'm afraid of what those test results will reveal." She sobbed.

"Lord, I'm afraid because..." She let her voice fade out.

I'm listening, daughter. Why are you afraid?

"Lord, I'm sorry but I feel like this is happening because of what happened between my daughter and Jane." She sniffed.

Megan, Sapphire is forgiven.

‘I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more ...’

For I have forgiven her wickedness and I remember her sins no more.

“I’m sorry Lord. I shouldn’t allow fear in the first place.”

Yes. Remember ‘For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.’ Sound Mind is what I have given to you.

Peace is what I have given to you.

“Yes Lord, I need Peace. I have another precious gift of yours in my womb.”

“Lord, I feel weak. I need your Strength.” She cried out.

My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

She then committed all into God’s hands: asking him to take control of whatever would be happening.

Unbeknownst to the interceding mother, a young man walked into the Chapel using the door on the Right hand side of the building. He could easily pass off as a Medical Doctor since he had a White Coat draped over his T-Shirt.

He walked towards a Grand Piano that was settled at the front of the Right Column: which was the left hand side for anyone who stood on the altar and faced the pew.

A stool was positioned in front of the large instrument, so he eased himself gently onto the stool and struck a key on the musical instrument.

Megan had just rounded up her prayer when she heard the sound.

In surprise, she lifted up her head and saw him. She wondered how he had come in without her hearing his footsteps.

She gently relaxed. At least she had enjoyed the space she needed.

She sat for some seconds watching his every move. He obviously had difficulty deciding what to play. By his demeanor, He didn't know someone was watching him. He probably thought he was alone in the building.

Megan was feeling better, so she cleaned her face with her handkerchief and stood up to go. Dr James should have gotten something to tell them by now.

“Simply Trusting Everyday;” the young man started as he played along.

Megan stopped.

“Trusting through a stormy way; even when my faith is small; Trusting Jesus that is all.”

She didn't know when she hit the bench back.

“Trusting as the moments fly; Trusting as the days go by; trusting him whatever befall; Trusting Jesus that is all.”

Tears rolled down her face as she closed her eyes and listened as he sang through the four verses of the song.

After that, the man fell silent and just played the prelude. Seconds later, he suddenly stopped playing.

Megan opened her eyes to see he was now looking towards her direction. He had seen her. She sought for words to say but couldn't find any before he started playing the refrain again.

“Trusting as the moment fly,” he sang as his eyes encouraged her to sing along; “Trusting as the days go by; trusting him whatever befall; Trusting Jesus that is all.” She sang along in tears.

They sang the refrain one more time before they ended the song on a soft note.

“Thank you and God bless you.” Megan eventually said. At that moment, she felt like a river of peace had been unlocked within her.

The man smiled. “Amen.”

“Why did you come here?” She asked thoughtfully. “I mean what made you come here? You came at the perfect time.”

He chuckled at her look. “All the Glory is to God. I just felt the urge to spend my break time here. It has been a long time since I played the Piano.”

“Oh Wow.” Megan looked awed.

“You know what? I realized my fingers just played that song across the piano, so i just gave in. The truth is I couldn’t even control it.” He explained as he stood up and shoved his hands into his side pockets.

“That song is a message to me. Trust me when I say I am strengthened.” She said from where she sat.

“I’m grateful the Lord drew me here with a precious soul in mind.” He said walking towards her.

“I’m thankful the Lord is here with me.” Megan added smiling.

“Yeah! I need to go back to the Laboratory.” He said suddenly.

“Oh. I already concluded you were a Medical Doctor because of your white coat. Or do you just want to make a stop at the Lab? ” She asked.

The young man laughed. “My name is Chris. I’m a Lab Scientist.”

“I see. Don't let me be a bother. Take care of yourself.” She smiled as she waved him off.

“And you too.” He replied as he walked past her and out of the chapel.

“Thank you Lord.” Megan said and she stood up to leave when her phone chimed in her clutch purse.

She decided it could be a message from her husband so she hurriedly brought her cellphone out.

She was wrong. It was a message from an unknown number.

She sighed as she tapped on the message to view the complete text. She started reading.

Hi. This is Dorothy, Jane’s mother.

Megan paused. Why would the woman contact her? Had Jane told her parents what happened during Sapphire’s visit?

She decided to sit back as the message was worth reading patiently. She continued;

If I'm right, your daughter should be complaining of stomach pains, diarrhea and showing other symptoms by now.

Megan frowned. She read on; *Jane told me about what happened between her and Sapphire.* Okay, but what has that got to do with the stomach ache?

My daughter had been having stomach issues and weeks ago we had to rush her to the hospital from her school. Aren't you concerned that both girls are presently in a hospital?

Megan felt blood drain from her face. Sapphire had mentioned something like that too. But how did Dorothy know Sapphire was presently in the hospital?

She read the next line.

She blinked. That one line was enough to make her throw up.

“Jesus! Ha! No!” It couldn't be. She had to read that line again.

No! Not her daughter.

“Megan, forget that one line for now. You need to finish reading this message.” She told herself.

She read on;

We wondered how Jane came about it and discovered that our Chauffeur, Seth had been having carnal knowledge of our daughter for sometime. Turned out he transferred it to my daughter and mine to yours. Infact Seth's family contacted us that he's dead.

What?

He didn't even know anything was wrong with him as the symptoms didn't show up early.

No! It had to be a Lie. Her head was throbbing heavily.

I know you find this hard to believe but Sapphire has been infected. Please take care of her. We plan to fly Jane out for treatment as she showed symptoms really late and she is really deteriorating. Please contact us if you need any help.

Megan dropped her phone on the floor in shock.

The woman had to have typed nonsense. Lies!

She bent down to pick up her phone and quickly grabbed her purse. Her eyes caught the piano at that moment as she remembered the moment she had spend talking with God and her encounter with Chris.

She shivered. She had to know what the doctors knew; not the lies Dorothy had sent her.

Yes! She had to know the truth. She would believe only the truth.

She stopped.

The truth? What if the truth was bitter?

Well, she just had to find out. She turned and walked briskly out of the Chapel.

CHAPTER NINE

Chris walked back to his office in high spirit, whistling as he went. He couldn't help but think back to the woman he had met at the Chapel and said few words of prayer for her.

He walked into the Laboratory as the Head of the Department was preparing to go out with a paper in hand. "Chris, you came at the right time. Kindly get this result to Dr James. He has been on lookout for it."

"Alright Sir." Chris collected the paper and turned back.

Few minutes later, he was knocking on the door to Dr James' office. The man himself opened the door as he was also about to step out.

"Good Evening Sir, I have a result from our HOD." Chris said handing the paper over.

"Thank you." Dr James collected it and immediately opened it.

Chris couldn't help but stretch his neck in a bid to see the conclusions on the paper. He wondered what the test could be about, that His Boss had monitored it personally.

His eyes widened as he caught the name 'Megan' as the mother's name of the patient and wondered if the woman he had just recently met hadn't told him her name was Megan.

"This isn't good." Dr James said jolting Chris back. The young man's eyes darted quickly to the HOD's conclusion.

"Oh No!" he said even as the older man closed the result and looked outside the door thoughtfully.

“I need to see the parents.” Chris muttered under his breath.

Dr James walked past him and out of the office even as Chris turned and followed him at a distance. It couldn't hurt to confirm if his suspicion was right.

He watched as the Doctor called a man sitting at the reception.

“I don't see the woman.” he breathed in relief as the doctor and the man returned to the doctor's office.

Gratefully, he turned to go back to the Laboratory. He had passed the doctor's office and was about turning into another hallway when his eyes caught Megan walking in hurry towards the office.

He stopped. “That's the woman.”

He watched as she opened the door and entered.

“Oh God!” he whispered as he prayed the couple would handle the news well.

With a mental note to pray for the family, he rounded the corner and walked away.

Megan stood behind her husband in silence as they watched the doctor write a report in their daughter's Case note.

She could have caught her husband before the doctor went for him but she had needed a visit to the restroom.

She desperately wanted to show him the text message; to scream at the doctor to say whatever it was he was writing down but it was like her tongue was tied.

Dr James finished writing and closed the Case Note. “Mrs Anderson, please have your seat.”

“No. I prefer to stand.” She said with a forced smile on her face.

“Okay.” The doctor said as John looked up at her in concern.

“The thing is... ” The doctor was obviously careful with his choice of words.

"Please say whatever it is." She wanted to scream out. Dorothy must have lied.

“We conducted some tests on your daughter and the result is quite shocking.” The older man said and started tapping his pen on the case note nervously.

“Please doctor, what are you driving at?” John asked as Megan waited in silence.

“The truth is Sapphire... the doctor kept quiet again, his eyes darting from husband to wife.

Megan couldn't keep shut anymore; “...tested positive for Chlamydia.” She completed.

Both the Doctor and her husband looked at her in shock.

”Positive for what?” John blurted out looking at his wife in horror.

“How did you know?” Dr James asked with jaw dropped.

John looked at the doctor in confusion; “What’s going on?”

The look of shock on the Doctor's face was enough answer for Megan.
“So Dorothy was right.”

Her head was pounding; Images were becoming fuzzy; the room was spinning all around her; and in seconds her feet gave way and she was down on the ground.

As she fought to stay awake, she heard the doctor and her husband scramble towards her. As the light faded and a tear slipped out of her eye, she whispered; “God, this is too much to bear.”

All that remained after that was darkness.

Few seconds later with the sun shining brightly at the horizon, Megan walked down a pathway passaged with beautiful flowers.

She wondered what had happened and how she had gotten there.

She remembered being in Dr James’ office with the doctor and her husband.

She remembered the fuzzy images, the spinning room and the darkness.
But where was she?

Deciding to find out, she walked on until she came to a large clearing. There at the center of the Clearing was a building. Excitement bubbled through her: she wasn’t there alone.

She took a step towards the building but stopped.

She looked at the building again. It looked like a Chapel and it felt strangely familiar.

She frowned thoughtfully. Where had she seen a Chapel like this before?

She blinked. The Hospital's Chapel? Yes, that was it. It looked exactly like the hospital's chapel but there was still something unique about the structure.

She took a curious step towards the Chapel and as if on cue, Soft music began to play from the building. She felt herself being drawn to it, so she just kept going.

The doors were closed but as soon as she was two feet from it, it opened of its own accord.

“Wonderful.” She said as she stepped in. The door closed softly behind her.

She gawked in awe as she looked around the Chapel. Once again she told herself the place looked exactly like the Hospital's Chapel but here within the wall was a greater Glory and Power.

The music still played on, so she closed her eyes and tried to feel its melody around her.

“I have been waiting for you.” A voice called from the front of the Chapel.

She was startled by the Authority and yet the Love in the Voice that she opened her eyes and looked towards that direction. Sitting in the third row of the middle column was a man.

Megan swallowed. That was exactly where she had sat in the hospital's chapel.

“Come.” He said without turning to look at her.

Swiftly, her feet responded and she found herself walking towards the row. She couldn't wait to see who he was.

Soon she was standing beside the row. She waited in silence.

Few seconds passed before he finally turned to look at her with a wide smile on his face. In response, Love swelled in her heart. It felt supernatural.

“I know you.” She whispered.

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” He said with a smile.

“John 10:14.” Megan added being encouraged by his smile.

“Yes. My children know me. When a Believer leaves the world and come to the place I have prepared for all of mine; the moment he sees me, he doesn't need an angel to tell him ‘This is your Lord.’ Why?” He stopped for some seconds. “He knows me; his heart knows me; and he has fellowshiped with me.” She nodded in understanding.

“Daughter, sit.” He patted the space beside him and Megan moved from the spot where she had stood for minutes and sat quietly beside him.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” He started as soon as she was seated. “Let's talk about Sapphire. How is she?”

Megan looked down and bite her lower lip awkwardly; “Lord, you know all things.”

She heard him chuckle softly beside her; “Yes. But to you, how is she doing?”

She looked up to meet his eyes and saw one thing: Love. She was encouraged to speak; “As of now, all I know is she is infected. I don't know if it's going to be worse like Dorothy said. It's...” Her eyes were glistened with tears and she was struggling to keep her composure.

“Daughter, whose words are you to listen to?”

“Your word, Lord.” She replied letting the tears slid down her face.

“Good. I have three questions for you.” He said and she immediately nodded in anticipation.

“Do I love you?” He asked and watched as a look of surprise crossed her face.

She sat up straight. “Yes Lord, I have never for once doubted your love.” The words were said with so much confidence that he smiled.

“Do I love Sapphire?” He asked without Megan failing to notice that his voice had tuned down a bit.

She nodded affirmatively with a big smile on her face; “Yes, with no shadow of doubt.”

“Now daughter,” his face was now serious but the Love was still there in his eyes; “Can you trust me with Sapphire?”

Megan smiled nervously; “Sapphire has always been yours Lord.” She paused and smiled broadly as beautiful recollections flooded her mind. “You gave her to us; you have kept and showed her your love right from her infancy; you gave Sapphire an amazing knowledge of you. Lord,

I have already trusted Sapphire to you. She is all yours as long as she lives and also eternally to dwell with you in heaven.”

He smiled. “Yes I know.” His face became serious once again. “Megan, can you trust her with me; to be with me a whole lot earlier than none of you ever thought or imagined?”

She looked at him in silence but she was clearly confused. He watched as she processed his question in her mind again.

Her eyes widened with understanding; “Lord...” That was all she could say before she started weeping profusely.

As she wept beside him, he put out his hand and patted her shoulders in a bid to comfort her.

She whimpered as she began to speak again; “Lord, you know the end from the beginning yet you have the power to heal her. Lord, I want that she be healed. I really do.” She sniffled. “But Lord let your will be done. You know all things Lord. Let thy will be done.” Even as she spoke she couldn’t stop weeping.

He didn’t stop patting her shoulders. “My Perfect Will Megan is that Sapphire comes home. Let me remind you of the prayer I prayed at Gethsemane: ‘Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.’ And God’s will was that mankind is saved and without shedding of blood there will be no remission of sin.”

“Everything that happens according to the Father’s will is never a mistake. If anything happens to any of my sheep and it looks to you sons of men like a tragedy, it is not. The devil didn’t succeed because nothing happens to my children without my permission.”

“My ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts.”

“I love you, John and Sapphire and I have your best interests at heart. I am interested in you enjoying all the benefits of being my sheep here on earth but I am much more interested in your getting to Heaven.”

“I love my children so much that if calling any of them home early will save his soul from eternal perdition, I will not hesitate to do so. Megan, my will is that Sapphire comes home.”

Megan understood so perfectly.

She sighed and even though it wasn't easy for her, she said; “Lord, thy will alone be done.”

He smiled and nodded in approval before saying again; “Megan, note my next words very carefully.” He paused for some seconds and continued when he saw he had her attention; “Have you ever heard of people who lived a short but impactful life? Sapphire will be one.”

“Already she has impacted lives but there are more to be impacted.”

Megan was clearly surprised; “But, how Lord?”

He smiled; “Have you seen people whose translation caused souls to turn to the truth?”

Megan nodded.

“They in death won more souls for me than in living?”

“Yes.” She answered quietly.

“Sapphire will be one.” She now looked at him in awe.

“Megan, I will give you a sign. It will start with Jane and her parents, and then it will spread like wildfire. There are souls that will come to the truth by her translation.”

“Jane?” She asked surprised.

“Yes, I want that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of truth.”

“Yes.” Megan said in agreement.

“I have an assignment for you. From this day, begin to make preparations to work on a biography for her; and one that you will write by yourself.”

Megan had a look of horror on her face; “Lord, I am not a writer. I don't even have the natural ability.”

He shook his head at her words; “You speak like Moses did years ago. I will help you daughter, because that biography will be published. I will breathe life into it and through those words men will be saved.”

That settled, Megan was thinking about finances again.

He looked unhappy with her and with a firm voice he said; “O ye of little Faith. I will sponsor it my own way. This is the Father's business.”

She nodded in submission.

His face was now lit up with joy; “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

“My daughter I am with you. No matter what people say, I am with you. You must tell all these to my son: John. You are one; so in telling you I have told you both.”

“Lord, letting a beloved go; letting a child go; it’s not easy.” Her eyes were once more stricken with tears.

He pulled her in for a Fatherly Embrace; “You have my comfort. For this loss, you will not only have double but triple blessings, even much more.” Peace flowed like in like River across her heart taking with it her fears.

He released her, gave her a final pat on the shoulder and stood up. “Megan, my grace is sufficient for thee.”

She laid her right hand on her chest; “Amen. Lord, I receive.”

“You need to go back now. Don’t forget any part of all I told you.”

He gave her a hand and she stood up. “I won’t Lord. I won’t.”

Then he smiled at her: A smile that held Love, Reassurance and with it a promise.

“Now go.” He said and in response she walked out to the space between the columns.

She took few strides towards the door; stopped; looked back again: there he was, giving her a convincing smile that he would always be there for her, for John and for their daughter.

“My daughter Remember, I am with you.” She heard audibly in her ears. She nodded and turned towards the door.

As she neared it, the door opened on its own accord again and she stepped out. It closed gently behind her.

As she walked down the path she had come, she sang softly; “Trusting as the moments fly; trusting as the days go by...”

Still singing, she walked towards a new dawn.

John stood up from the chair that was positioned beside his daughter's bed and sighed in frustration. He walked towards the window blinds as he sent a silence prayer to God for help and divine intervention.

The machines connected to Sapphire had not stopped giving signs that the heart of the patient on the hospital bed was still beating normally. All her vitals were very much stable. She had been placed in a private ward on John's request.

His wife was still out in the next room. The doctor had said she was fine: her body needed rest as she had been stressed due to her state. He had been reassured she would wake up in a better state.

John was doing everything he could to encourage himself and not forget that God was in control. He knew no matter what may have happened or will happen one thing was constant: God would glorify himself. If asked how, He didn't know.

He had placed a call to their Pastor, and the Minister had promised to pray along and also check in at the hospital in the morning.

One thing was certain. He and his wife had each other, they had the members of their Church Family who he knew wouldn't relent in prayers, above all they had God: All would be well.

A knock at the door brought him back to the present so he was at attention by the time it opened and a nurse entered.

He looked at her questionably when he noticed she was smiling; “Sir, your wife is awake.” He grinned widely at her words

“Thank you Jesus.” He said as he walked past the nurse swiftly into the hallway. His wife’s room was just two rooms away, so all he had to do was make a short walk.

The door was opened, so he walked in without drawing attention. Dr James was asking Megan some questions, while a nurse was helping her clean her face with a towel. It was then he noticed her face: She had been crying.

“Is she alright?” Three pair of eyes turned to look at him including Megan's.

“We didn’t hear you come in.” The wide-eyed nurse said.

“Yes, Mr Anderson. Your wife can be out of her bed tomorrow morning. No matter what happens, she is to stay in bed till then.” The Doctor explained.

John moved towards the doctor; “As long as I’m here, she will. Thank you very much Doctor.”

The Doctor gave him a slight pat on the shoulder; “You are welcome. I need to discuss with you so you both will have an understanding of what we are dealing with as regards your daughter.”

At that point, Megan started weeping. John moved towards his wife who was still lying on the bed; “Please calm down.”

The doctor felt sorry for them that he sighed; “It’s going to be alright. I have to go home now but when I resume tomorrow morning, we will be having a discussion. We’ll be talking in detail about her treatment. We have put that on hold till she’s awake. I don't know why she is still

unconscious but she is fine in there. I believe by tomorrow morning she will come around.”

“Alright Sir.” John said gratefully.

“I will be taking my leave now. Stay strong, Mrs Anderson. God is in control.” Megan nodded in reply as he bade the couple ‘Good night’ and he stepped out.

“Well-done, its being a long evening.” John heard the doctor say to his staff just before he closed the door behind him.

As soon as they were alone, John pulled a chair close to his wife’s bed and sat down. He took her left hand in his hands; “Sweetheart, You scared me.”

She blinked; “I’m sorry. I was just shocked.”

“It’s alright.” He brought her hand close to his mouth and kissed it; “Sapphire needs us now than ever before. I can’t cope if you fall sick on me.”

“Yes, she needs us.” She replied somberly.

He must have heard the urgency in her voice because he immediately called; “Megan...”

She cut him off; “Sweetheart, we need to talk; Like really talk.”

He frowned: one that told her he didn’t like the fact she was changing the topic. “You are right. Plus you haven’t told me how you knew about the infection.”

“Oh that? You got my phone?”

“Yes.” Not letting go of her hand, he used his right hand to bring it out of his pocket.

“Check the last message. It was sent by Jane’s mother.”

John looked really dumbfounded as he unlocked the phone. “Wait a minute. Don’t tell me Jane infected Sapphire.” He now looked dazed and angry.

Megan nodded.

“Oh God.” He groaned as he searched for the message, found it and he read. Absentmindedly, he let go of his wife’s hand.

Megan waited in silence to watch his reaction.

At first, there was a look of horror on his face; then fear.

Astonished, He looked at his wife; “This was what you dealt with on your own?”

She smiled weakly; “I didn’t get to show you.”

“Lord have mercy.” He said as he bowed down with his head on her bed.

“John, there is more.” The tone of her words had him lifting up his head.

“I had a revelation. It was so real.” That had him sitting up.

“Sweetheart, I need to sit up.” She said as he stood up to give her a hand. He used the two pillows on the bed to support her back in a bid to make her more convenient.

“Thanks dear.” She said.

He pulled his chair closer and sat down. “You have my attention.”

Megan smiled; “John, I saw the Lord. I saw Christ...” She started and she didn’t stop until she had told him everything: leaving nothing out.

John did not interrupt her. He just listened though his face showed his emotions.

“This is too much for me to take.” His eyes glistened with tears.

“He gave us promises Sweetheart.” Megan said putting her left hand on her husband's shoulder and rubbing it slightly.

“So we just wait for her to pass?” He asked gravely.

“No.” She said firmly.

“We continue her treatment because there is work to be done. God knows what he is doing.” She explained.

“You mean the biography?”

“Yes.”

“Are we going to tell her?”

The tears were back now as she shook her head; “I don’t know. John, I don’t know.”

He nodded and silence prevailed for some seconds as he watched his wife’s face.

“How did I get blessed with a woman so strong?” He asked with a thin smile.

Holding her husband's hand, she smiled through her tears and asked; “And how did I get blessed with an amazing husband and a girl who loves the Lord?”

He grinned at her without answering.

She continued; “Sweetheart, God is not leaving us in the dark in this matter. Things could have happened his way without us seeing it coming. He is an Unquestionable God. He doesn't need anyone's permission before he does things.”

“But God told us.” John completed with a nod.

“He told us and sweetheart, that means a whole lot to me.” She said with a large smile through her tears.

He stood up and sat down beside her on the bed. “Come here, beautiful.” He called as he pulled her into his embrace.

“It’s going to be alright.” He said, though more to himself than to his wife.

They prayed together and before they slept John told his wife he would wake up at intervals to check on their daughter.

Even if the size of the hospital bed was nothing compared to their bed at home, husband and wife slept holding each other.

They slept trusting that God had their best interest at heart.

CHAPTER TEN

Dr James studied Sapphire's case note as he waited for The Andersons' to make their appearance.

Megan had been discharged that morning as she was feeling better.

As soon as he resumed that morning, the Chief Nursing Officer on duty had told him that Sapphire had woken up that morning.

The good news was the fact that the girl had requested for a warm bath, had a light breakfast and went back to sleep. All that was left to do was to discuss details with her parents', then her treatment would commence in earnest. If he had to wake her up to administer her first dose, so be it.

There was a knock on the door at that moment and he knowing that would be the girl's parents' told them to come in.

The door squeaked silently as it was pushed open and he watched as John assisted his wife into the office. He pulled a seat out for her to sit on while he also helped himself into another chair.

"Thank you very much, Doctor; for everything." Megan said as soon as she was seated.

The doctor smiled; "It's my job. Plus I have been Sapphire's medical physician since her birth so it's just natural that I make sure she is hale and hearty."

The couple nodded in agreement.

"Okay;" Dr James started, "I know you might have Goggled up what the infection is all about..."

“We haven’t.” Megan cut in.

“We haven’t had time to think about that.” John explained with a thin smile.

Dr James nodded; “Oh! Okay. I understand. A lot happened yesterday.”

John looked at his wife briefly; “Yeah!”

“Anyway, let me just give you a brief overview of the infection we are dealing with.” He looked from husband to wife as he said that.

Megan sat back comfortably as he began; “Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection as you might have known.”

John nodded in agreement while Megan just folded her hands.

The Doctor relaxed into his chair before speaking on; “It’s actually common in sexually active teenagers and young adults. It is a bacterial infection which can be transmitted through unprotected sex, sharing of sex toys that are not washed, one’s genitals coming in contact with the genital of someone who has been infected and so on.”

“The shocking truth is even without penetration or ejaculation it can be transmitted.”

He sighed deeply; “Well, some of its symptoms are pain in the belly or pelvis, eye discharge, inflammation or redness of the eye, genital pain and some other symptoms. Some people don’t notice the symptoms or sometimes the symptoms might disappear which doesn’t actually mean the infection is gone. If left untreated it can spread to the womb and cause Pelvic Inflammatory disease. (PID)”

“Do you have questions from what I just explained?” Dr James asked.

John looked at his wife; “No Sir.” Megan replied quietly.

“Great. I’m sorry but I have been wondering...” The doctor began, using his pen to tap the surface of the case note nervously.

Megan looked at her husband’s face briefly with a sigh in preparation for the question she had feared the doctor would ask. John gave her a thin encouraging smile.

“Do you perhaps have an idea of how Sapphire got infected?”

“I mean your daughter is a wonderful girl so it has actually left me thoughtful and confused.” He kept silent then and looked from husband to wife; “If you don’t want to talk about it, we can...”

“No. There is nothing to hide.” John said quietly.

“Okay.” The doctor nodded.

“Doctor, the thing is Sapphire made friends with a wrong girl: a girl who had been sexually active with the family’s chauffeur without her parents’ knowledge. Our daughter made a visit to their house and the girl got her involved in some things.” John explained gloomily.

“That’s sad. So I’m taking it the man infected the girl?”

“Yes. He didn’t make it.” Megan answered.

“That’s terrible then. He probably didn’t take note of the symptoms.”

“That or the symptoms reflected late.” Megan said.

“Well, God will take control.” Dr James prayed.

“Amen.” The couple replied.

“Alright, let us talk about the treatment.” The doctor spoke on again; “Chlamydia can be effectively treated with antibiotics. 95% of infected people get cured if they take their antibiotics correctly.”

“As soon as we are done with this discussion, Sapphire will start her first dosage of Azithromycin or doxycycline; whichever one I feel looks right for her.”

“For how long is the treatment going to be?” Megan asked.

“The truth is there is no special treatment for chlamydia and the tablets might be taken for about 2 weeks. After treatment is completed, we redo the test again and hopefully by that time the infection will be gone.”

“Hopefully!” Megan muttered under her breath.

“Yeah.” The doctor said with a reassuring smile.

“It’s alright. It is well.” John said.

“So let’s make a trip to her room together.” Dr James said as he stood up and led the couple out of his office. He walked ahead of them to Sapphire’s room. They met the girl fully awake but lying down quietly.

“Mum;” She called as soon as they walked in. She struggled to sit up but Megan rushed to her side to give her a hand; “Steady, girl; let me assist you.”

“But I don’t really feel sick.” Sapphire frowned looking round at their faces.

Dr James smiled as he looked at the monitoring machine beside her bed to check her vitals; “That is very possible my young patient but your

system isn't feeling so strong, so you have to abide by my instructions; Alright?"

She nodded silently.

"Good of you. A nurse will be here real soon with a sachet and you are going to take two of it for now with some other drugs until I say otherwise."

She nodded again.

A knock sounded on the door just then and a nurse opened the door and entered.

"Here is a Packet of azithromycin tablet Sir?" She said as she stretched the drug towards the doctor.

He collected it and in turn stretched it towards Megan.

"Excuse me Sir?" The nurse stammered.

"Yes?"

She blinked; "I'm thinking that four tablet at once will be too much for her."

"Definitely, she'll be taking two." He heard her sigh in relief and smiled at her thoughtfulness; "I pray she doesn't have any form of allergy. She doesn't really react to drugs, but we can't conclude for sure since she hasn't taken strong antibiotics like this before. That's one of the reasons she's still here: To observe her reaction to the drug."

"Okay Sir." She nodded as she helped Megan discharge water from the water dispenser into a cup while the mother removed the tablets for her daughter.

“Thanks.” Megan said as she collected the cup with water in it and assisted her daughter in taking the pills.

“Sapphire, you are going to be alright soon. Okay?” The doctor said.

Sapphire nodded with a wide smile. Megan felt a flicker of pain.

“I’ll be going for my rounds now. I will check on you guys later.”

“Thank you very much Doctor.” John said.

“My pleasure.” He replied with a grin and left the room with the nurse walking briskly behind him. John and Megan fell into various thoughts then.

“I will be fine right? Mum?” Sapphire asked jolting them back.

Megan gave her a heartening smile; “Baby, God is in control.”

Sapphire nodded as she looked at her parents’ quiet features.

“Mum, I want to go back to sleep.” She mumbled quietly.

“Alright.” Megan said as she helped her lay down comfortably.

“Dear, I think I need to go home and pick some few things for us.” John said giving his wife a hand.

“Dad, can you bring my Bible with you?” Sapphire asked.

“Of course.” He replied.

She smiled at him as she closed her eyes.

“Honey, can you help me bring my Laptop when you are coming back?” Megan asked in whisper.

John gawked at her; “What are you...” His words sobered in surprise; “You want to start writing the biography?”

“Yes. The earlier the better John. She needs to help me with facts.”

“Okay.” He nodded as he moved to go.

“When I return, you can go home; you can even stay the night.” He offered.

She shook her head in protest; “No. I don’t think I can sleep at home knowing she’s here.”

“Plus when last have I slept in that room without you by my side.” She blushed.

“That’s my girl.” He winked.

“I will get you something to eat when coming. Will Boiled potatoes and roasted chicken do?” He looked at her with a soft gaze.

Megan gulped and whispered; “Can you get it? Like really bring it here?”

He smiled at her behavior just then.

“I love seeing you so gentle like this.” He said softly and pulled her into his arm.

She looked deep into his eyes. She didn’t know when she licked her lips expectantly.

He chuckled softly as he tilted his head closer and kissed her full on her lips.

He was breathing hard by the time he released her few seconds later. “Anything for you sweetheart.” He whispered before pecking her on her forehead.

“I’ll be back.” He let go of her and turned to go.

“Take your time John.” She called after him.

“You meant to say I shouldn’t be long right? I will be back before you know it.” Laughing deeply, he gave a mock salute and exited the room.

As soon as her husband stepped out, Megan’s face became sober as she took a seat beside her daughter and watched her sleep.

She closed her eyes. Lord, I think I understand how Abraham must have felt when you told him to give you Isaac. How had that man done it? This isn’t easy Lord.

My grace is sufficient daughter.

“My beautiful daughter; God’s precious gift to me...” She said as her eyes shimmered with tears.

She bowed her head beside Sapphire and prayed silently; “Lord, release upon me all I need to fall in track with your will.”

“Help us Lord to walk in line with your plans.”

“Help us Lord to do faithfully that which you have committed in our hand. Release strength Lord.”

She let the tears flow.

Little did she know that minutes away, her husband was also praying that same prayer.

Few hours later, Megan picked up her journal and pen and started drawing up how the biography would be: its contents and the little details she could think of; she would take note of other things as they come to her mind.

Some memories got her laughing; some made her cry.

She had just finished penning down something when Sapphire jerked violently from her sleep. The monitoring machine connected to her also barred in alarm.

“Sapphire...” Megan called as she stood up, quickly dropping the journal on the side drawer.

She looked at Sapphire in alarm: The girl was shivering violently, her face bedded in sweat.

Megan looked at the monitoring machine in fear. Even though she didn’t know how to read the vitals, she could tell that her daughter’s blood pressure and heart beat were fluctuating rapidly.

She rang for the nursing station immediately.

Before she could return back to her daughter’s side, the door opened and about four nurses rushed in.

“What happened?” The Nurse who had attended to her a day before alongside the doctor asked as they all moved towards the girl.

“She just jerked from her sleep.” Megan replied disordered.

“This is not good!” Another of the nurses exclaimed.

“What is it?” Another asked and they moved close to see whatever she had seen.

“Which drug is she on?” The Chief Nursing Officer asked.

“Azithromycin.” The nurse who had brought the drug in few hours before said.

“Dr James is not going to like this.” The CNO pouted thoughtfully; “Please ring for him. This is serious.”

Megan stood there praying silently as it appeared that the nurses had forgotten she was present in the room.

She couldn’t help but tell herself that God wouldn’t take her daughter just yet.

Silently committing all into God’s hands, she excused herself from the room to give her husband a call.

Dr James had just finished his rounds and entered his office when the hospital intercom rang out; “Code white; Code White; Code White.”

“Pediatric medical emergency?” He frowned as he turned back and dashed quickly to the nurses’ station.

“Which room is that?” He asked the only person he met there.

She looked at the central monitor briefly; “Room 6B Sir. Four nurses including the CNO reported there minutes ago.” She said.

Sapphire! He muttered under his breath as he made a beeline for the room. Whatever would have made most of his nurses including the CNO be in that room couldn't be good.

He found the door opened when he got there and entered; "What's wrong?" He asked and they immediately cleared out for him.

He moved towards the girl and one look at the girl was enough for him to realize he had made a big mistake.

"Geez!" He looked at the medical monitoring machine for her vitals.

"It's the drug right?" One of the nurses asked.

Four pairs of eyes turned to glare at her.

Megan walked in just then and didn't fail to notice the tensed atmosphere of the room; "What's going on?"

Dr James turned to her; "It's going to be alright. Just..."

"Megan..." John hurried in at that moment and seeing the number of people in the room quickly looked at his daughter in dread.

"Mr & Mrs Anderson, I know this is not going to be easy but could you sit on the bench outside the door?" Dr James sent a silent plea to John with his eyes quickly darting to Megan.

John understood.

"Okay." He said as he took his wife's hand in his and led her out of the room. He used his free hand to close the door behind them.

Silently, they walked towards the Bench. He assisted her to sit down and also sat down beside her. She leaned on him immediately.

“John, it’s not time right?” She asked.

John swallowed as he looked down at the floor swiftly before closing his eyes; “Megan...” What would he say? He himself needed answers.

God, what should I say?

With eyes still closed, there was a brief replay of all Megan had told him in his mind.

“John?” Megan called in tears.

He opened his eyes; “I just know it isn’t time yet. There are still things to be done.” He said reaching forth to hold her hand.

“Right? That was what I was thinking about too.” She muffled beside him.

He squeezed her hand fondly; “Lets’ just trust God, okay?”

“God is in control.” She said silently.

“Yes he is.” He said as he kissed her forehead.

“How did you get here so quickly?” His wife asked.

“I was about to leave the house when you called so all I had to do was beat speed limit to get here.” She heard a smile in his voice and chuckled.

Before she could reply, the door opened beside them and the CNO and another nurse rushed out as if on errand for something. Husband and wife fell into various thoughts just then.

Megan sighed as she thought about the fact that waiting for news of whatever was happening to their daughter was frustrating.

She then told herself they had no choice but to wait.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Dr James looked at Sapphire in concern as he waited for the arrival of the nurses he had sent on an errand.

He looked at the monitoring machine: fast heart beat.

He used his stethoscope to listen to her heartbeat: it only confirmed what he had seen on the machine.

He looked at her skin: it was clammy. Sapphire had anaphylactic reaction: he was now sure of it. Shaking his head with the knowledge that he was dealing with a Severe and potentially life threatening reaction, he prayed that things would not go out of control. If not handled well under certain circumstances, it could lead to the death of the patient. He couldn't lose Sapphire. No!

"Where is Nurse Daniela? They should be back with the auto-injectors by now." he asked the two other nurses who were with him irritably.

As if on cue, the door opened and the nurses arrived with the injectors in hand.

The Chief Nursing Officer gave him an apologetic look; "Sorry Sir, it has been long we made use of it so we had to ..."

"It's okay. Let me have them." He cut in calmly as the nurse handed them to him. He collected them, put them in his pocket and got to work.

"Let's put her in a recovery position so her airway remains open and clear." He instructed.

As soon as they had done that, they connected fluids into her system to increase her blood pressure.

“Which type of auto-injector did you bring?” he asked the CNO.

“Epipen Sir.”

“Okay.” He replied as he brought one out of his pocket and pulled off the blue safety cap. The nurses quickly pushed aside the cover cloth on Sapphire’s body. Nodding thankfully, Dr James positioned the tip of the injector few centimeters away from her outer thigh and jabbed it into her flesh.

Silence prevailed as he firmly held it in for 3 seconds before finally removing it. He immediately stretched it towards the nurse who stood directly beside him. She collected it and discarded it.

They waited as he studied her vitals. After 5 minutes, the symptoms had not improved so he administered the second one. He prayed silently as they waited.

“Let’s keep an eye on her heartbeat. We will have to do CPR if it suddenly stops.”

1 minute;

2minutes;

3 minutes; then her breathing returned to normal.

“Thank you Jesus.” The CNO said under her breath.

Dr James released the breath he had been holding in, he then spoke; “Let’s give her an antihistamine possibly Loratadine to relieve the symptoms plus it’s a non-drowsy one. We’ll switch her antibiotics to erythromycin.” He stopped suddenly; “Why didn’t I think of that before?” He shook his head in disbelief.

The Chief Nursing Officer chuckled; “Well done Sir.”

He smiled at her; “Good job CNO.”

“Is she the only one here?” one of the nurses whispered irritably.

Dr James grinned at the nurse; “Alright. Good job everyone.”

The nurse who had spoken smiled and hurried out of the room coyly. Sapphire turned in her sleep just then.

The CNO shook her head; “Who on earth will believe we were actually trying to rescue this girl minutes ago?”

The doctor nodded; “Thank God her mother was near to raise an alarm.”

“Talking of parents, her parents must be worried by now.” He said as he checked her vitals one more time, nodded in satisfaction and turned to leave the room.

“Please come back in about an hour to give her the medications i mentioned.” He said as he walked out.

“I will make sure of that Sir.” The CNO nodded as she walked after him. The rest of the nurses tailed behind them.

As soon as the door opened and the medical team filed out, John and Megan stood up and moved towards them.

“Everything is under control.” Dr James began.

Megan breathed in relief.

“Come with me to my office so we can discuss things. You can check on her later.”

“Alright.” John nodded. Megan looked like she would argue with the doctor but kept still. They followed him quietly to his office and got seated.

As soon as the doctor got behind his table, he remained standing and started apologizing for the mistake on his end; “I should have just gone with another antibiotic.”

“Guess you wanted the infection to leave quickly.” John joked gently.

“It was a serious situation. I mustn’t make that type of mistake ever again; In fact let me note this in her case note now.” He said as he took his seat and searched for the folder on his table. He found it and quickly wrote the report.

Having done that, he closed the folder and set it by the piles of case notes on his table. “Okay. That allergy is called anaphylaxis.” He waited for them to take that in and seeing their confused looks continued; “It is a medical emergency and can be very serious if not treated quickly. Treatment is by immunotherapy and we had to administer two Adrenaline injectors before Sapphire’s vitals came back to normal.”

Husband and wife looked at each other in surprise.

“That reminds me, now that we know she has the tendency to have this kind of allergy, I strongly recommend that you purchase auto injectors for her; Preferably Epipen: the type we used to treat her. It’s best she has two on her everywhere she goes.” He advised.

Megan looked horrified; “You mean just like asthmatic patients go everywhere with their inhaler?”

“Exactly.” Dr James nodded.

“So have you changed her medication?” It was John who asked that.

“That was necessary but apart from the antibiotics she will also be on loratadine tablets to totally subside the symptoms.”

Megan sighed; “It is well.”

“I believe things are under control.” The doctor encouraged them.

“Amen.” John nodded.

“Can we check on her now?” Megan asked.

“Yes.” The doctor replied standing up to lead them out of his office.

John put his hand out to stop him; “Don’t let us be a bother. If we have any question we can ask any of the nurses.”

“Alright then; and please get something to eat.”

“Yes. I have something for us in the car.” John replied.

“Great! I will see you later.” The doctor replied and turned back.

As they walked side by side, Megan’s hand found her husband’s and she said softly; “Trusting Jesus that is all.” John nodded beside her as they entered their daughter’s room.

Sapphire was sleeping soundly when they got there. After being reassured she was alright, the couple strolled out to the car park to bring in the things John had gotten from his short trip home.

They prayed together for some minutes, committing the situation into God's hands and after that the couple devoured the meal John had bought from a Restaurant on his way back. They didn't forget to leave their daughter's portion.

Mrs Smith had just finished marking her students' class works when her mind wandered to the fact that two of her girls had fallen mysteriously ill in the space of two weeks.

Jane's mother had been nice to contact her the day before and had simply told her Jane had an infection. Mrs Smith had sent her regards to Jane and promised to pray for the girl but for Sapphire, She had no idea what was going on with the girl.

She let her eyes wander to the girls' seat which was now occupied by some other two students. Emotions welled in her heart as she pictured the day Jane had joined the school and how the girls had clicked. She recalled the few times she had called them to order in class. She remembered Jane's action, then Sapphire's respectful attitude. She smiled; those girls had to be okay.

The bell for lunch rang at that moment jostling her back to reality. She looked up to meet her students' expectant faces. Could they go for lunch?

She nodded and laughed as they all stood up excitedly and most of them half ran out of the classroom.

Silence prevailed as the teacher arranged the notebooks on her table. She was still busy with that when a knock on the classroom door caused her to look up: it was Frank.

"Stressful Day?" The young teacher asked with a pitiful look.

“Not really! I just miss two of my girls.” Or should I say one? Even with the fact Jane can be rude sometimes, I still miss the girl. She smiled at her own thoughts.

“And which of them?” He asked putting an end to her thoughts.

Her face looked thoughtful; “Sapphire and Jane: the new girl.”

Frank’s face held a look of disbelief; “Wait! You mean they left the school?”

She hissed; “I didn’t say that Frank.” She looked at him with a frown; “The girls are ill, At least from what I know.”

“Oh!”

Her voice softened a bit; “Jane’s mother contacted me but I think I have to reach out to Sapphire’s parents myself. Sapphire never misses school.” She crossed her legs and sat back comfortably in her chair.

Frank let his weight rest on the door frame; “You can check her file. I’m sure her parents’ contact will be there somewhere.”

“Yes. Let me do that right away.”

“I hope you are well aware Mrs. Ruby has to give you a note before that woman in charge will let you access any file?”

“Yes. I guess I have to just give it a shot.” She shoved her shoulder.

“Good luck at that. I have to go.” He winked at her.

“Thanks for checking on me. See you later.” She waved and watched as he stepped back into the hall way and walked off.

Mrs Smith breathed in relief and stood up. She prayed things would go well in the administrative building as Frank was right: without a note from the Headmistress, it would be difficult accessing a student's file. She really couldn't be left in the dark as regards Sapphire.

As she walked on, she prayed within her; "Lord, whatever is going on with Sapphire, please take control."

"I can't help feeling like both girls have the same illness: the same infection; but God, Sapphire is your child Glorify yourself."

"I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

She felt herself relax as she walked into the building.

It had been hours since Sapphire had the anaphylactic reaction and Megan prayed within her as she worked that no complicated situation would arise again.

She had been typing on her Laptop for hours working up the points she had noted in her journal.

Few minutes later, Sapphire woke up and had her portion of the boiled potatoes and roasted chicken. The girl then wondered what she was working on.

"A biography." Megan simply told her. Her daughter looked at her strangely and just nodded.

Megan felt she could put that moment to good use; "Baby?"

"Yes Mum."

“Can you tell me some things that have crossed your mind since all these stuffs started?” She watched her daughter’s face for her reaction.

Sapphire wiggled her fingers awkwardly; “Well, one of the most common things that has crossed my mind is couldn’t God had done it that I and Jane wouldn’t meet at all?”

She listened to her daughter.

“Like God knows all things, he knew that would happen.”

Megan looked thoughtful but didn’t say a word so Sapphire continued; “Couldn’t he have just done it that all those bad scenes wouldn’t occur at all?”

Megan sighed; God had definitely warned her the morning Sapphire was meant to visit Jane: the nudging was there.

God had made it happen that Jane hadn’t planted the idea of the visitation into Sapphire’s head from school.

He had done it that she herself was the one who answered Jane’s call.

The uncomfortable feeling was there. The fact that even if she had said Sapphire shouldn’t go, the girl wouldn’t have argued could have aided her decision.

“God warned us, at least he warned me.” She pushed her left hand through her hair as if in anguish.

Sapphire looked at her softly; “But God is still faithful right? He definitely still loves me?”

Megan pulled her seat closer to the bed; “Yes sweetheart, don’t ever doubt the love of God.”

Her face became serious; “Sapphire, the truth is no believer ever lives without facing temptations but God is so faithful that he wouldn’t allow us to be tempted beyond what we can take; beyond the grace and strength he has provided for us.”

“So i disappointed God? I failed him?” Sapphire welled up in tears.

Megan whispered; “Sapphire, when we fall into sin, yes we disappoint God. But you know what? We disappoint him more when we remain in that state of unrighteousness. At that point, one’s soul is in danger.”

“Sapphire, you realized your wrong; you knew you had sinned against God but more than that you repented and asked God for forgiveness and baby, that gives God Joy.”

The words were getting into the girl but she just listened without saying a word.

Megan continued; “Let me share with you something the Lord told me the evening we brought you in, that was before any of us knew what was really wrong with you.”

“I had been wondering before the Lord if all these was happening because of what had transpired between you girls; but God said; ‘Megan, Sapphire is forgiven. I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.’ He said he had forgiven your wickedness and he remembers your sin no more.”

“So my dear, just forget the past. Live this present moment in a better way. Love God and just remind yourself that you are dear to him and he holds you in his arms.”

Sapphire smiled; “Thanks Mum.”

“You are welcome my daughter.” She squeezed the girl’s hand adoringly.

The ringtone of Megan’s phone interrupted that moment and she used her right hand to pick it from the top of the bedside drawer where it was. Sapphire watched as she stared at the number on the screen.

“I don’t know who this is. Why don’t I find out?” Mother and daughter smiled at each other as she answered the call.

“Megan Anderson on the line.”

She listened to the person on the other end and smiled broadly; “Mrs Smith;” Sapphire sat up at that.

“Careful;” Megan whispered before speaking on; “its nice hearing from you. I have heard so much about you from my daughter.” She grinned at Sapphire when she realized the girl was trying to follow the conversation.

Sapphire decided the teacher must have asked after her as her mother explained to the woman that she was ill and was on admission in a hospital. The women talked for few minutes.

“We would appreciate your prayers. Thanks for reaching out Ma.” Megan said before she ended the call.

She smiled at her daughter; “She sounds like a woman that will make a good friend.”

Sapphire pouted; “She is a wonderful woman.”

Megan chuckled; “She is probably your best teacher since you started school.” She eyed her daughter with a smile.

“You are right.” Sapphire replied as she looked around the room as if she was seeing the room for the first time.

She looked thoughtful for sometime before finally turning to her mother; “Mum, where is Dad?”

“Oh! He said he needed a nap and he’s doing that in his vehicle.” She laughed.

Sapphire joined her; “He really did looked tired the last time i saw him.”

The laughter died down and Megan looked at her; “Yes. Is there something you want him to do?”

Sapphire shook her head; “No. I guess there is something I want to tell both of you.”

She looked around the room again; “I guess not.”

She sighed; “I don’t know. Mum, I want to sleep.”

Megan frowned; her daughter was acting strange and that was the second time she would catch her looking around the room oddly. What was she looking for?

She looked round the room herself; Could Sapphire be seeing things? It couldn’t be.

She looked around the room again, hoping to catch anything out of place but found none.

She turned to look at her daughter but found her watching her intently; “Come on Mum, forget i said that.” Sapphire said with a smile as she closed her eyes.

Megan sighed as she couldn't help but wonder what was going through her daughter's mind. She once again told God to take control.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Sarah Lann spun the executive leather office chair she sat on as she studied the script her younger sister who doubled as her manager had given to her.

The script was for a Christian Movie titled ‘Theophilia’ and she would be acting the central character of the movie.

The story written by a Nigerian Christian Writer centred around a lady who was kidnapped and all efforts to rescue her proved abortive. She had suffered a lot in the hand of her abductors including being raped twice. A lot happened to her after that.

The script ended with the lady forgiving the man who hurt her most amidst the abductors. It was meant to be a message of Love and forgiveness.

“Interesting.” Sarah nodded as she closed the script and placed it on her table. She had two weeks to study her lines before shooting began. If anyone ever told her that she the Actress who had won the Jockbel Art 2018 award would become a Christian Actress, she would have taken it up with the person but that step had become imperative as soon as she surrendered her life to Christ.

All that happened all thanks to God, her younger sister and a certain young girl.

“Sapphire.” She smiled as she twirled her chair round.

She needed to meet that girl even if it was once. She wondered how the girl was doing.

There had to be a way to contact her. Hadn't she used her mother's Instagram account to message her? "Yes!" She said excitedly as she stopped the chair and picked up her phone from her work table.

"What was her name again?" She tilted her head to a side as she accessed her Instagram account and searched through the people she was following.

She hissed; "How will i get her account now?"

She scrolled down and her eyes caught the name 'Megan Anderson.'

"Yes, this should be it." She tapped the profile and went through her chat with the person. The messages confirmed that was who she was looking for.

There had to be her email or phone number on her profile; she thought as she looked through Megan's bio.

"Gotcha!" She mouthed excitedly as she picked her pen and a sheet of paper and scribbled a number down.

"I will make sure to call her before the end of today." She soliloquizes.

"Call who?" A voice asked outside the door and the door opened. Her sister, Jane walked in.

Megan watched as she pulled out the chair opposite her and sat down.

"Megan Anderson. Sapphire's Mother." She answered her question.

Jane looked at her questionably; "I can't seem to figure out who that is."

Sarah shook her head; "How can I ever forget a girl like that?" She smiled.

“Oh!” Her younger sister said as understanding clicked; “The girl who had a part to play in your conversion?”

Megan smiled as she gave her sister a thumps up.

“You really should give the girl a call and tell her how you are doing.” Jane said.

“Yeah! I will call her before the day runs out.”

“Well, the producer of Theophilia called to ask for your comments as regards the script. I told him you haven’t told me anything.” As soon as Jane said that, her eyes caught the script on the table.

“It’s a great story. It’s just that my lines are so much.” Megan shook her head.

“I know. The story is long.” Jane nodded in agreement.

“Shooting starts in two weeks. If nothing props up, I will be able to get myself prepared.”

“God will help you.”

“Amen.”

“I have to run. I and Alfred have a counseling session with Pas Solomon this afternoon.” She said referring to her fiancé.

Sarah pouted; “It’s alright. Enjoy yourself and greet the love of your life for me.”

Jane chuckled and rose up; “I will. Sis, get yourself aligned.” She said as she walked towards the door.

“My man will come at the right time. Thank you.” Sarah replied with a wide smile.

“It’s okay.” Jane said as she stepped out of the office and shut the door behind her.

Sarah sighed as she picked up the script to study her lines.

It had been three days since the doctor changed Sapphire’s prescription and Megan could only watch as her daughter’s condition relapse. The medical team were doing all they could and even though drugs were being given to her at appropriate time, Sapphire would feel better a day and be down the next. Dr James had said there was nothing they could do but trust God for a miracle.

Megan stood up from where she had been working on the biography. She yawned; soliloquizing that she was famished. Her husband had been the one running the errands for days but he had needed to report at work that morning for an impromptu meeting and would be back anytime soon. She could hold on till he arrived.

She looked at her system thoughtfully; she only had a chapter to write before the draft was completed. Whatever happened from that moment would determine what she would write in that last chapter. She needed a professional editor and a publisher. Even the funds for publication weren’t available but she knew God would work out a miracle.

She moved towards the water dispenser and poured herself a cup of water. As she drank, she looked at Sapphire who was reading her Bible on her hospital bed. She smiled; even in the midst of it all, her daughter still held on to her faith.

Sapphire looked up from the Bible and looked around the room in silence.

Megan stopped; what was it about Sapphire and the room? For days the girl could just stop talking and look around the room. There were times that as soon as she woke up the first thing she would do were to observe her environment. Whatever was going on Megan prayed her daughter would trust her enough to tell her.

“Mum;” Sapphire called.

“Yes dear;” She moved to stand at the foot of the bed as her daughter looked at her.

“There’s something I haven’t told you and Dad.” Sapphire began as she looked about the room again.

Megan winced; was her daughter about to tell her what was going on? God sure answered that prayer so quickly.

“Mum;” Sapphire called again as Megan turned her attention to her.

“Since I regained consciousness three days ago I have been seeing strange things.”

Megan had a look of shock on her face.

For a moment, Sapphire looked around the room with a grim face before turning to her mother again; “I know it's strange but i have been having visitors in my room and they keep increasing daily. All they do is smile and sing.”

Megan still didn’t say anything.

Sapphire continued; “Mum, I feel they are angels. They have beautiful countenances. They are so huge.”

Megan sighed thoughtfully; what her daughter was saying meant one thing: She was going home soon.

She couldn’t just keep quiet when her daughter was telling her something this important to her so she smiled and said; “Really?”

“Yes. Mum.” Sapphire light up at that moment.

“The atmosphere in this room is so peaceful. Can’t you feel it?” Her daughter asked excitedly.

Megan chuckled; Sapphire was right. The atmosphere in the room felt special.

As she nodded in response to the girl, her eyes glistened with tears at the thought that she was indeed losing her daughter.

Not able to hold it in anymore, she decided she could at least not cry in Sapphire’s presence and moved to go out of the room. As she opened the door to step out, she heard Sapphire gasp in surprise.

She turned back in tears; “What is it? Are you alright?”

“Yes.” Sapphire looked excited; “You know the man who gave me the golden spectacles?”

Megan nodded.

“He just stepped in front of you as you moved to go out.”

Megan gaped in awe. “Really?”

“Yes.” Sapphire chuckled.

Megan smiled; “I was about to go and cry my eyes out but why do I feel better suddenly?”

“That’s probably because he’s patting your shoulder and rubbing your back.”

Megan looked shocked; “Wow” She said looking into the thin air in front of her with a smile. She turned and walked towards the bed. She pulled the chair closer and sat down.

Sapphire looked on as her mother cleaned her face. She decided she had to let Sapphire understand the implication of what she was seeing.

“Sapphire, the Lord told me something the evening I passed out.” She started.

Sapphire looked at her silently as she listened. She suddenly looked around the room in confusion.

“What is it?” Megan asked.

“The atmosphere is solemn.” The girl replied.

“Hmm! They definitely know about what I’m about to tell you.”

Megan nodded. She looked at the thin air round the room as she struggled with whether to tell Sapphire or not.

“Mum, what did the Lord tell you?” her daughter called.

Megan held her daughter’s hand gently; “I’m wondering if he would love me to divulge such special information.”

Sapphire shoved her shoulder; “Well, he came to me while you were in the other hospital room.”

Megan listened with rapt attention.

“He said something like he would pay you a visit too. Not long I started seeing angels.”

Megan sighed; “Lord, this isn’t easy. My daughter is really going?” Tears found its way out of her eyes.

My grace is sufficient for thee.

She sniffled; “Okay, did he tell you anything?” She asked her daughter.

Sapphire looked thoughtful for a moment.

The door opened quietly and Megan turned to see her husband walk in quietly. Sapphire was lost in thought so she didn’t see her father standing and leaning on the door.

Sapphire continued absentmindedly; “He told me he knows I am repentant and he has forgiven me.”

“Wow.” John said. “Thank you Jesus.”

Sapphire looked surprised; “Dad, when did you come in?”

He laughed; “Not too long. Just ignore me and continue with what you are saying.”

Sapphire smiled; “Okay. So he told me I wouldn't be on this sick bed for long. That it would soon be over.”

She swallowed; "He asked how it would feel to be with him a little earlier than I thought. I said 'well it's just gonna add some days extra to the time I would have used with him'. He laughed and said he'll be waiting for me. He hugged me after that and left."

Silence filled the room after that except for Megan's snuffle.

John felt a lump in his chest as he was doing all he could not to shed tears.

Sapphire looked at her parents grimly; "Mum, I don't know but am i going to die?"

Megan used her hand to blow herself like it could stop her from crying; "Lord..."

She sat up a bit and said; "Sapphire, lets just look at it this way. God is going to give you eternity plus extra days in front to use with him in heaven right?"

Sapphire sniffed in tears; "Mum, i will miss you."

That broke Megan down. John himself couldn't hold back anymore.

"I will miss you too sweetheart." Her voice was shaking; "We will miss you, more than you can imagine."

I will be there for you. She heard the still small voice said.

Megan wiped the tears on her face; "The Lord will comfort us. You are going to a better place."

Sapphire only nodded.

The family prayed and talked some more after that.

Megan decided within her that the conversation they just had was what she would write in the last chapter of the book.

As they talked, a phone rang and Megan knowing it was hers stood up and picked the phone from the side drawer. Seeing a strange number, she excused herself from the room and went out.

“Megan Anderson on the line.” She said as she sat down on the chair outside the room.

“Good Afternoon.” It was a woman’s voice; “This is Sarah Lann.”

Megan frowned; “Sarah Lann?”

“Yes, the same Sarah your daughter chatted up on Instagram.” The woman laughed.

Megan’s eye widened in recollection; “Oh! Good afternoon, how have you been?”

“I’m doing great. Thanks to God. How is your daughter?”

Megan kept quiet for some seconds before answering; “She’s doing good.”

“Can I speak with her?”

Megan struggled within her whether to tell the woman about Sapphire's condition or not. She swallowed; “Miss Lann,”

“Please you can call me Sarah.”

“Alright. The thing is Sapphire is ill and she has been admitted in a hospital for sometime. The situation is kind of serious.”

“Really? I’m sorry. But she’s gonna be okay right?”

Megan shook her head as if the woman could see her.

Sarah understanding her silence said; “What a sweet girl. This is serious.”

Megan nodded; “Yes, it is.” Megan nodded.

“Can I come over? If you don't mind, i really want to meet her?”

Megan hadn’t seen that coming; “Are you serious?”

“Yes, I am. Don’t worry about accommodation. I’ll lodge in a hotel. I just wouldn't want to crowd your space if you don’t want me there.”

Megan smiled; “There is no problem really. You can come over if you want to. Sapphire is going to be glad to know this.”

“I'm excited to meet her too. Can we make this a surprise for her?” Sarah sounded excited.

“Of course. I will tell my husband if you don’t mind.”

“No problem. Just make sure Sapphire doesn’t know.”

“Its alright.”

“Thank you very much Mrs Anderson. I will be there tomorrow by God’s Grace.”

“Alright. I really appreciate your call.”

“It’s my pleasure. Take care.”

“Bye.” Megan said before she ended the call.

She smiled; Sarah Lann was coming over? John would find it hard to believe.

She stood up and moved to join her daughter and husband inside the room. The duo were talking and laughing when she opened the door.

She nodded as she looked at them; “We will be fine.” She reassured herself and closed the door behind her.

As the plane made its way in the sky, Sarah Lann looked outside the window beside her into the white clouds.

As soon as she had gotten off the phone with Megan, she had booked a flight online. Remembering she hadn’t asked for details of the hospital Sapphire was admitted in, she sent Megan a message and the woman had sent her the address and Sapphire’s room number. With that information, she booked for herself three days stay in an hotel not too far from the hospital. If she would be staying longer than that, she would settle that later.

She had thought of what to bring for the girl and couldn’t come up with any. Her sister had told her her presence there would be more than enough for the girl. Jane had been sad to know about Sapphire’s illness.

Sarah looked at her phone for the time: 9:46 am. The plane would be landing anytime soon. She closed her eyes as she thought back to her conversation with Megan and how she had sounded on phone.

Will a sweet girl like that die? She shivered at her own thought.

How will her parents fare? Lord, please intervene.

A voice sounded on the plane intercom just then telling the passengers to tighten their seat belt as the plane would be landing soon.

In minutes the plane had landed and Sarah was soon out of the airport. A car with a designated driver was waiting for her as soon as she stepped out; thanks to her sister's thoughtful arrangement.

The driver drove her straight to her hotel and also assisted her with getting her luggage to her room. She then told him to come back in an hour.

Within that hour, she had her shower and a late breakfast. She contacted Megan and informed her that she was in town and would drop by at the hospital anytime soon. Not too long her driver arrived and he drove her to the hospital.

Without difficulty, she found her way to the nursing station and asked for direction to the room.

She had remembered to wear a hat and use her sunglasses, so she had no problem with people recognizing her.

The nurse pointed towards a direction; "Just walk down that hallway, its the fifth room to your left."

"Thanks." She replied as she walked briskly towards that direction.

She stopped in front of the room where 6B was boldly written. With an exciting smile, she knocked on the door and waited.

The door opened and Megan with a sweet smile motioned her to enter.

“You are welcome.” She said as Sarah walked in and the woman shut the door behind her.

John was sitting in a chair and Sapphire was on the bed reading.

“Good morning.” Sarah said silently still standing; Megan smiled as they waited for Sapphire to lift up her head.

The girl looked shocked; “Mum! Is that Sarah Lann?” She screamed.

Megan nodded.

“Hello Sapphire.” Sarah chuckled as she moved close to the girl.

“Oh my God. Dad, she is the one.”

“Sarah Lann.” Sarah said as she put out her hand to shake John.

“Thanks for coming. My wife has told me a lot about you and of course i know of your conversion and all that.” He laughed.

“Yeah! Good really used your daughter for me.” She smiled. Sapphire was still looking at her in awe.

“Can i hug you?” She asked the girl. Sapphire nodded excitedly.

Sarah carefully put her hand around the girl. “I have been waiting to meet you.” She said as soon as she released her.

“I never thought I could see you in real life.” Sapphire confessed.

“Well, here i am.” The actress chuckled as she moved to place her handbag on the side drawer. It was then she saw the manuscript Megan had printed earlier that day.

“What is this?” She asked as she picked up the material and sat down in an empty chair. There were only two chairs in the room. John had stood up and eventually sat beside Sapphire so Megan could have a seat on the other chair.

“It’s the manuscript of Sapphire’s biography.” Megan replied silently.

“Oh!” She said as she opened it and browsed through the pages. Reading through some lines in the last chapter, she realized something: Sapphire had little time left.

Her eyes glistening with tears, she closed the manuscript and said; “I’m so sorry.”

“Its alright.” Megan shrugged her shoulder.

Sarah looked at the manuscript as an idea dropped in her mind; “Do you mind if I get this published?”

Megan looked at her in surprise; “Really?”

“Yes, or have you gotten a publisher?” Sarah looked from husband to wife.

“No. We are still trying to see what would happen as regards funds.” Megan replied.

Sarah put forth her hand and held Megan's hand; “Please, Let me do this.”

Megan looked at her husband and he nodded in agreement.

Megan shrugged; “It’s alright. Thank you very much.”

“Thank you. This means a lot to me.” Sarah said thankfully.

She stood up with the manuscript in hand; “I need to make a few calls.” She said as she excused herself from the room.

As soon as she got outside, she called her sister and gave her a brief of the situation of things. She requested Jane get a publisher who could get the book edited and published in a week.

Jane sounded surprised and said she would try her best. She had later called Sarah back and told her she had found someone.

She asked her sister to get the manuscript sent to her. They concluded on the arrangement and Sarah returned to the room to join the family.

She told them the outcome of her calls and asked how many copies should be made available.

“For now, 100 Copies.” Megan replied.

Sarah immediately texted her sister and reassured them work would begin on the book in earnest.

Megan looked at her husband with a look that said ‘God had fulfilled his word to take care of the publication of the book.’

John smiled; “God is faithful.”

“Yes he is.” Megan nodded.

Three days later.

Sapphire held her mother's hand with her right hand and her father's with her left hand. They had made her felt loved as this day came close. It would happen anytime soon, she could feel it.

"Mum, Dad I love you." She said silently.

Her mother wiped a tear that fell from her eyes as husband and wife nodded in silence, sharing the moment without needing words.

They were wrestling with emotions.

Dr James had excused them, giving them this time alone. Before he left, Megan noticed he took a sample of Sapphire's blood. What he needed it for he didn't say.

"I'm tired Mum. I'm..." Sapphire whispered before coughing.

Megan sniffed; "It's okay to go home." She whispered softly.

Lacing her fingers with her parent's, the girl closed her eyes.

With a smile on her face, Sapphire took her last breath on this side and her first on the other side.

The monitoring machine barred in alarm.

Megan shivered as she kissed her daughter's face. In tears she said; "We love you."

John wiped his eyes as he walked over to his wife's side. His hand slid behind her neck and turned her face to his shoulder.

The door opened and the doctor entered with Sarah Lann. Megan cried against her husband as the doctor covered the girl's body.

Sarah couldn't hold back tears herself.

The doctor cleared his throat and said; "Sapphire Anderson. Date of death: Thursday November 1 2018 at 10:54am."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” The pastor said as the graveside service concluded.

Megan turned the pages of the funeral booklet in her hand. It felt odd in her hand. The past days had gone by quickly as they prepared for today. It's been four days since her daughter passed.

Jane Lann had come into town that morning with copies of the published book. Sarah had sent an emergency message to her as soon as she learnt of the date of the funeral, requesting that the books be made available that morning.

Jane had argued that it would be impossible but had called her back to inform her that the publishers said they would try. They had made it possible even if it had cost the actress extra charges.

Megan looked at her husband who was beside her in silence. She reached for his hand as the pastor made final prayers for the family.

“There is a New Name written down in Glory.” began to play. Megan and her husband had chosen the song themselves.

She took a deep breath and turned back to concentrate on what was going on. Sapphire was being buried next to her maternal grandparents.

The pastor motioned the couple over to make their goodbyes. They moved towards the casket hand in hand.

Megan was the first to touch it. She wiped her eyes as her husband handed the flowers in his hand to her. She moved forward and placed it in front of the inscription already added to the headstone.

The couple moved back as the coffin was being lowered into the hole in the ground.

Megan cried for memories were pulled back to the present.

“It is well.” John said with muffled voice as he held his wife to himself.

“I miss her already.” Megan whispered against him.

“The Pastor will take care of the rest, let’s go to the chapel.” John said as he pulled his wife gently towards the chapel where the service had been held.

Megan looked back one more time and eventually allowed her husband to take her with him.

They walked into the Chapel as people greeted them. Megan caught Sarah and her sister as they distributed the book to people. The sisters had been of great support to them in the past few days.

“Mrs Anderson.” Someone called from behind them.

The couple turned to see Jane and her parents.

Megan didn’t know what to feel as soon as she saw Jane: Hatred, Anger, Envy. No. She would show the girl Love.

“I’m so sorry.” Jane said in tears as she moved towards them.

Megna pulled her in for a hug.

“It’s all my fault. I’m sorry.” The girl whimpered against her.

“You are forgiven my dear.” She released her as Jane's mother also hugged her. The men shook hands.

“Are you alright now?” Megan asked the girl referring to the infection.

“Yes. I don’t know why I’m healed. It should be Sapphire. Not me.” The girl cried some more.

“Jane, God understands okay.” Megan reassured.

She wiped the girls tears; “Have you been given the book?”

“Yes, we have a copy.” Jane’s mother replied.

“Please make sure you read it Jane.” The girl nodded in response.

Megan lifted up her head to see Mrs Smith and two other people: a young man and an older woman walk towards them. Jane and her parents also saw them Coming so they made their goodbyes and left.

“Accept my condolences.” Mrs Smith said pulling Megan in for hug.

“Thank you very much for coming.” John said as he shook hand with the other two people.

Mrs Smith turned to the couple. “This is Frank a teacher in our school and Mrs Ruby the headmistress.”

“Oh!” John said. Mrs Smith nodded.

“Sapphire was a wonderful girl. The Lord will comfort you.” Mrs Ruby put forth her hand to hold their hands.

“Amen, thank you very much.” Megan replied with a thin smile. The trio moved away from the couple then.

Megan looked around the chapel. People had turned up for the funeral than they expected: Church members; Sapphire’s classmates; their own friends and family; even the medical team who had treated her had all been present.

“Is Dr James still around?” Megan whispered to John.

Without answering, John pointed towards a direction. Megan looked up to see the man walking toward them.

“It was a wonderful service.” Dr James said as soon as he was in front of them.

“Yes it was.” Megan said.

“Thank you for every thing doctor. God bless you.” John shook the doctor’s hand.

“It was my pleasure. God be with you, Mr and Mrs Anderson.” He patted John’s shoulder.

“Amen.” The couple replied.

“John, i have something to tell you guys.” The doctor said.

The couple looked at each other at his tone.

“What is it?” John asked.

The doctor moved nearer; “I don’t know if you noticed but before your daughter died I took a sample of her blood.”

Megan nodded; “I noticed but it skipped my mind to ask why you did so.”

“Is there a problem?” John asked.

Dr James sighed; “I’m sorry I did this without your consent but it just occurred to me to test Sapphire’s blood again. So I did a chlamydia test.”

The couple gaped at him in shock.

“What?” Megan shouted.

“So what was the result?” John asked.

Dr James nodded before talking; “Negative.”

The couple stared at him in silence.

He spoke on; “Sapphire was miraculously cured of Chlamydia before she passed.”

Megan shook her head with eyes glistening with tears; “If God wanted her to live, he could have done that. His ways are not our ways.” John nodded in agreement.

“I’m sorry I did the test without your permission. I’m really sorry.”
The doctor said.

“It’s alright.” John put his hand out to shake him.

Dr James turned to Megan; “Please remember you are pregnant and take care of yourself.”

“I will. Thank you very much.” Megan smiled lightly.

They bid their goodbyes and the doctor left.

Sarah and her sister moved near just then and told them they distributed 98 of the copies and took one for themselves. Jane handed one to the couple.

“Thank you very much Sarah. Thanks Jane.” Megan said.

“It’s our pleasure.” Sarah replied as she and her sister took turns hugging Megan and shook hands with John.

“When is your flight leaving?” John asked.

Sarah looked at her wristwatch before replying; “In two hours.”

“We need to go and pack up at the hotel.” Jane told her sister.

“We’ll remember you in our prayers. Please take care of yourselves.” Sarah said to them.

The couple thanked them once again and the sisters left.

With a heart of thanksgiving to God for the hope of eternal life and a future filled with great promises, the couple walked out of the chapel hand in hand.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Megan closed the biography of Sapphire that she had written and wondered at the fact that God had helped her. As she read, she had asked herself if really she had written the book. It could only be God.

It had been one week since Sapphire's burial and Megan could only thank God because of his works.

Testimonies had poured in since the distribution of the book. It had started with Jane and her parents. A day after the funeral service, Jane's parents had called with news that Jane had surrendered her life to Christ after reading the book. Her parents had also made the decision later. Megan and her husband had sung praises to God that day.

Requests had even been made for more copies of the books by readers who wanted to give to their friends and families. Some people had even donated for the production.

The days went by slowly but with hope for them. The couple had comforted and loved each other in many ways.

"God, you are faithful;" Megan said softly.

John walked in just then; "A penny for your thoughts?" He asked.

She turned to her husband with a smile; "I'm thinking about God's faithfulness so far."

He nodded in response and stretched forth his hand toward her; She accepted it and he pulled her up to himself.

She looked at her husband as he traced her cheek with his hand. His warm smile curled around her heart.

“I love you with all my heart.” He whispered softly.

Megan blushed; “I love you too.” She whispered as she tilted her face towards his and leaned in for a kiss.

Seconds later, Megan’s stomach growled; John chuckled. He released her and grinned; “Should we eat out?”

“What will we have?” Megan asked excitedly.

“Boiled potatoes and roasted chicken.” Both said at the same time.

They looked at each other in amazement and burst into laughter.

8 months later.

“John, hurry.” Megan screamed as her husband drove towards the hospital.

Her water had broken that evening and in a flash John had bundled her into the car.

“Hold on. Here we are.”

John said as he drove into the hospital car park.

As usual Dr James was waiting due to the fact that John had called him ahead. The doctor opened the back door in a hurry as Megan let out a scream.

“Hold on.” Dr James said and both men assisted her out of the car.

John paced the front of the labour room. It's been two hours since Megan entered the room.

“Lord, please take control.”

A baby's shrill came from the room then, John's heart leapt in joy; “Thank you Jesus.”

He waited for the doctor to come with the news but no one came. He frowned; what was wrong?

Just then another shrill came from the room.

He stopped; he was hearing two different cries.

He laughed; “Twins?” He couldn't hold himself any longer.

He walked near the room and knocked on the door. A nurse opened from inside the room.

“Let him come in.” Dr James called from within. Without wasting time, John entered. He turned to take in the room. He saw two nurses each holding a child in their arms.

“Twins?” he asked happily as he moved near the nurses.

“No!” the doctor said with a wide grin on his face.

John frowned as he looked at his wife who was still pushing and screaming.

“I can see the head, push.” Doctor James urged Megan.

John blinked; “Another one?”

A nurse nodded.

“Oh my God.” He pushed his hand through his short hair.

Megan screamed as she pushed with all her might.

Dr James smiled; “You are doing good. One more push and he’s here.”

Megan gave a final push and another cry filled the room. The doctor collected the baby into his gloved hands.

John grinned widely; “Thank you Jesus.”

The nurses got to work of cleaning the mother and the children.

The doctor smiled; “Well done, Mrs Anderson.”

Megan gave John a warm smile; “Sweetheart.” He moved close to her silently.

Megan watched her husband as he bent down to her level and gave her a gentle kiss on her forehead.

“Thank you.” He whispered softly.

“We have triplets.” Megan said as tears of joy gushed out from her eyes.

“Yes, sweetheart. For our loss God gave us Triple.” he said. She nodded in tears.

“Mr and Mrs Anderson.” The doctor interrupted that moment.

They looked at him; “You have two girls and a boy. The boy was the one that arrived last.”

“Wow!” John said as Megan chuckled.

“God is faithful.” Megan said as she smiled at her husband.

“Yes, he is.” John said as he pulled his wife in for a hug.

God had their future clearly in his hand. He would also help them to take care of this one’s, even more than he helped them with Sapphire.

John swallowed with a smile; Their Sapphire.

THE END

**From The Author's Desk,
Nigeria.**

Dear Readers,

I want to say a big 'Thank You' to you for coming along with me on a journey through the pages of 'SAPPHIRE.'

I hope this story has touched you just as it has done to me.

I'm grateful to God, the source of my Inspiration and my Best Teacher.

As at the time I am writing this, this is just the longest and best story I have ever written. It can only be God.

I want to say a big thank you to all the Readers and Lovers of 'Sapphire' especially my blog subscribers who didn't stop reading despite the breaks and those who would drop their comments on the blog or private chat me. I'm grateful to you all. God bless you.

If you know you read 'Sapphire' and you were blessed in any way, kindly send a review to adebisimercyfunmito@gmail.com.

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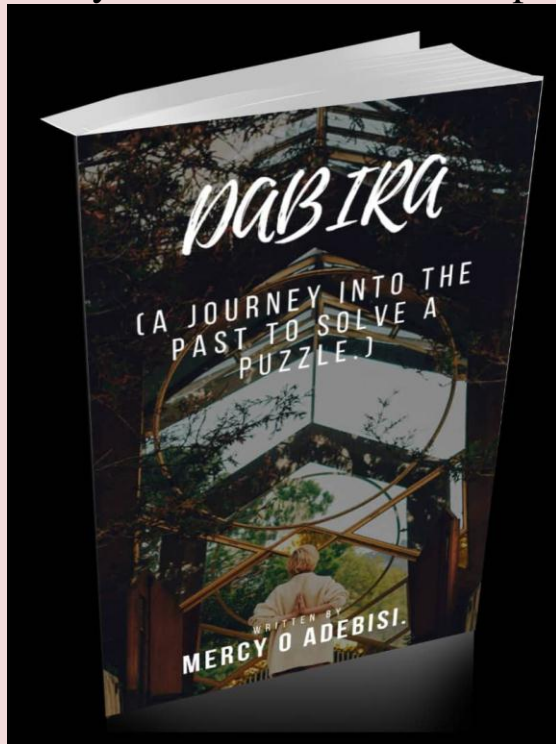
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