

BUSINESS DAY

WYOMING WOMEN'S

APRIL 22, 2022

TORI ABIOLA

*the women empowerment advocate
who went through 'fire,' came out gold*

Image P.



Editor's Note

It is always our pleasure to bring you stories that will be worth your time. We trust that you had a fulfilling week after the long holiday. I can hear you say you wished it didn't end. Work can be fun, you only have to find a way to make it so.

This week, our cover personality is passionate about women empowerment and she is also a cancer survivor. She is inspiring women with her story and creating programmes that encourage women to soar in the midst of their challenges. Her name is TORI ABIOLA, and she is the Founder of Women Of World Entrepreneurship & Empowerment (WOWEE).

Social media has been filled with celebration on behalf of the veteran actress Rita Dominic and her husband Fidelis Anosike, who recently had their traditional mar-

riage. There was excitement in the air as many people had lovely congratulatory messages for them. We share pictures of some ladies who attended and looked stunning in their green aso ebi attires. Pure display of elegance at its peak. We also shared tweets on this on our tweets section.

We have other stories that includes: How The Power Of Choices And Decisions Impact You, Getting The Best From Your Domestic Assistants, Prayer Works, Brenda Is Gone... and of course, meals like Mofongo and Loaded Mashed Potato Casserole made by ImmaculateBites.

Enjoy!

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TORI ABIOLA

*the women empowerment advocate
who went through 'fire', came out gold*

BY KEMI AJUMOBI





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WOMEN SHOULD BE GIVEN CHANCES TO LEAD

Tori ABIOLA is the Founder, Women Of World Entrepreneurship & Empowerment (WOWEE) and Tori Aduke Agency, a fully integrated sales and marketing agency, with world class talent and global footprint, leveraging her 23+ years' experience in sales, marketing and business leadership across Europe, Africa, Middle East and North America.

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, she spent few years in Port Harcourt before aged 6 where her father was a Petroleum Engineer and her Mum a nurse.

She later moved to Kent College Pembury Kent where she was active in Theatre Studies, English Literature, Poetry, Public Speaking and won the national and regional awards in poetry, verse and prose and English-Speaking Union's Parliament Cup for Best Speaker.

She went on to France for a few months as part of exchange and work experience and became fluent in French with a passion for French culture, literature and film.

She is a graduate of Economics & Politics from SOAS University of London University in London, England.

She joined Euromoney Training UK FTSE 250 Company, and was promoted three times, growing their African business for training, for which she had responsibility by 75%, through new product innovation, partnerships and marketing including capital markets course with FCMB, Bond Programme with HSBC and Capital Markets programme with Lusaka Stock Exchange Zambia. In that role, she travelled across Africa and got to know senior level decision makers across the continent.

Tori later went to work with the CEO of Terrappin Global Conference company to launch their Global Telecoms Summit as the world got introduced to VOIP, World Luxury Congress George V Paris, World Low Cost Airlines Amsterdam and World Regional Airports in France.

She joined Pfizer /IQPC South Africa and UK, and then ICAEW Commercial Department for 4 years, where she worked under mentorship and leadership of now COO ICAEW, who was the first woman in ICAEW 100+ history to be elected on the board. Her role involved her commercial partnerships management for the award winning social financial innovation project Finance Innovation Lab, working with WWF, University of Oxford, Oxfam and leading public and private sector, civil society organisations concerned about creating financial systems that serve people and planet. This experience introduced her to systems change and social entrepreneurship programmes around gender equity, and also the fact that businesses can run with profit, purpose and passion.

Abiola's work at the Finance Innovation Lab was transformative and this is where she understood that she had the power to make change and real impact in the world, including understanding what it takes to make such changes.

She launched WOWEE in 2013 with support from Montgomery Group, where she led business in West Africa and went on to become Programme and Brand Lead Unicorn Group, Platform Capital from 2018 – 2019.

In 2019 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and she decided to focus on health and recovery with some work on gender empowerment and Fire Sessions.

Now in recovery, she is working, through her Marketing Agency, Tori Aduke Agency in places that include Dubai, London, Lagos, Lusaka and Joburg.

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**EUROMONEY IS AN
AMAZING TEMPLATE
AND BLUE PRINT
FOR SUCCESSFUL
BUSINESSES**



What part of your childhood do you remember and would want to share?

Growing up for me, I now realise as an adult, how invested my parents were in my life, and how much of their energies was invested in us. Both my parents and many of my extended family are all very hard working. I think this is a standard Nigerian thing.

I spent a lot of my weekends before moving to UK at age 10 with my grandma in her house at Agege. I also spent a lot of my childhood in Moshood Abiola Crescent with my cousins, playing, talking, listening to music and learning dance moves. A big part of my childhood was spent learning new dances.

I also spent time in prayers at mosque at home. I was either dancing, praying, listening to older folks debate politics, eating or going to parties, dressing up and all. It was really fun. I remember also being with my mum at her shops in Alade Market, playing in the market, watching my mum engage

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THE PROBLEM WITH WOMEN OCCUPYING SPACES AND SECURING CAPITAL STILL EXISTS

with customers, and of course there was always school, being good at school was very important.

In UK, I also loved school but got more into

theatre training, poetry, acting, netball and public speaking. It was a very full life outside of academics. I grew up with a lot of love, knowing and experiencing the importance of family. From a very young age, we would visit my great grandma in Abeokuta, my mother made a lot of effort to keep us close to our family.

Share your Euromoney experience and lessons learnt

After 20+ years of experience launching a global marketing agency Tori Aduke, I have to say Euromoney is an amazing template and blue print for successful businesses. A lot of what I learnt came from there. Euromoney was brilliant. I learnt what it takes to launch products and grow in new markets, the fundamentals of sales and marketing, and the importance of data. I also learnt the importance of figures, budgets, forecasts, making targets and margins. I was really ambitious, and I always wanted to learn to progress. It's an organisation that rewards entrepreneurial spirit, and a lot of work is based on relationships. It was also very rigorous in terms of content and marketing. I started as a Training Manager in Operations but noticed the sales guys. Although they were far less glamorous offices, it was a bit of a boiler room telemarketing set up, they made more than operations, and that got me interested and I moved into sales.

After that, I learnt what I needed and from my degree at SOAS, I realised there were elements missing in our offering in developing countries. I was also a very good sales person, so I got a shot at running and growing Africa which I did by 75%. I was in a unique position of understanding the UK / Global context, but also understanding Africa having studied its socio-economic dynamics at SOAS.



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AT SOAS, I WAS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY SOME COUNTRIES WERE POORER THAN OTHERS, WHAT IT WOULD TAKE TO GET OUT OF CERTAIN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Euromoney was really a very great foundation to my career. Their efficiency and business management was really impressive, it's part of the Daily Mail Group, one of the most successful global media/publishing organisations. I just love their business structure and ethos. They went out to own a segment and were dogmatic in that.

Take us through your SOAS experience, where you studied Economics & Politics

You can imagine from a young age growing up between UK and Nigeria, and seeing the contrast in development, infrastructure and wealth, and the many questions that rose in my mind. At SOAS, I was able to understand why some countries were poorer than others, what it would take to get out of certain development challenges. It basically spoke to my passion which is development. I also learnt critical thinking across various cultural, geographical and political lines. I learnt the ability to analyse and make sound judgement calls based on facts. It also gave me solid grounding in economic and political theory which continues to serve me well. I met incredible people who are still friends till date.

How was your experience working with Pfizer?

I am proud to say that my experience with Pfizer shows that I am a world class, best of breed marketer. We ran a competition in-house across many countries and I won, and was awarded for my campaign ideas and approach.

That gave me a lot of confidence, because I didn't have formal pharma or marketing training.

I learnt how to market at scale, nationally and regionally. Basically how to run major campaigns like managing significant marketing budgets, engaging with agency and creative, gaining consensus across multiple stake holders and decision makers, solid brand marketing experience, how to operate within an MNC, campaign planning and execution, field marketing, sales, detail aids and product launches

When and why was WOWEE launched?

I started my career in financial training at Euro-money, where I had responsibility for developing training programmes working with faculty, and I also worked at ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales), and in 2007/8 I was doing a lot of work in management and leadership development for women in SADC region.

So, I have lots of experience in training, capacity building, and also membership/Institutes. At that time in 2013, there wasn't much for women of African origin and honestly, the lack of service in this area is still huge. 1% of VC funding goes to female CEOs. So I saw a gap.

Imagine bringing world class business education, networking to African women but also delivering that content in a fresh, accessible, fun, glamorous and enjoyable way.

I also learnt the hard way, that no one invites you to the table, most times, you need to build your own. That's how WOWEE was birthed.

WOWEE provides the world with economic empowerment solutions and systems change interventions that support women of African origin to thrive as professionals and entrepreneurs. We believe the world is better when African women can contribute fully to the economy and society.

Now, there are so many women empowerment programmes and this is great, but we still have a problem with women occupying spaces and securing capital.



I ALSO LEARNT THE HARD WAY, THAT NO ONE INVITES YOU TO THE TABLE, MOST TIMES, YOU NEED TO BUILD YOUR OWN

Share on discovering you had cancer

I had just returned from an incredible work trip from Cape Town, first night back home, after a couple of intense weeks preparing for the event and organising everyone. So, I was really determined to have a comfortable sleep, and while adjusting, I felt a lump I hadn't felt before. Somehow, the thought of breast cancer came heavily to my mind and I made a mental note to check it out when next I was in the UK. So, in October, I was asked to organise a workshop in London and it was there that I was diagnosed in October 2019. From there, the process with lots of appointments began. I am now clear and everyday getting stronger and better but mindful of it.



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TO CANCER PATIENTS, REDEFINE YOUR SENSE OF SELF AND VALUES SO THAT THEY CAN INSPIRE YOU TO REMAIN HOPEFUL

What is it that anyone going through cancer needs to know?

Take a day, a moment at a time, practice mindfulness, advocate for yourself, ask people for help if you need it, don't blame yourself or feel shame. Also, redefine your sense of self and values so that they can inspire you to remain hopeful.

What is that people who are around survivors need to know?

The level of what I can endure and take is a lot more than before (mentally, spiritually and physically). People need to look at what we can bring and contribute instead of seeing us as somehow broken or unable to fully contribute to society and life. Of course, there are restrictions, but we have learnt to cope with these, manage them and living well mostly.

How important is it to have your mental health in check?

Through my entire process, I knew my mental health had to be in check. This is very crucial to daily living whether you are going through a form of ailment or not. Your mental health is important and so you must guard it jealously. Therapy helped me a great deal. The entire process taught me that self-care is critical.

When you compare the healthcare system you received in the UK and what obtains in Nigeria, what are you hopeful for to change in Nigeria's healthcare system?

UK is a developed economy, Nigeria is devel-



THERE ARE INCREDIBLE BENEFITS FROM HAVING A SOCIETY WHICH SEES HEALTHCARE AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT FOR EVERYONE

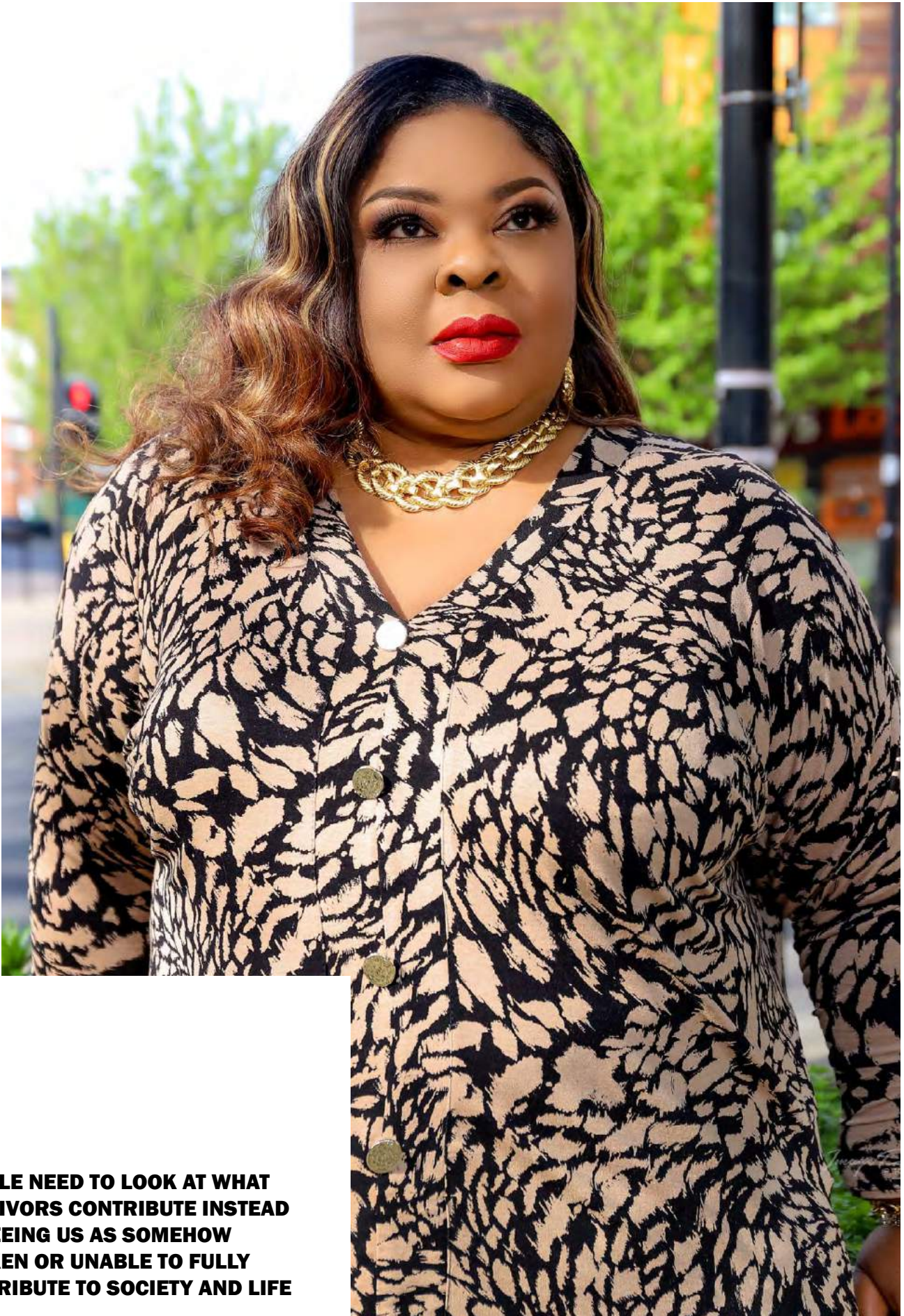
oping but we can do better. There are incredible benefits from having a society which sees healthcare as a fundamental right for everyone, and that has a national health insurance system.

How was Fire Sessions birthed? What is the goal?

Fire Sessions was inspired by my breast cancer survival. I want people to feel that whatever life throws at you, (and will throw so much), it's worth the battle, commitment, tough times to shine and thrive. The programme is worth looking out for. Information will be available in BusinessDay amongst other places once we are ready.

Final words

Never give up. Understand the importance of faith, prayer and a support system. Mental health and psychological tools are therapies to manage life. Most importantly, women should be given chances to lead.



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PEOPLE NEED TO LOOK AT WHAT SURVIVORS CONTRIBUTE INSTEAD OF SEEING US AS SOMEHOW BROKEN OR UNABLE TO FULLY CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY AND LIFE

How the Power of Choices and Decisions Impact You!

BY GLADYS AGWAI

“Life is a matter of choices and every choice you make, makes you.”

Life is a never-ending series of choices and decisions. They can be simple and small or big and difficult. Choice connects you to your desired intention, values, and beliefs while your decisions connect you to your behavior, performance, and consequences. When you run from the challenge to choose and decide versus confronting and overcoming the challenge, it will impair your ability to face, deal with, and grow from the challenges in your future with an inability to manage increasingly demanding situations. This disempowers you to be overwhelmingly incapable of handling life. According to Sam Silverstein, *The Power of Choice*, your choices also impact others within your circles of influence. For example, your ability to support your family based on financial decisions, how you treat your personal or professional partner and its impact on your relationships and success. You influence others with your choices and decisions and

can change their lives as well as your own.

However, when you live your life on autopilot, the daily choices you make happen invisibly. This can make it seem as though you have no choice to decide because you think everything is outside of your control. It can feel as though you have been swept up in a strong wind that is tossing and turning you at will. Looking back on your life have you felt powerless by external events, i.e., COVID, economics, illness, fired, birth inheritance of family, culture, and class, chance meeting with a stranger, generous act of a colleague, friend, or mentor, or a mean word from a loved one? The intervention of these events can change the direction of your story. This makes it crucial to your life's story that you make conscious, intentional choices and decisions to create the story you want to tell and have for your life. You are constantly weaving your tapestry based on your choices which evolves into your story.

There is a science behind making choices called The Choice Theory by Psychiatrist William Glasser. He determined that you have direct control over how you act and think. And in turn, how you think, and act influences how you feel and your physiology from the cellular and molecular levels. It all works together to determine who you are and how your life will evolve. Your brain makes decisions based on its valuation (what is rewarding) and cognitive control networks (meet your goals without distractions). Most people have gone shopping to buy foods that align with their goal of healthy eating. Your value network wants what is good and not good for you (fruits and cake). Your cognitive control helps you strike a balance by not checking out with a cart full of chocolate cake (my favorite). A balance of both valuation and cognitive control networks is needed to make the best decisions (vegetables and a slice of cake).

Now you can see how making choices and decisions is difficult. The difficulty made more so by your biases (life experiences, family/friends, what you see in the media, need for instant gratification, pain from a prior decision) that can lead you into the wrong direction. You may over or underestimate the likelihood of the consequences of your choice, i.e., victim of a crime. When you have more choices, you can feel overwhelmed when making decisions. You must cut

through all the noise of bias and the impact of too many choices. You must take a step back and learn to become present with yourself and your life to see that every decision you make matters. Each decision or choice will have consequences. And although you can make choices and decisions freely, you can never choose the consequences of your decisions. You can help avoid hurtful consequences and make better choices and decisions when you:

- Get clear about what you really want.
- Do not sweat the small choice.
- Make proactive decisions a habit.
- Get an opinion from those you trust.
- Notice your emotions and its impact on your decisions.
- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of your decisions.
- Recognize the opportunities within your decisions.
- Act on your decisions.
- Forgive yourself and others for wrong decisions.

“Tomorrow’s blessings and opportunities depend on the choices and decisions we make today.” James Esdras Faust



Gladys Agwai spent 30 years as a corporate executive leader within IBM in the US, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. Her leadership experiences spanned across multiple functional areas, such as, Sales, Marketing, Financial, and Operations, key industries in Public Sector, Banking, Telecommunications, and Small Medium Enterprises, and cultures. She received multiple top leadership and

sales awards throughout her career. She was sought out for an IBM Executive Loan program where she spent seven years working with the Committee for the Olympic Games with game changing thought leadership on its resource strategy that was implemented for future Olympic games. She is the Founder & CEO of Ignite Within.

Gladys Agwai can be reached at ignitewithin.org.

GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR DOMESTIC ASSISTANTS

DR. AGILITY OBI-IHESIE

The staff at the domestic help agency looked at each other as Mrs Musa stormed into their office. In the one year since she became their client, she'd had a turnover of 6 domestic assistants. The assistants were always blamed for the short stay, as Mrs Musa insisted that the agency kept sending her bad hands.

Mrs Musa was a social media influencer and had threatened to 'drag' them online especially on the platforms where she had hundreds of thousands of followers. The agency had existed for 12 years and had gained a good reputation for providing high quality domestic assistants. Mrs Musa was 'bad market' and they needed wisdom to handle her.

The agency was a structured company with a board, and their board members were highly respected members of the society whose opinions carried a lot of weight.

They had informed one of their board members about this case. Everybody called her Auntie Angel because she was literally one, but she was a former First Lady of the state as well as a very successful businesswoman with thousands of mentees. A meeting had been scheduled between Auntie Angel and Mrs Musa, and that was the meeting Mrs Musa had stormed into the office for.

The receptionist silently showed her into the room where Auntie Angel was already waiting. As soon as she saw Auntie Angel, her demeanour changed dramatically to that of a nice, sweet, gentle woman.

Omoooo!! Mrs Musa could not believe that she was in the same room as Auntie Angel, who she greatly admired and had always dreamed of having a one on one interaction with. Her dream had just come true, but in the wrong location of this stupid agency. But what business could Auntie Angel have with her?

"Hello my dear, how are you doing? It's a real pleasure to meet you. I follow you

on social media and your recommendations have been really helpful especially to my daughters. Well done on all the good work you are doing", Auntie Angel said to Mrs Musa, who was about ready to pass out. Heyyyy God! Auntie Angel was following her on social media! She don blow!

"Good afternoon Ma. Thank you so much for your kind words. I've been such a big fan of yours too, from your days as First Lady up until now. You inspire me so much ma", Mrs Musa stuttered back as a reply.

"I'm sure that you are surprised to see me. I am one of the board members of this agency and they requested that I meet with you to help you resolve the high turnover issues you have with your domestic staff. So let me hear you out." Auntie Angel was aware of the dragging threats but intentionally did not mention the matter.

Mrs Musa began to share about how they all got on her nerves, did not know their left from right, were always mixing things up, did not understand her, and so on. Auntie Angel allowed her to finish and then asked her if her staff underwent the mandatory 6 weeks on boarding program to integrate them into her household. Mrs Musa kept quiet; she always skipped that part of staff training as she felt it was unnecessary. She felt that the staff should just be 'plug and play' like who trains domestic staff for crying out loud? As if her home was one corporate organisation.

As if Auntie Angel could read her mind, she continued "My dear, when you train your staff, show them the ropes of how you want your home run, and develop structured procedures for them to follow, it makes the journey easier. Why don't you go and try this with your new assistant and keep me informed about how it goes. We'll review in 6 months."

Six months later, she met again physically with Auntie Angel even though they had kept in touch on Whatsapp. Her domestic assistant was doing very well and

she herself was happier and calmer than she had been in months. She now understood the importance of structure, planning and staff training even in the home. She was grateful.

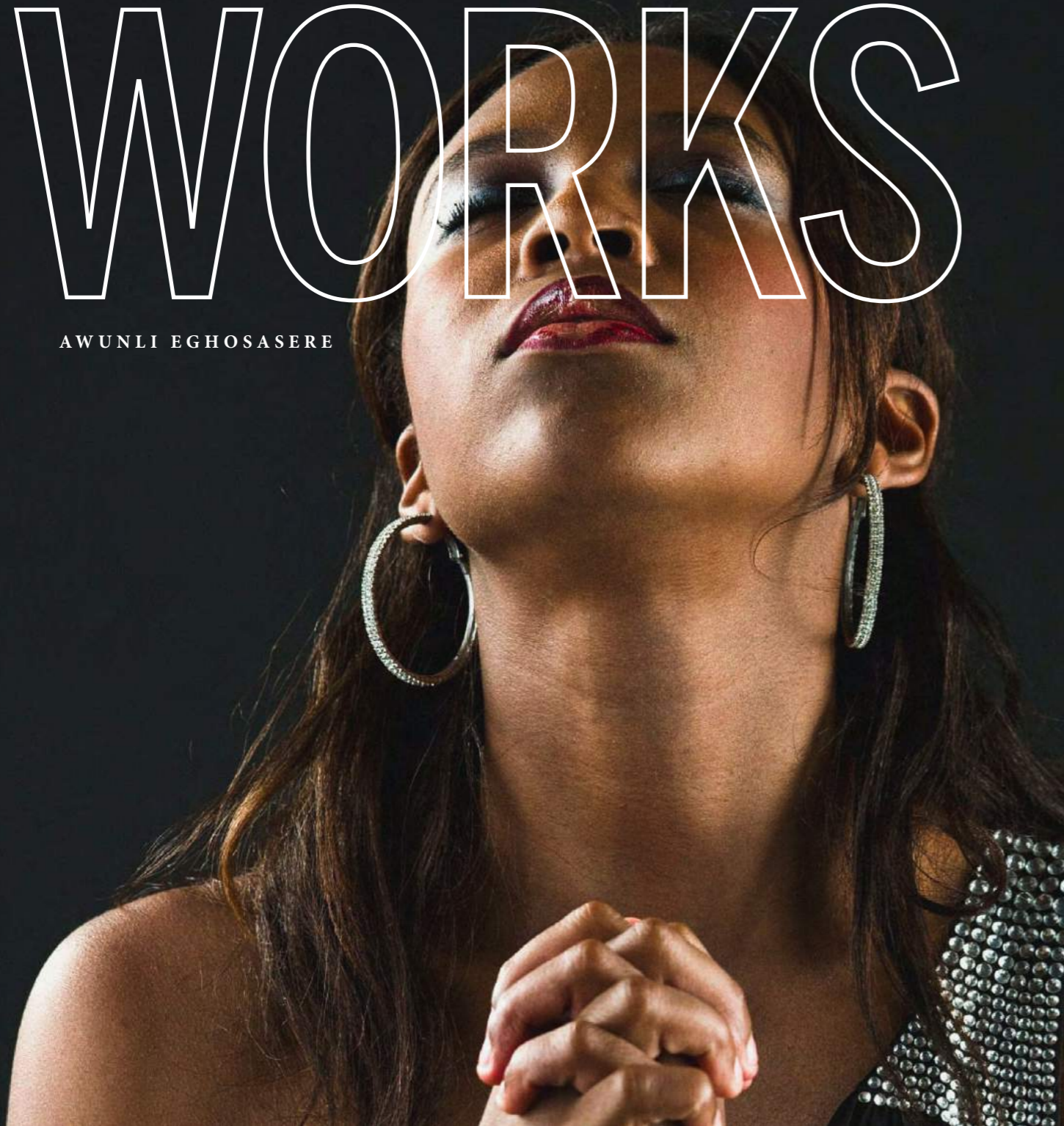


Dr Agility Obi-Ihesie (Dr Purejoie) is a Consultant Pathologist, Entrepreneur, Life and Personal growth strategist, and wholesome living advocate. She is the Founder of Dr Purejoie Skincare, a safe ethical skincare brand in Nigeria, and Dr Purejoie Consulting where she helps individuals gain clarity and develop strategies for personal growth, relationships, and healthy wholesome living.

She holds a MBBCh degree from College of Medicine University of Calabar, a FMCPATH Fellowship in Pathology from National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, a Certificate in Project Management in Global Health from University of Washington and a Certificate in Entrepreneurial Management from Enterprise Development Centre, Pan-Atlantic University (CEM51 Class). She can be reached at agility.obiiesie@gmail.com.

PRAYER WORKS

AWUNLI EGHOSASERE



"**F**ather, no evil fashioned against anyone here today will prosper" Tomi's aunty declared as she led the prayer that morning at about 5:30am. Joke's eyes were closed tight and that particular line Tomi's aunt declared stayed glued to her head. She had often heard it and said it too. But today, it sounded different. She didn't hear any words that were said afterwards. But then, she was suddenly jolted into reality when everybody started greeting and hugging one another.

Joke had come for Tomi's wedding. Tomi was her course mate. She had accepted to help Tomi with her academic work when Tomi approached her during the end of their hundred level academic year. Tomi explained shyly that she was having difficulty comprehending the courses. Especially those that were mandatory from other faculties. Joke loved Tomi's sincerity.

Joke wasn't in the league of those who scored above four to five points in their GPA, but she was considered a scholar after some of her classmates had sat behind her during the first semester exams, and were asking her questions intermittently. She was almost caught by the exam invigilator. When the results came out, the lucky ones who had access to spy Tomi's papers passed. This little gesture of giving answers during the first semester exams spread Tomi's name like wildfire in their class.

Two years down the line, because Tomi wanted her relationship with Joke to become more than just being course mates, she chose Joke to be her chief bridesmaid (so Joke thought). It had never crossed Joke's mind that being a chief bridesmaid was a thing. Until Tomi talked on and on about how many of her closest friends wanted to be her chief bridesmaid but she had chosen Joke instead. However, Joke cared less about being one.

After the prayers, everyone hurriedly prepared so they could attend the church wedding in time because they had some cooking to do. Halfway into the wedding reception, Joke made up her mind to leave Tomi's city back to campus. It was a two hour journey and the time was almost three o'clock. She couldn't explain why she can't stand being in parties. She also couldn't wait to pull off the very tight dress that was now making her feel like she wanted to suffocate. The measurement she sent to the seamstress was quite different from the final output. She just shook her head in pain. She quickly intimidated Tomi that she would be leaving for campus immediately after the reception party, but Tomi persuaded her to stay back as some of her husband's friends who arrived from abroad would love to give her friends a treat.

Joke wasn't so sure about staying back but a little plea from Tomi's aunt made her change her mind. She went to freshen up and changed clothes after the reception and joined Tomi's friend and other members of the bridal train for an outing event for the night sponsored by Tomi's newly wedded husband and his friends.

While the cars zoomed off into the main road, Tomi noticed a small piece of red cloth by the wayside. She wanted to assume this could be a sign of something negative but she waved it aside. She had spent a few years in a fire prayer church that read meaning to almost everything. But since she entered the university, she began attending another church whose outlook on life was quite different from what she had been used to. As the journey continued, she noticed another large piece of red cloth widely spread along the main road. She didn't want to take this for granted so she mumbled some prayers silently not wanting to disturb the other ladies who were chatting loudly about their experiences from the wedding reception.

Not too long after their vehicle passed the red cloth, one of the vehicles in the convoy hit a keke driver. Tomi's husband and his friends were occupants of the car.

As they came out to assess the damage caused by the accident, out of nowhere, a large number of street boys assembled and hounded the car. One of them broke a bottle and hit Tomi's husband's forehead with it. Luckily, it wasn't a huge cut. They demanded that Tomi's newly wedded husband transfer a huge sum of money and held him hostage. They were waving their cutlasses in the air and breaking bottles. Everyone was gripped with fear but suddenly, someone entered the crowd and said a few words and they let him go apologising.

It was a narrow escape for Tomi's husband. A happy day almost became a day of sorrow. Could Tomi's aunt's prayer have saved the day? The incident reminded Tomi that indeed "Men ought to pray and not faint".



Awunli Eghosasere is a writing consultant that helps leaders and professionals birth their thoughts and ideas into books. She is also the founder of hapi-wify.site, a digital platform that curates resources to help young women unlock their potential.



Brenda is gone... sadly, a product of domestic violence

BY LONGJOHN DEBORAH

Sitting here, watching her lifeless body, I couldn't help but wonder why? Why she chose him. Why she married him. Why she stayed. Why she returned to him after the warnings and counselling. Why?

Brenda was my best friend. We met when she had just been made manager in her firm. Being an ambitious, career driven young woman, Brenda had started off her life quite early. She was only 25 and already a PhD holder, manager and accomplished speaker. She had her whole life in front of her and she didn't waste a second exploring each phase. She had a voice that resonated with wisdom and eyes that sparkled with life. All Brenda wanted to do was get to the peak of her career by her 35th, be settled with the man of her dreams, finally have her twin babies Zoe and Zia, be one of the best life coaches ever and then retire into lecturing. She just wanted to live life to the fullest and leave heavy footprints when she's gone.

I remember when Lucas showed up. He transferred from another firm to Brenda's and even though she was ahead of him in position, he was respectable. She fell in love! It was against the rules of the firm to date your colleague so someone had to resign. She approached me with it and I told her it wasn't wise considering the fact that she was higher, had made her name there and was just few years into making Partner. He on the other hand just joined and is still fresh, so he can easily move and get another placement. Blinded by love I guess; she didn't heed my advice, she resigned few weeks to their marriage and started off something else. Now her neatly mapped out calendar, has experienced an unplanned detour.

Before they got married, I remembered walking in on Lucas being so furious with Brenda that he almost hit her had I not walked in. When interrogated, she claimed she provoked him and that he

had a quick temper and they're walking through it as a couple. That didn't sit right with me. I remember asking her why they didn't bring it to me considering I'm a licensed marriage counsellor and therapist with a certification in conflict and anger management. She waved it aside saying Lucas wouldn't be comfortable since I'm family. I later realised that she didn't want to leave him because she feared she wouldn't meet another person and her ideal time of settling down was fast running out. She said she'll rather walk through the issue with this one claiming the devil you know is better than the angel you don't know.

Fast forward to five years after their marriage. I had lost contact with Brenda because I had to go to Austria for secondment and I eventually relocated. I was at the mall trying to get some groceries for the family, it was Christmas season and one could mistake the mall for a frenzy considering the number of people there. "Oh, I'm so sorry, let me help you;" this calming and strikingly familiar voice said as I dropped my purse that contained some valuables. "Thank you" I said as I turned to see who it was. It was Brenda! My joy knew no bounds. I just came in few days ago and one of the prayers in my heart was to find Brenda again. She still had her therapeutic voice but she had lost the sparkle in her eyes. Though still pretty, she wasn't the lively young woman I knew. Only 31, yet she looked like she just clocked 60. I couldn't believe my eyes or hold back the tears. What happened? I asked as we locked ourselves in a tight embrace.

Lucas had been the jerk I perceived he'd be. Beating and cheating on her. He'd used up all her money. Because of the beatings she lost her ability to conceive and now she's just holding on to a little thread of hope, taking one day at a time. We spoke at length that day and I begged her to leave him. I was even ready to help her relocate and pick up the pieces of her life. Not necessarily get a divorce but at

least a separation until something is done. She assured me she would leave this time and said she'll keep in touch so we can plan what next. I was sad but happy at the same time because we now have hope and something to work on and look forward to. Only for me to be stabbed by this rude news of her demise. She had gotten into a fight with Lucas and he had "unintentionally" beat her to death. All the dreams, hopes, aspirations, now lie here...lifeless!



LongJohn Deborah A. is from Bonny, Rivers state. She is a Teen mentor and an Emotional Intelligence enthusiast. She is passionate about the next generation and is always elated whenever she gets any opportunity to share life changing experiences with teenagers. She believes she is blessed to bless others and her greatest goal in life is to live an impactful life and leave a lasting legacy when she exits this world.

Rita Dominic is married!

The social media space has indeed been in high spirits as different pictures and videos from the traditional wedding of the veteran actress, Rita Dominic, who got married to the Publisher of Daily Times, Fidelis Anosike, are being shared. The marriage took place in Mbaise, Imo state, where Rita is from. The hashtag was #ReelDeel22 and it certainly was a go-to hashtag to see all the glits and glamour of the wedding. Here are some Tweets From Twitter Streets in celebration of the day! We wish Fidelis and Rita a Happy Married Life!

Tweets FROM TWITTER STREETS

Oyinkansola Alabi @EmotionsD... · 5d
There is something about Kemi Adetiba, Jude Abaga, and Rita Dominic's engagement that gave me joy. I love it when good people find joy. It reminded me of how I felt when Ibrahim and Ihuoma found each other 🥰❤️. Love is beautiful and I live for it.

Chikadibia @valentinowpg · 1d
Hello my queens, Rita Dominic getting married at the age of 46 yrs. So don't let family pressures you to marry someone you don't love, wait for the right opportunities to come by. ❤️❤️❤️

justgracie14 @justgracie14 · 1d
Rita Dominic made a beautiful bride 🥰. I'm genuinely happy for her....God's time is surely the best.
#reeldeel22




The @DamiElebe · 1d
The pictures from Rita Dominic's wedding sweet me die. I wish I was part of old nollywood. Me sef wan wear green, dance for stories in Mbaise.

IamWi-Fi @wi_fiyo · 1d
At the age 46 Rita Dominic has gotten marriage. My sister don't lose hope




Odion Aleobua @odionmatics · 1d
Rita Dominic is the poster child of matching excellent acting, fame and good behaviour. No scandals or diva vibes.

She has now pivoted to become the Ambassador of "waiting for your time" and throwing a decent but classic wedding event. This woman is a national treasure.




Pulse Nigeria @PulseNigeria2... · 1d
Here is why Ini Edo is trending...

Tweeps are commending the actress' outfit to Rita Dominic's traditional wedding, some even rated her "best dressed."



Stanley @stanleyonuah · 1d
Rita Dominic is my Nollywood childhood crush lol. She's beautiful, unproblematic, always shinning her white teeth.

She's found her soulmate, and I am genuinely happy for her. Congratulations to her.



Sir Dickson @Wizarab10 · 1d
From the stables of "Kamala Harris found her person at 50" comes "Rita Dominic married at 46. A woman can find love at any age."

I love Rita Dominic so I wouldn't want to stir the waters because stupid people turned this to motivational speech. Just congratulate her and move on.

Ewurama Folake @Owusuivy · 1d
Ohoooo 🥰🥰🥰
The support is massive and these icons are looking mwah 🍷
World Rita Dominic day 🥰🥰🥰
God bless y'all



firdaus @ese_belosagie · 1d
"Rita Dominic getting married in her 40s means..."

It means she's getting married. Let us hear word.

Uncle Bayotics @unclebayoti... · 1d
Some people are taking screenshots of outfits from Rita Dominic's wedding to send to their tailors. They won't pay more than 5k. They will now come and be disturbing us with "What I ordered Vs what I got" 😞

Gorgeous @g_orgeous10 · 1d
A lot of ladies would surely love to know what kept you motivated up till this point @ritaUdominic

May your marriage be sweeter than what you call sweet, I wish you the very best in your marriage ma.

Brand ambassador @Poetized... · 1d
The Nollywood queens are already out to celebrate their colleague Rita Dominic 🥰🥰🥰 you just wouldn't want to miss out on this stay tuned. It's Rita's Day 🥰🥰🥰

Nonsky Laz @NonskyL... · 11 Apr
Rita Dominic has modified bridal shower for us...no more 10 girls in a hotel room wearing pajamas with cake 🥰
Mr Eazi reminded guys on how to propose to a lady. Men, kindly refrain from 🍷🍷🍷 e don do 🙏



Tailor plug--hindscouture @hin... · 1d
Mama ajoke silva came looking all beautiful 🍷 **Rita Dominic** #BBNaija




De_Jahynet_girl @The_janet_girl · 1d
There's a man for every woman no matter how long it takes 🥰 I'm so happy for **Rita Dominic**, may her marriage be blessed.



Deaconess Ada @blvck... · 1d
Hear me! I'm so happy at how happy everyone is for **Rita Dominic**. It's just too beautiful. Like veterans and new Hollywood actors and actresses, everyone is just so happy for her. But in all, I'm just happy that woman is happy! So happy for her!

Glory @Glowree21 · 1d
Riri mama..you look so beautiful 🥰
Am so happy for you 🥰
See Bride ooo..see as she fine like today fresh baked bread 🥰
May God bless your Union 🙏
Congratulations **Rita Dominic** 🥰




Brother G.O @OyinTGSPE · 1d
Rita Dominic is the most Unproblematic Nollywood actress, she just wanna shine her gap teeth and smile

Celebrity Niffyblizz @niffy... · 1d
Rita Dominic the bride 🥰🥰🥰



The Tegan Show @tegantalksh... · 16h
She's the talk of town! Ageless beauty, **@ritaUdominic** tied the knot yesterday in Imo State, the Eastern Heartland – to Fidelis Anosike, Founder of Folio Media Group. On this Woman Crush Wednesday, we celebrate the iconic **Rita Dominic**. Here are five interesting facts about her!



FUN FACTS ABOUT RITA DOMINIC

- 1) In 1998, Rita Dominic joined the Nollywood movie industry featuring in her first movie, "A Time to Kill" that caught her to the limelight.
- 2) Rita Dominic has joined the league of "Top Actors" that have acted in more than 100 Nollywood movies.
- 3) Rita Dominic is ranked as one of the highest paid actors in Nigeria.
- 4) Aside from acting and film production, Rita Dominic is also a philanthropist who gives back through her non-governmental organization.
- 5) Rita Dominic is currently nominated in the Africa Music Viewers Choice Awards 2022, as the "Best Actress" in the movie, "La Femme Afrique".

Bullion @sey_degenius · 1d
Rita Dominic married at 46. Handing over the microphone to the motivational speakers now... it's going to be a long 48 hours on the TL!!!



OKE ITE EJI ESI NKAKWU @Ik... · 16h
Someone should pls confirm how much **Rita Dominic** paid to ESN/IPOB before she had her traditional marriage.

Its very important

Afia B. @janiceAfiba · 1h
Seeing **Rita Dominic's** wedding yesterday had me wishing I had a tight knit of crazy girl-friends instead I'm an annoying antisocial without friends 😞

Voice Of Meta-VOM @Voiceofm... · 1d
It's a celebration day for Nollywood actress, **Rita Dominic**, as she ties the knot with her lover, publisher Fidelis Anosike, today.



#OurFavOnlineDoc @... · 1d
Rita Dominic is in a real life Nollywood movie titled: "Everybody will find love at their own time".

A huge congratulations to her!

Bongie @itsbongie · 1d
I genuinely love **Rita Dominic** from the good side of my heart. Her happiness gives me some legit good vibe & some sweet feeling around my love area. Today, I wish her the very best in marriage. 🍷🍷

Yrka @Yrkaceauha · 1d
Rita Dominic is gorgeous. she is the definition of blossom, sublime and kindhearted. she has an aura of happiness that makes you more happier than her. praying for endless joy and a blissful marriage, nollywood actors came through this is what we like to see feed our eyes more 🥰

Tailor plug--hindscouture @hin... · 1d
Them men 🙌🙌🙌 #weddingday at **Rita Dominic** wedding



Wendy @_onlywendy · 1d
Extremely happy for **Rita Dominic**. She's found her soul mate and the happiness is visible. Better to wait long than marry wrong. God has no time limits #ReelDeel22 it is!!!

Amby C. Ezem @AmbyCEzem · 23h
Rita Dominic Nwaturuocha 🍷🍷🍷 made a gorgeous gorgeous Mbaise bride 🍷🍷. So excited for her and the women in her corner. I've been story jumping lol. What a gorgeous wedding. can't help but wonder who supplied the green asoebi cause how many yards did they sell 🍷🍷🍷



Odinaka @I_AM_LILLYAN · 1d
Such a phenomenal woman... She does no wrong in my eyes.. Congratulations **Rita Dominic** 🍷🍷🍷



Rita Dominic @ritaUdominic · 1h
Thank you 🙏🙏🙏🙏

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#ReelDeel22

How women stunned in their outfits at the traditional wedding of Fidelis Anosike and Rita Dominic. It certainly was the green to envy!













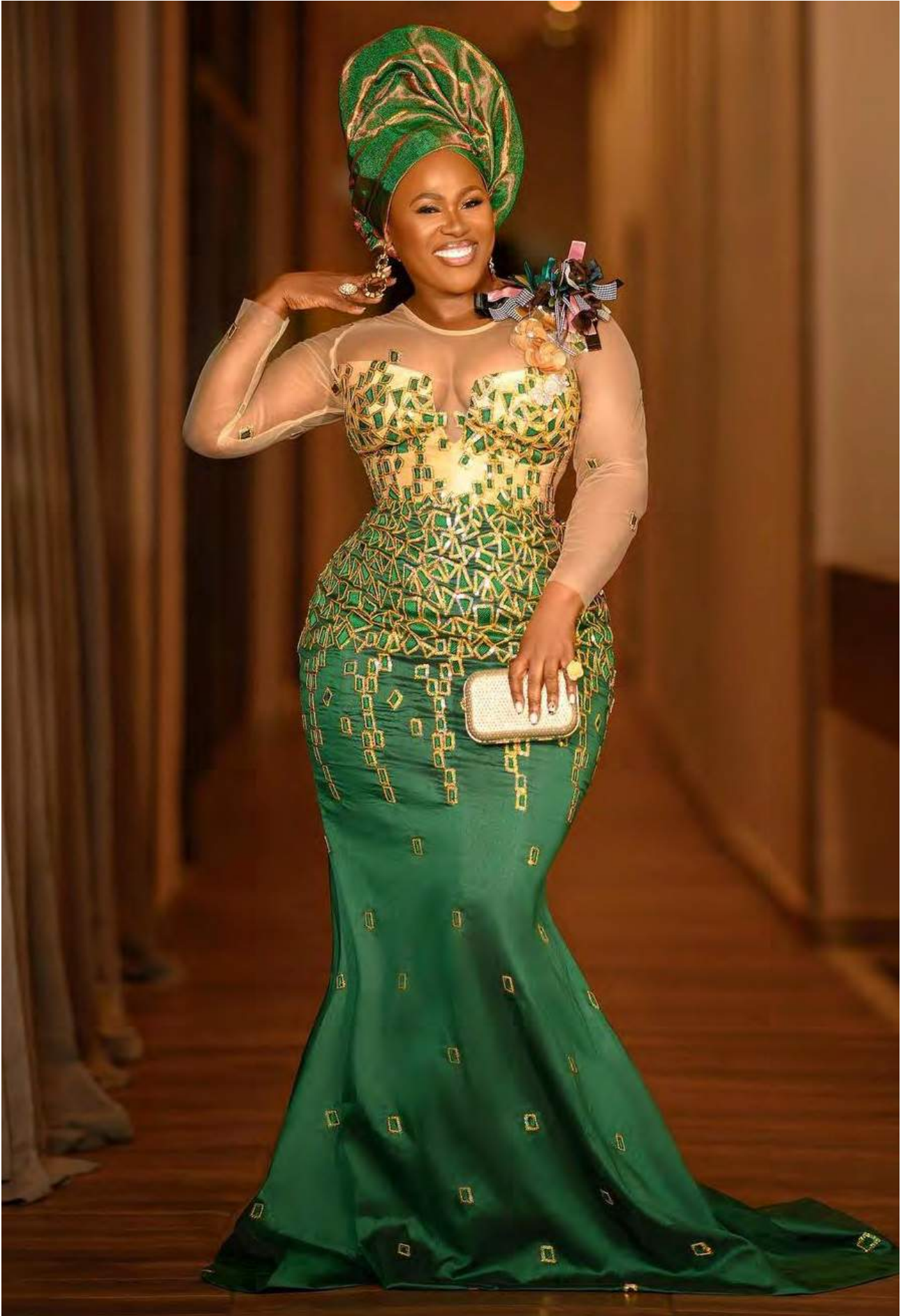
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MEALS TO ENJOY

By ImmaculateBites



© ImmaculateBites

Mofongo Recipe

INSTRUCTIONS

Shrimp Sauce

Lightly season shrimp with Creole seasoning. Heat about a tablespoon of oil over medium heat in a skillet.

- Sauté the shrimp for about 3-5 minutes. Set aside.
- Add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the skillet, followed by onions, garlic, cumin, tomatoes, and paprika. Stir for about a minute or until fragrant.
- Add the bell pepper and chicken broth or water.
- Bring it to a boil, then simmer for about 5-7 minutes.

- Toss in shrimp; continue cooking for about 2-3 minutes more. Adjust for salt and pepper, and remove from the heat. Set aside.

Mofongo

- In a small saucepan, add 3 tablespoons of oil, followed by garlic, bacon, and salt. Sauté for about a minute until fragrant, being careful not to let it burn. Set aside.

- Cut each plantain into about 4-5 thick slices.

- Soak the slices in salted water for about 15-30 minutes, then remove and dry with a paper towel.

- Pour vegetable oil into a large saucepan until it is at least 1-inch deep. Heat on medium heat until the oil reaches 375°F/190°C.

- Gently place the plantains into the oil. Fry them in batches so that you don't overcrowd the pan.



- Fry for 3-4 minutes until lightly brown on each side.

- Use a large, slotted spoon or a similar utensil to remove the plantains from the oil. Then drain them on a paper towel.

- Place about a ½ teaspoon or more of the garlic, oil, and bacon mixture into a mortar and give it a smash with a pestle.

- Add the chicharrones and some salt if necessary. Then, one by one, start adding and smashing the fried plantains with the other ingredients. Once all the ingredients have just come together, and the mortar is nearly full, the mofongo is ready. Don't overdo it!

- Run a knife or spatula between the mofongo and the mortar walls and place shrimp sauce in the middle.

- Serve right out of the mortar or turn the mortar upside down on a serving plate and bang lightly – you will get a nice mofongo dome.

- Repeat the same process with the remaining garlic, bacon, oil, and plantains.



Loaded Mashed Potato Casserole

This Loaded Mashed Potato Casserole enjoys fully loaded baked potato flavours in a ridiculously easy casserole dish. It has all the good stuff. Bacon, cheese, sour cream, and onions make regular mashed potatoes the life of the party.

INGREDIENTS

Mashed Potatoes

- 2 ½-3 pounds russet potatoes
- 1-2 teaspoons salt
- 4 ounces soft butter
- ½ cup sour cream (room temperature) (room temperature)
- salt and freshly ground black or white pepper to taste
- ¾-1 cup or more warm milk

Loaded Casserole Assembly and Toppings

- ½ cup cheddar cheese, grated
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated gouda cheese optional
- ½ cup bacon crumbles (about 4-5 bacon strips)
- 3 green chopped onions or chives (½ cup)
- salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Mashed Potatoes

- Peel the potatoes, removing any spoiled spots, such as bruising and discoloration. Cut into big even-sized chunks. Place potatoes in water as you peel to prevent discoloration.
- Wash the potatoes and rinse until



- Return potatoes to the stove and simmer for about a minute to remove moisture from the potatoes.

- Transfer potatoes into a large bowl then, add the soft butter, sour cream, garlic, and black pepper. Start mixing while adding warm milk as you go until mashed potatoes is soft and fluffy. You may add more milk if desired.

Loaded Mashed Potato Casserole Assembly

- Stir in cheeses, parmesan, cheddar cheese, gouda cheese (optional) half of the bacon (reserve the other half to top the casserole). Adjust the salt and pepper to taste.

- Scoop the mashed potatoes into a 9×13 baking dish or casserole dish.

- When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350°F. If desired, place the dish on a cookie or baking sheet (this helps facilitate carrying the dish).

- Bake uncovered 18-20 minutes or until heated through and the top is slightly puffed and golden brown.

- Using an oven mitt, carefully remove from the oven and spread remaining cheddar cheese and bacon. Bake an additional 5 minutes.

- Remove from the oven, sprinkle with green onions, and serve.

TIPS & NOTES:

The sour cream and milk don't have to be at room temperature for this recipe.

water runs clear. Place the potatoes in a large pot with about 1-2 teaspoons of salt and enough water to cover the potatoes.

- Bring to a boil, cook until potatoes are fork-tender. Drain water from the potatoes.

- Please keep in mind that the nutritional information is a rough estimate and can vary significantly based on the products used in the recipe.

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