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The Aftermath by U.C Dee

The power we allow rage to access can either give us peace or destroy us; the "aftermath" is usually what haunts us.
I'm Amanda and I won't spend so much time introducing myself so I'll just get to it. I'm everything but not a fool. Maybe I've been a fool once or twice or thrice? I lost count but I'll still argue that I'm not a fool, Usually People would refer to being "a fool" as being head Overhill in love.
Tunde and I have been dating since Uni. He was the tall handsome Yoruba Engineering guy every girl on campus would like to date and there was just me: not what many would refer to as the beauty standard, but I never felt like I wasn't enough. I can still remember how he'd hold my hands in public and pretty girls would pass and give the "look". We know that look "Bro seriously her?" but I never gave a shit, and he never did too.
We got married four years after Uni and it was the talk of the town, My life felt perfect until it didn't. Our love was like a rose with little thorns; pretty from a distance until you look closely and it stings you.
We fell pregnant six months after our wedding and that was the beginning of a hodgepodge. Everything I did pissed Tunde off, it was either my nose looking too fat or my stretch marks were too gross, something about my body always disgusts him. He wouldn't make love to me and I convinced myself that It was okay. "*You're pregnant Amanda, he probably doesn't want to stress you"* I'd always tell myself until I started chatting with some of the ladies from antenatal and they all seemed to be having the best sex of their lives. "*Amanda you haven't said anything" "She must be shy" "You guys stop it, not everyone wants to talk about their sex lives" Oh* I would've loved to except I don't have a sex life. *"Amanda, did you say something?"*
Oh, nothing at all actually, Well I'm having the best sex and he's doing just great, I feel good!
You can take so much when you're in love, you're just not a nitwit when you're in love. I was seven months pregnant and every day was chaos at home. Tunde started coming home late and I'd ask him why but he'd much rather ignore me. This continued every night and got worse when he'd return very late at midnight on Fridays or not return at all.
It was a faithful Friday and I was having contractions at night, I was in so much pain I could barely move. I cried and I managed to reach my phone. I dialed my husband's phone, I called Tunde a million times, and each time it got sent to voicemail. I called my friend Teni who immediately showed up and rushed me to the hospital. I spent the rest of the night there and went home the following morning. Now here's the interesting part: Tunde still wasn't home. I didn't bother calling, I had my bath and was just making breakfast when I heard someone banging at the door. I pretended not to hear a forte, in my head, I was at a beach and all that noise was just seagulls squawking. I finished eating and was just sipping my juice when a hard blow landed on my face. I could taste blood and I turned to make sure I wasn't dreaming and a hand choked me. My eyes bulged out and were red as I tried to catch a whiff.
"You stupid bitch, didn't you hear me at the door eh? Are deaf now?!"
I was almost going to pass out when he left me there choking, he was upstairs but the whole damn place reeked of alcohol. He was drunk, again. I stood up and went to the sink to rinse the blood off my mouth, I was still trying to process what had just happened and there it was, the

stupid voice in my head saying "*You shouldn't have ignored him, give him some time he's just angry".* I always made excuses for him. Well, it was the first time he raised his hands to me, or the second actually: he hit me one time in Uni and he apologized. He was just furious and it was kind of my fault. He promised never to raise his hands to me again except he did again and again and again. But he always apologized. I know what you're thinking *"Amanda you're such a fool"* I'm no fool, I was just in love.

It's been three weeks since the incident and Tunde hasn't said a word to me. I apologized for him being out late, for him not picking up my calls, for me calling him, for him not being around to take care of his pregnant wife, for him coming home the next day, for me not opening the door, for him breaking into his own house and for him hitting me and almost choking me to death. I apologized for it all and still, he gave me the silent treatment. You can imagine the gaslighting! That narcissist! Weeks passed and not a word.

It was my last trimester and I was doing it all alone: no care or love from the man I loved so much, my husband. He was always on his phone, he'd leave the house at intervals to take calls. I knew he was having an affair but I convinced myself that it was important business and he didn't want me to distract him with my "breathing". What a fool I was. Oh, sorry, I was just in love. I kept telling myself the same thing until one night, while he was in the bathroom, his phone beeped, and I was tempted to check it but then I ignored it. It beeped three times and my curiosity had grown, so I picked the phone up. It was a text from the one person I least expected it to be, Bimbola. My hands grew cold and stiff, I couldn't feel my feet and the fetus just kept kicking hard. I had goosebumps all over my body and the worst feeling; the feeling of betrayal. I heard my heart break like the ceramics he had missed that smashed on the wall. My head was lucky that day. I kept staring at the text and trying my best to find a reaction but I started feeling numb. I felt numb. I just stood there and there, a tear dropped, and two and three and they just rolled down my cheeks. *"what the fuck are you doing with my phone?! Has it gotten to this? You now go through my phone?"* There he was, gaslighting prick, invariably making me the bad guy, not today Mr. Handsome Fibber!

"I'm asking you a bloody question. Are you deaf?" Oh, there I was, bereft of words and he grabbed the phone from my hand and I looked at him, eyes blurred, and wasn't sure what to say, and the words came "*Since when, Tunde?"* I moved close to him and looked at him dead in those dark eyes "*How long has this been going on?"*

"You must be insane Amanda. You go through my phone and you're now interrogating me? Since when-"

I slapped him hard in the face before he would somehow make me feel guilty for nothing.

"*Tunde! You are a devil. A cunt! You cheating bastard! Where are you going? Huh?"*

"Look, Amanda, do not tempt me. You do not want my wrath this nig-"

Another slap, and another with the back of my hand, and sweet lord that felt good. My ring bled him.

"*I have tolerated so much from you, Tunde. I have ignored everything you did but this? No fucking way. Tunde you barely speak to me your wife, you hit me and abused me. You do not care about me one bit but I just kept holding on and hoping that it was just a phase and it'll pass in no time. Your mom does and says whatever to me and you have never stood up for me, I endured everything you did because I love you and you were my everything. I placed you so*

high above and all you did was walk over me and treat me like I was nobody, I took it all and then you went and cheated on me with Bimbola? That bitch?!"
"Amanda watch it, you are pushing me, do not refer to Bimbs as a bitch. I'm warning you now, do no-"
I slapped him again and now the tears won't stop rolling down. Did he just call her Bimbs?
"*Bimbs? Do you still call her that? You excuse of a man. The same bitch who broke your heart? Broke shamed you back in Uni? Slept with your best friend? I was there! I picked up the pieces! I stood by you and I loved you in every way a person could be loved and you… You never forgot about her?"*
At this point, I thought I saw a glimpse of guilt in his eyes but then it was gone and he headed for the door but I blocked him
" Oh, you wanna leave? It's about her and you wanna leave. You won't slap me? Hit me? And try to kill me? C'mon and do it, beat me, you coward! You wanna leave like your usurper cunt of a dad?"
"Amanda!" there, rage in his eyes.
"*what? You can't handle a conversation? I'm so stupid. How did it take me this long to realize you are addicted to toxicity? You don't like peace, right? You want all the chaos and hate and stubbornness because that's all your whore of a mother was about huh?"*
All I could see was black, were my eyes open or shut? I could hear noises, machines beeping, and the smell of drugs. Where am I? My head felt so heavy and my abdomen hurt so bad. The baby? I can't feel the baby. Machines start to beep fast… "*Doctor! Doctor!"* That's my mom's voice, what's she doing here? Am I dreaming?
"Please what's going on? Can I see my wife, please? "
"Wife? Did you just say, wife? You devil! Get him out of here!" That's my dad's voice and Tunde
"*You all need to calm down, this is a hospital please,"* Teni said, her voice breaking like she's been crying.
It felt like I'd been knocked out for weeks and then I woke up. The whole place was too bright, I managed to sit up and my head was hurting like hell. I touched my head and it was bandaged and my face felt swollen. I looked down at my bump and it was gone… where's my baby? Did I deliver already? My mom walked in and started to cry. She hugged me and kept saying she was sorry. I didn't understand what she meant, Teni and my dad walked in and they both looked tired and sad. I got discharged and was taken to my parent's house. *"Can anyone tell me what happened to my baby?"*
"Ama nnem, what do you remember?" My mom asked.
"*I remember everything, he beat me, it was so bad and painful. All I remember after that was the hospital."* I started to cry, my mom and Teni held me but I just couldn't stop crying. I knew my baby didn't survive it. Nine months and my baby was murdered in the womb by his father, what more could be more painful? "*Where is Tunde?"*
"You're gonna ask about that monster right now?" Teni asked, looking so pissed.
"*Yes, he's my husband and I should be in my husband's house, shouldn't I?"*
My mom and dad were dumbfounded
"*You are not going back to that man, I won't let you die in the name of marriage,"* my mom said crying

I looked at my dad and I knew he understood everything my eyes said, he always understood. Sometimes I wonder how I ended up with a man like Tunde. People say girls with daddy issues often pick the worst men but my dad was perfect. How then did I make this mistake?
"*Nwunyem, let the girl return to her husband's house"* he turned to me "*I trust you'd be just fine?"*
I walked into the sitting room and there was Tunde and his mom, I looked at them and went straight upstairs. I came back down and Tunde immediately knelt and started apologizing. After an hour I managed to say "*Ask your mom to leave, I don't need her in my home."*
She tried to say something and he shut her up and asked her to please leave. She left and he kept apologizing. The entire time he spoke, I had murder on my mind.
"*Tunde, you crossed the line and I promise you, honey, you'd regret this."* I smiled and went upstairs. A week had passed and I hadn't said a word to him. He started coming home early and doing the chores, he got me flowers every day and woke up each morning to find them burnt in the trash. That was how every atom of love I got for him burnt. He got a text and I knew it was Bimbola. He immediately turned off the phone and tried distracting himself with newspapers; it was turned upside down and he was on the same page for hours. I kept laughing out loud and he left the house.
The anger in me grew every minute I spent thinking of all the ways to make him suffer and there was no way I wasn't going to make his mistress pay too.
I drove to her apartment the next day and she wasn't home. I took her apartment key under the foot match and went in, I just wanted to make her pay. I looked around and thought it was dumb of me to be there so I decided to leave, then I heard a sound from her bedroom, I went in there and it was her cat. I turned to leave and there, it was Tunde's hoodie. I got it for him and it was there, in her room, neatly folded on her bed. I felt the heat of anger. So much rage and I let it access the power in me; all the hate and disdain.
I stormed into her kitchen, picked up a knife, and stabbed the pipe connected to the gas cylinder, and I left. I got home and Tunde was there making us lunch, I looked at him and smiled "*Let me take it from here love"* he looked so surprised and left. I made pasta and a few tablets in it. He ate quietly while I watched him smiling "*I knew you'd come around Amanda, all that overreacting, I knew you'd be fine"* he started coughing, and just then, his phone rang, he picked up and had this shock on his face. *"Amanda, what have you done? Did you go to Bimbs? Sorry Bimbola's?"*
"Bimbs? Huh, Tunde. Don't worry, I had gloves on, no prints" I chuckled
He coughed and coughed and there, blood everywhere….
"*Amanda, do you happen to know what happened to your husband?"*
"No, I hope you get me out of these cuffs soon. All I can say is, he deserved every bit of what he went through"
"All this rage has brought you nothing but destruction"
"Nah, it's brought me both peace. This Aftermath, it's perfect."

U.C Dee