

# **THE AFRICAN MESSIAH**

by

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The following story is a fictitious depiction of actual events.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO (O.C.)  
Are you listening, Kwaku?

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

It's a rather small office in the heart of KULUNGUGU. On a thick leather office chair sits TAWIA ADAMAFIO, The Minister of Information. He reclines on the chair, his legs propped up on the huge desk before him. He smokes a pipe and blows the smoke across the table to where ANANSI sits.

The smoke puffs around Ananse's small head. He wears a necklace bearing the Gye Nyame symbol. He's Odomankoma's Mystery Messenger and Head-Weaver after all.

He nods in response. He's listening. Soaking it all in.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
So what have I told you?

ANANSE  
You want me to assassinate Nkrumah.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
Exactly.

ANANSE  
But why?

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
Why do you think?

Ananse raises an eyebrow.

ANANSE  
Boss, if I knew, I wouldn't have asked.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
Well, it appears that some of that wisdom you released into the world seems to have skipped our dear President.

ANANSE  
Hmm.  
I actually think he has too much wisdom. Like Papa Solo in the Holy Book; it's led him astray.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
Whether he has too much wisdom or no wisdom, he's not what Ghana needs right now.

Ananse sighs, visibly uncomfortable.

ANANSE

Can I also smoke my pipe?

Tawia nods. Ananse reaches for his belt and yanks a pipe from its holster. Tawia throws him a pack of matches. Ananse strikes the match and raises it to the well of his pipe. He huffs and puffs, heating up the pipe, before exhaling. Relaxing.

ANANSE (CONT'D)

Why me?

TAWIA ADAMAFIO

Do I have to explain everything, Kwaku? Aren't you the "Supreme Strategist?"

ANANSE

And you're the Minister of Information. Inform.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO

Hmmm...

The exploding bomb would inevitably cause Nkrumah's men to become aggressive in self-defense. Once the bomb is on its way to Nkrumah, my men would need a signal to get ready for an attack on the presidential convoy. What better signal is there than a bald man with a small head and a big buttocks walking up to the president? Your silhouette can be spotted from a mile away. Not to mention your celebrity status; surely, Osagyefo would welcome you with open arms.

ANANSE

They'll see right through me oo.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO

"Men commit evil at night, and children play in the moonlight." They won't suspect you, a man, to commit evil in the daytime.

ANANSE

But won't I die in the process? You're sending me to the slaughterhouse.

Tawia takes his feet off the table and leans in toward Ananse. He smiles.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO  
You'll be a hero, Kwaku.  
Just imagine...

He raises his arms in the air, envisioning a signboard.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO (CONT'D)  
"Osagyefo Kwaku Ananse, The African  
Messiah"  
Songs will be sung about you, poems  
will be written, plays will be  
enacted, your appellations will be  
on the lips of women for centuries  
to come.

Ananse smokes his pipe, taking it all in with a smile on his  
face. He stares dreamily at the peeling paint of the wall  
beyond, lost in his imagination.

TAWIA ADAMAFIO (CONT'D)  
So, what do you say?

Ananse looks at the Minister.

ANANSE  
You, my friend, are a very wise  
man.

INT. ANANSE AND ASO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ananse and his wife, ASO, discuss the meeting with Tawia.  
They lay in bed, lit dimly by a dying lantern.

ANANSE  
He is a very foolish man.

ASO  
Very, very foolish.

ANANSE  
Does he really expect me to kill  
myself? How can you entice me with  
praises and songs I'll not even be  
able to hear from the grave?

ASO  
So where's the bomb?

ANANSE  
Under the bed.

ASO  
AWURADE!

Aso leaps up from the bed, startling Ananse.

ANANSE  
Calm down, dear.

ASO

We are sleeping on a bomb and you  
want me to calm down!

ANANSE

It's asleep. I haven't triggered it  
yet, I'm not stupid. Come and lie  
down.

Aso hesitantly sinks back onto the bed.

ANANSE (CONT'D)

At least, I think it's asleep.

ASO

KWAKU!

ANANSE

(Laughing)

I'm kidding oo, Aso.

Aso looks him up and down and sucks her teeth. She lies back  
down and exhales heavily, trying her best to remain calm.

ASO

So what do we do?

ANANSE

I've been thinking...

Ananse sits up excitedly.

ANANSE (CONT'D)

"...Men commit evil at night, and  
children play in the moonlight,"  
correct?

ASO

And?

ANANSE

Don't you see? Children also play  
in the moonlight; they frolic about  
at night too.

ASO

So you want to put a child in your  
place?

ANANSE

Nobody would expect a child to act  
the fool in the daytime just as  
they wouldn't expect a man to  
commit evil in the daytime.

ASO

But how do we convince a child to  
do your dirty work?

ANANSE  
I've been thinking...

ASO  
Mhmm?

ANANSE  
Ntikuma...

Aso springs up from the bed, again startling Ananse.

ASO  
My friend!

ANANSE  
Oh?

ASO  
You better not be saying what I  
think you're saying?

ANANSE  
Madam, how would I know what you  
think I'm going to say?

ASO  
You want to send our son to the  
slaughterhouse?

ANANSE  
Father Abraham did the same thing  
and was blessed.

Aso places her hands on her head and looks up at the  
ceiling.

ASO  
Ei God, this my husband will kill  
me oo. This man will kill me oo,  
ei!

She then stares sternly at her husband.

ASO (CONT'D)  
My son will not be used like a  
sacrificial lamb!

ANANSE  
Okay, then think of something  
better.

Aso slowly sinks back onto the bed, deep in thought. They  
are quiet for a while, until...

ASO  
Elizabeth Asantewaa.

ANANSE  
Maame Ama's daughter?

ASO

She was telling me how excited she was to see Nkrumah pass by tomorrow. We can give her some flowers to give to Nkrumah, the bomb would be hidden inside. I'm sure she would love to hand Nkrumah the flowers if it means coming face to face with the man...

ANANSE

Ei, my wife is a genius oo!

ASO

Let me finish.

ANANSE

Sorry.

ASO

...And Tawia said he needs a signal, correct?

ANANSE

Correct.

ASO

So she has to look like you... You would have to put a pillow inside Elizabeth's dress to give her your abnormally large buttocks.

ANANSE

And what about my small head?

ASO

Aha, do you remember the song the Spirits by the water taught you?

ANANSE

I don't like where this is going, Aso...

ASO

Teach her the song, and sing it with her. That way, both of your skulls will fall off. You can then swap your heads. She would look just like you, and Tawia's men would get their signal.

Ananse strokes his non-existent beard. His eyes light up as he visualizes the plan.

ANANSE

...And I'd still be a hero. "The African Messiah."

ASO  
Exactly. Alive and well to witness  
your praises.

ANANSE  
(Smiling)  
Ei, Aso my love...

ASO  
Yes, my dear

He winces.

ANANSE  
...My back is itchy, scratch it for  
me.

EXT. KULUNGUGU - NEXT DAY

Ananse and Elizabeth are in a secluded corner, out of sight from the gathering crowd. He forces a large pillow into her dress to exaggerate her buttocks, and hands her the bouquet of flowers fitted with the bomb. She is unaware of the true intention behind the bouquet.

ELIZABETH  
They're beautiful.

ANANSE  
(Grinning)  
They're beautiful indeed.  
Now, quick, let's sing the song I  
taught you, the President's coming.

Together they sing: "We the Spirits, when we splash the river-bed dry to catch fish, we use our heads to splash the water..."  
Suddenly, their heads fall off. Elizabeth panics but Ananse rests his hand on her shoulder to reassure her. They swap heads and fasten them back on.

EXT. KULUNGUGU - LATER

The Presidential Convoy arrives. Kwame Nkrumah steps out of his car, waving at school children, a large smile on his face.

Aso and Ananse, who wears Elizabeth's head, watch on from a distance as Elizabeth, wearing Ananse's head and buttocks, walks up to the President with the bouquet in hand. Nkrumah bends down before her to receive the flowers.

NKRUMAH  
Ahhh, the great Kwaku Ananse! The  
One who manipulates creation from  
the fringes of a vibrant web! Thank  
you for the-



He is suddenly tackled to the ground by CAPTAIN SAMUEL BUCKMAN, and the bomb explodes.

Dust and shrapnel fly through the air, and panic ensues. Tawia's men charge towards the convoy to subdue Nkrumah's men. From amidst the chaos, a frightened voice calls out...

VOICE (O.S.)  
HE LIVES! THE OSAGYEFO LIVES!

On hearing this, Tawia's men, once on the offence, retreat.

Slowly, the dust settles and visibility is gradually restored. Men, women, and children continue to run for their lives, calling out to their various gods.

Aso rubs her eyes and coughs a bit, trying to catch a glimpse of the aftermath. She spots Nkrumah and Captain Buckman as they crawl away from the explosion site.

ASO  
Ah ah, Kwaku! He lives oo.

No response.

She turns to Ananse who sits on the ground in tears.

ASO (CONT'D)  
Kwaku?

Ananse, with Elizabeth's head, looks up at her. His eyes are swollen as the tears rush down his face.

ASO (CONT'D)  
Why are you crying?

He sniffs like a child. He coughs like a child. He then speaks, pointing at the wreckage like a child blaming his sibling for a wrongdoing.

ANANSE  
He's dead.

But it isn't Ananse's voice. No. It's the shrill, childlike voice of a girl who has just witnessed the death of many. Aso stares wide-eyed at the person before her.

ASO  
Elizabeth?

Aso looks over at the wreckage, speechless. It quickly dawns on her that her husband is now nothing but ash. The swapped heads had swapped consciousness and Ananse is no more.

The African Messiah is no more...

FADE TO BLACK.