

MOSQUITOS

written by

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EXT. MANSION BACKYARD - NIGHT

On a wet season night, coupled with heavy downpour as usual, a mid-angle shot of a mischief of **RATS** approach a lone soggy **BISCUIT**. It's enough for some, but not all.

A fight ensues between the identical rats, spilling blood and quelling for the soggy biscuit.

A title card fades in as the rats fight.

"1951, Lagos, Nigeria. The second round of the colonial Nigerian election, under the newly established MacPherson Constitution is in months of commencing. The Yoruba-dominated Action Party, led by Mr Obafemi Awolowo, and the Ibo-dominated National Council of Nigerians and Cameroons, led by Dr Nnamdi Asikwe, dominate the western region elections. In a round where house of assembly seats are decided by elected ministers, where ethnicity comes first before ideology, politicking and cross-partying will decide the future of the nation."

The title card fades out, then suddenly someone crushes the biscuit, as they rush into a busy kitchen area.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The staff member leaves the kitchen, walking into a lavish, warmly lit living room, already filled with laughter.

A staff member grabs some bottles of drinks from a table, as three middle-aged men laugh with one another and leaves.

Among one of the men is **MR AMADI EGO**, an outgoing, business-savvy Ibo man wearing a lavish traditional attire.

MR AMADI

You're not believing me, I'm
telling you that I saw an Ibo and
an Hausa man in one of the
protests.

ONE OF THE OTHER MEN

(sarcastically)
So Bello allowed them leave the
north eh?

MR AMADI

You believe in Nigeria's
liberation, yet you cannot believe
a Hausa man being in the workers
union?

The two men chuckle, sipping on their now arrived tea.

MR AMADI (CONT'D)

All I'm saying is that in 1945, Nigeria finally figured out its greatest weapon. Which is its people. Full cooperation, no division. And now Zik wants to unleash that weapon against the British!

ONE OF THE OTHER MEN

Amadi, you know Obafemi wants the same thing.

MR AMADI

Let us not lie to ourselves, ***The Lagos Daily*** certainly *doesn't* want the same thing-

A knock on the door, leading to the hallway, interrupts him.

VOICE FROM THE HALLWAY

It's Folake sir.

MR AMADI

(excited)

Ah ah please let her in.

The door opens, revealing an early 20s biracial Yoruba woman. This is **DAISY ADEFOLAKE SOPE**. She wears a business attire, although a bit dishevelled in her appearance. She waits by the door.

MR AMADI (CONT'D)

Folake my dear how are you?

DAISY

(sheepishly)

Fine sir, just came back from work.

MR AMADI

Ah yes yes, gentlemen you are looking at the heir to *Ego Communications*. She will be the reason you can speak to your child all the way in London!

The two men laugh heartily, on par to seeing a girl play with boy toys. Mr Amadi's shocked with how much they're laughing. He notices Daisy's waning smile.

MR AMADI (CONT'D)
 (solemnly)
 She will surely do well in the Sope
 household.

An abrupt silence takes over the room for a beat

ONE OF THE OTHER MEN
 My deepest condolences...to both

Mr Amadi gets up as grabs a newspaper, heading towards Daisy.

MR AMADI
 Excuse me guys. I'll leave you with
 one question: Do you want a
 independent unified Nigeria or an
 already broken independent one?

Mr Amadi and Daisy leave the living room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mr Amadi towers over the silent Daisy. He notices the eye-
 bags, and the wrinkled clothing she's wearing.

MR AMADI
 Don't mind them. Mindless AP
 politicians. I'm hoping to use
 their only braincell to get them
 into the NCNC.

Daisy nods along, head down to the floor, chuckling.

MR AMADI (CONT'D)
 Are you ok my dear?

DAISY
 No no I'm fine, just a long day.

He stares at her for a beat, as he thinks. He hands her
 newspaper.

MR AMADI
 Don't worry we'll be done after
 this. Look at this article.

Daisy grabs the newspaper. It's a page from the **West African Pilot**. The article in view is titled "**The War has shown the Essence of Traditional Education for our Youth.**" The article is by **CHIEF AKUJI AJANI OLISA**.

DAISY
 Looks ridiculous.

MR AMADI

Yes, but a Yoruba chief publishing in the West African during election season? Why didn't he publish it at the *Lagos Daily*?

Daisy thinks for a beat.

DAISY

Who wants to learn about hut houses when they can learn about *Shakespeare*?

MR AMADI

Exactly, *The West African* will take any Yoruba politicians who go against the grain. So Folake, I've gotten a meeting with him, and I want you there to convince him to come see me.

DAISY

Wait you don't even agree with what he's saying.

MR AMADI

My dear, I just told those men that there were Hausa men in the 1945 strike. I have no idea who made up the strike but the point is to sound like a chairman, who can orate for his fucking life.

Mr Amadi opens the door to the living room.

MR AMADI (CONT'D)

The meeting is at 5:50 AM. I'm sure you can figure something out. Dapo will take you there.

DAISY

(whispering)

5:50?

INT. CAR - DAWN

The sunrise glistens on Daisy as she rigorously reads the article. It's a beautiful sunrise as the car drives along the lagoon side. A complete contrast to her stressed expression.

DAISY

(muttering)

"From the cataclysmic horror of the war, the facade of the British power has finally crashed, and the damage has fallen on the young men of Nigeria. It is time to evaluate whether an Independent Nigeria should teach our next generation a way of life based on brutality and selfish ambition-

Dapo, a relatively young man about the same age as Daisy, looks at peace as he drives. He looks up at Daisy, through the rear view mirror.

DAPO

Everything okay?

DAISY

Good.

For a beat, he looks at the road again. But as he looks on, his discomfort and anger forms. He hisses

DAPO

Folake, this is insane. How can you blindly follow orders from that man.

DAISY

Dapo, abeg I'm trying to focus.

DAPO

You don't even know why you're going instead of him.

DAISY

And he's paying your bills so you should watch what you're saying.

DAPO

He can fire me all he wants. I would rather live my life fishing on the lagoon.

DAISY

(disgusted)

So you can forever live your life being an uncivilized fool. Stop the car, I'll walk the rest.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAWN

Dapo stops the car, with a village within eye distance. Daisy walks out, slamming the door.

DAPO

Shame on the person who told you
your class determines your
happiness in life.

He turns back, and drives off away from the village.

She looks on at the hazy village, sighs, and throws the newspaper into the bush, heading to the village.

Approaching, the haze doesn't seem to be subsiding, still having a blurry view of everything in her sight.

In her view, a group of people pull a canoe towards the lagoon at the same time. She looks unto the lagoon, sees another group of people release the fish net at the same time. It's a beautiful site, but slightly uncanny.

Now within steps of being in the village, she sees the border between the sandy shore and the concrete road. She steps foot on the sand, and everyone immediately looks at her.

She's confused. The villagers all move towards the sides, leaving the middle open. A group of children walk towards her, smiling, and grabs her hand leading her into the village. They seems to be a large rash bump on their necks.

They lead her to wide Yoruba palace. A bungalow with a square front-yard overlooking the lagoon. The children immediately run away, leaving her looking at the open-doored dark entrance. She enters.

INT. CHIEF'S BUNGALOW - DAWN

In the room, which appears to be a living room, with just a large rug, calabashes on the rug, and towers of books and newspapers on the walls. There's but a sliver of sunlight, piercing towards the right corner of the room, showcasing the similar haze she saw outside.

There's a certain buzz in her ear that she hasn't been able to shake off since she got into the village, constantly swatting at her ear.

She looks unto the centre of the room, and sees a broad, dark-skinned bald man staring right at her. His eyes seems blood-shot red, grinning with a bright white sharp teeth.

This is **CHIEF AKUJI AJANI OLISA**, author of the *West African Pilot* article.

He grabs a paper, reading with a smile on his face

CHIEF AKUJI

"Dear Chief, I am pleased and honoured in the opportunity to be able to meet you. However, I cannot make it to Epe but I will be sending my dear assistant and relative of mine...

He takes a pause for the remaining part, looking to stress the next words of the letter

Daisy Olufolake Sope, to talk in my stead. I apologize for the short notice.

He pauses, looking at Daisy's sheepish smile, a lot less subtle in its discomfort.

DAISY

It's an honour to meet you Chief. I saw your recent article on the *West African*-

CHIEF AKUJI

Daisy...kini oruko. Tani o lorukọ rẹ iyẹn? Bakannaa jọwọ joko.

Daisy stands embarrassed.

DAISY

Sorry sir, I-I wasn't taught Yoruba when I was young.

The chief smile drops a bit, but hangs on. He motions to the rug in front of him. Daisy sits down.

CHIEF AKUJI

Who named you Daisy?

DAISY

My dad...He was a British colonial officer.

CHIEF AKUJI

Was?

Daisy looks really uncomfortable, picking at her nail sidewall, already bleeding from repeated picks.

DAISY

Yes sir. But really the article, It was so effortlessly written-

CHIEF AKUJI

Daisy please- do you mind if I call you that?

DAISY

That's fine sir.

CHIEF AKUJI

Daisy, I don't mean to pry but you look like you haven't had an honest conversation since harmattan.

The buzzing near her ear brings repeated swats around her ear. She looks to her right, and finds no flies anywhere. She looks back at the chief.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)

What happened to your father?

She pauses for a beat, feeling light-headed as she stares at the deep red eyes of the chief. There is a certain sincerity and honesty in his eyes that she notices.

DAISY

My-my mother stabbed him to death...She found out he was cheating on her back in England.

Daisy looks on, she feels a subtle tear drop falling on her cheek.

CHIEF AKUJI

Thank you for telling me. You see the article was really an accumulation of years and years of reflection, and lessons finally being learned.

He pauses, as she cries.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)

There is a haze present in Nigeria, a thick, humid one. So they're constantly preoccupied with themselves, figuring out to get out of this haze...

Daisy wipes her tears, and looks on to the right, and suddenly sees a **dense cloud of mosquitos** illuminated by the sunlight. She looks back at the chief

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)
 (more passionate)
 And our leaders are stuck in this
 haze too, focusing on themselves.
 But the sick thing is that these
 leaders seem to be directing their
 people into a deeper, deeper
 haze...

Daisy looks back, and the cloud of mosquitos is much closer to her, within steps away from her. She looks back at the Chief in deep fear.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)
 (getting heated)
 Do you know what the Oba of Benin
 said at the start of the war. He
 urged all Nigerians to bury their
 grievances with the British and
 fight against the evils of world...

Daisy looks back, and the cloud of mosquitos are next to her. The sound is so overwhelming, she cannot hear the chief anymore, but just a passionate mumble from his bright white fangs.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)
 And how many men of ours were
 killed-

Suddenly, a loud shout came from the front-yard, causing the chief to push open the window.

Outside are a pair of kids fighting over a catfish, despite one already having on. He leaps out the window, marching towards the kid with the additional catfish

EXT. PALACE FRONT YARD. DAWN

CHIEF AKUJI
 Dara, I told you. You always share
 your catch no matter what.

Dara still pulls the catfish towards him, increasingly stretching the fish to its limits.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)
 Dara, what are you doing? Let go
 now.

The chief grabs the kid by the neck. Daisy sees this, immediately snaps out of her dream state.

DAISY

Stop, let the kid go. Are you
insane? That's not how to teach
them, you sick man!

The chief drops the child, walking now towards Daisy. Eyes
red, body near total black, behind the sunrise.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Do what you want, but that's not
how to teach children. If he get
more catfish, then its his right to
keep it. You have no right to
threaten him. If anyone is in a
haze, it's you.

He freezes. A sudden realization has hit him. He looks back
at the crouching child. He walks back and consoles the child,
repeatedly apologizing. He carries him back to the bungalow.

INT. CHIEF'S BUNGALOW - LATER

They sit in silence for a beat. He consoles the child, as
Daisy looks at her right. The cloud of mosquitos are gone.
She's surprised.

CHIEF AKUJI

I'm sorry my love, it seems I took
things too far again. It's just
harder to live by your word after
all this years.

Daisy looks on confused. For a long beat, they both seat in
silence.

The chief gets up with the child, walking into another dark
room beyond the living room, with a cloud of mosquitos
following closely behind him.

CHIEF AKUJI (CONT'D)

I'll be going to Lagos to see Mr
Amadi in a few days. In the mean
time, I want you here with me.

DAISY

I-I don't think-

CHIEF AKUJI

I must go to bed.

Leaving Daisy behind, shocked with the recent events. Now
alone, she looks over at her left side. Outside are the
villagers staring under the dawn sky, like obedient rats.

MOSQUITOS - Feature Film Outline

ACT ONE

Seq. 01

The Zikist youth nationalist group torch an Ikoyi mansion meant for a British officer. The wrong target is killed. They flee as residents burn inside. Daisy wakes in a mansion beside an older man, rejects him, and tells him to contact Mr Amadi.

Seq. 02

She goes to work as a newspaper reports the Ikoyi arson. Jumoke urges her to attend a Women's Union meeting, but she refuses. She overhears her grandparents were among the dead. Amadi tasks her with bringing Chief Akuji to Lagos. In his village, the Chief agrees at dusk.

ACT TWO

Seq. 03

Daisy reviews the Chief's records on sacrifice and Benin. He stops her after she sees his late wife's photo. They sail to Lagos with a swarm of mosquitoes. At dinner, Amadi, Jumoke, Akintoye, and the Chief debate Nigeria's future: isolation, criticism, and industrialization. Toye dreams of a family in an independent Nigeria. That night, the Chief infects Jumoke as she sleeps beside him.

Seq. 04

Jumoke is taken to a crowded hospital with similar cases. Daisy accuses the Chief, who admits it and reveals plans to join the NCNC. She tells Amadi, who is pleased. Daisy finds her workplace empty. At the hospital, Jumoke is in a coma while Toye watches over her.

Seq. 05

Toye praises Jumoke's warmth and explains marrying her after the war. Daisy shares her love for Jumoke and reveals her history of abuse and isolation from her grandparents.

Seq. 06

Daisy confronts Amadi about adopting her. He explains their shared experience of ostracization, he as an Igbo man married into a Yoruba family. Daisy reveals she understands the cause of the epidemic.

ACT THREE

Seq. 07

Dawn. Amadi and Daisy see infected women and children leave the hospital. Toye arrives, saying he couldn't stop Jumoke. Daisy returns to the infected village, believing her immunity matters. The Chief reflects by the shore on his wife and a sunrise that changed his plans. Daisy says the past shapes the future, he agrees and says Daisy reminds him of her. He walks into the lake, drowning.

Seq. 08

Weeks later. Daisy studies the Chief's journals. Amadi discusses political victory and expansion of rural switchboards, but fears the country's future. Daisy suggests unity across Nigeria may still be possible. She leaves for a Nigerian Women's Union meeting, saying: as long as the sunrise remains, it is possible.