

## Shapeshifter

**8<sup>th</sup> of June 2005**

Dear diary,

I am a big girl now. I've just finished third term of class one and although I hated it, I'm sort of grateful for it? My grades were great, as per usual, and I have great friends, which is nice. But did I like being shipped away to boarding school in the middle of nowhere with no hot water? No. Why did my parents even choose this school? Ayobami is going to graduate next year, and Ayomikun has two years left. So even though we are all going to the same school now, I won't have the same level of senior student protection Ayomikun has enjoyed. Not like she needs it anyway; she's always been popular which I find interesting as there's not much in her head. Thank God she's fine o because... Sorry Diary, I can't finish that thought in case someone finds you.

Maybe I should be directing my anger at Grandpa.

"Send Oluwasayomi to Akingbade College. Her siblings have thrived, she will also thrive. And you know how I love having them over during their short holidays." He said the last time he visited.

Of course, Mum and Daddy agreed. Mum doesn't have much of an interest in doing too much housework; the way she looks is too important to her. I never paid it any mind but after having only 10 minutes to bath daily in this first year of secondary school, I started to question why she made us bath for 20 minutes twice a day. She may just die if I tell her that one time in school, I didn't bath for two days straight. "Dirty monkeys, all of you!" I can hear her say.

But that her vanity, isn't it too much? The amount of cosmetics I took to school probably broke a record. Of course, those broke senior bullies helped themselves to some of it. There's also the issue of the "contraband" part of my stuff going missing from the ones I asked the Matron to keep for me.

Daddy may have disagreed because his favourite child was leaving the house. (BamBam and Ayo, if you ever read this, you know it's true). But he is sooo busy! His business, the Social Polypus Youth Foundation (SPYF), is easily his fourth favourite child. SPYF helps to eradicate polyps from young children all over the continent and overseas which is why he is always travelling. I don't really mind sha because he always brings back the best gifts!

I also agreed because what did I know. I only saw BamBam and Ayo during Summer when we travelled abroad for the holidays, so I thought it would be nice to see them during the shorter holidays. (Even though Diary, why do we travel during Summer when the weather is the same as here? I want to go to America in Autumn! They taught us in Geography about the different seasons in the Western Hemisphere and Autumn is my favourite. The pictures were so beautiful).

Anyway, I'm back sha. I'm happy to be in my own home. I'm especially happy to feed our fish and Octi again. I don't know if Octi was happy to see me after so long or he was doing his usual scaredy cat thing but the first thing he did when I tried to feed him was turn white, weird octopus. I think he might need a new tank sha.

Wo diary, I'm tired. I'll speak abi write in you tomorrow.

**8<sup>th</sup> of June 2007**

Dear diary,

It's been two years! I was so excited to start a new thing but me and commitment are not friends. Having a diary felt like a cool grown-up thing to do especially after Fadekemi told me she had one. My friends who are not in boarding school are so cool! Anyway, the past two years have been okay. I'm finally going to class four from September. I'll also be going to visit BamBam and Ayo in Switzerland. Why are they in Switzerland? Ask Daddy o, he wanted them to learn a new language and some other reasons I don't care about. Me sha, all of my friends are already talking about going to the UK, so that's where I am going to go.

Diary, something interesting happened to me in school this year.

**8<sup>th</sup> of June 2009**

Dear diary,

Last night, before bed, I was admiring myself in the mirror. Yes, I am becoming my mother but sometimes, these things are inevitable. We had a talent show and Emeka and his friends had performed a song by Mo Hitz. The song was definitely dedicated to Nana, the stupid boyfriend snatcher. Please tell me why I woke up with her face! I mean I woke up looking like her.

I was walking past Green House Room 2 when Aisha shouted, "Nana after you at the taps!" I got to the taps and started filling my bucket when Ope queued after me. Of course, Aisha turned up and it became a fight.

"Excuse me Ope, I am after Nana,"

"How now, there was nobody here when I came,"

"I told her when she was walking here that I was after her,"

The two of them continued and I was just there wondering why they were referring to me as Nana, of all people. I had seen her walking ahead to the showers when I was walking to fetch water, which only added to my confusion. My bucket filled up sha and I left them to it. It was on my way to the showers that I caught a glimpse of myself - I had Nana's face! I quickly went to the Junior showers to hide, and it was there that her face began to fall off - skin began sliding off my face and neck. It was bloody, disgusting and terrifying.

**8<sup>th</sup> of June 2024**

Dear diary,

It's been 15 years! 15 actual years. I don't even know how you're still intact. Mum's Ghana-Must-Go of my stuff is really a treasure trove.

I guess I should update you about my life. I now work at SPYF with Daddy and the things my eyes have seen! Bruh. My official title is "Administrative Official" which is just another way of saying I clean up messes, of the highest order. Without me and my colleagues, this continent would be in serious disarray. People say their leaders are lying to them but trust me, they do not want the truth.

The great thing about my job is the opportunity to travel and enjoy the diversity of our beautiful continent, not every day abroad abroad. I still need my Autumn fix though, so Europe is very much on my travel list every year.

What do I hate about my job...? Hmm, not much to be honest. Like I said I'm contributing to Continental peace, on some level. Men in high places can be such degenerates so I have no qualms killing them. The real inconvenience is having to act like someone else while getting the job done. Let's not forget about having to dispose of the "dead" skin after my mutation is over. Daddy did say it was also his worst part of the job too, good thing he's no longer a field officer.

I also take "Administrative" jobs on the side, solely for women though. But I'm thinking maybe I should stop. Some of them can be so personal and end up staying on my mind for too long, like that job I did for Her Majesty. Bruh.

Her Majesty had contacted me via a SPYF associate and of course I said yes. A high-profile job from a high-profile individual would boost my reputation and make sure I had a pipeline of work outside SPYF. The job was simple - I had to eliminate His Majesty.

I typically never ask questions when I'm contracted to do these side jobs, but I always get answers which makes the killing worth it.

On the day, I timed my mutation perfectly to align with when His Majesty would be arriving from his trip. Unfortunately, His Majesty was running an hour late but there was no problem; I'm a professional and I always plan for contingencies. The Master bedroom, where the elimination would happen, had also been set up - I had done a sweep and ensured the only camera that was operational was the one Her Majesty would be watching on.

I also ensured there was no video recording, but she didn't know that. Her Majesty had also added some touches to the room which she knew her husband would like.

I was in full actress mode, setting up the table with the help of the maids, when His Majesty's arrival announcement was made – basically green light bulbs come on around the house. Her Majesty had stopped the guards from making formal verbal announcements as it made her feel like she was in a bad African American movie. Her life was stressful enough.

“Honey, I'm home,” His Majesty said.

“My darling, how was your trip? How are the kids? I hope they didn't miss me too much?” I replied while giving him a hug and a kiss.

“They're fine o. You know, I made sure that they didn't notice you weren't there. I didn't want them to feel neglected and miss someone who didn't bother to show up despite their cries.”

D E G E N E R A T E. He was obviously putting up a show for the staff. Her Majesty had told me how she had just been to see the kids a couple of months prior and how His Majesty absolutely refused to allow her join him on this trip. He had made up some excuse about not wanting to bother her but they both knew that they could not risk the media noticing her limp and the bandages on her nose. She was getting into too many “accidents” lately and it was just easier to stay at home. At least she was getting a new nose out of it.

His Majesty had eaten, drunk and I knew what was coming next. He did too, but he also didn't. We went to His Majesty's bedroom, and I excused myself to freshen up.

“What's taking you so long?!” His Majesty was drunk and becoming impatient.

“My darling, you know I have to be perfect for you,” I replied winking. Putting on a show is a special part of my skillset, and I am very proud of it.

Her Majesty had instructed me about what to do to get him in the mood, but His Majesty's drunkenness was proving to be problematic. As I approached him, he became more and more belligerent calling me all sorts of names. Water under the bridge.

The stage was set, and it was time for me to end his life. The next thing I knew, I was being pushed aside and Her Majesty began stabbing her husband. She must have gotten about forty strokes in before she collapsed in exhaustion and relief. The smile on her face was something renaissance artists would kill to paint. I had covered His Majesty's head with a pillow to muffle his cries while Her Majesty was exacting her revenge. Also, last last, she wasn't strong enough to take him alone so it served the dual purpose of also holding him down. I took the pillow off his face and there was an eerie look of confusion and disbelief etched on it.

How had Her Majesty gotten past the guards? A more important problem was how we were going to clean up the mess. To further complicate things, it had been 5 hours since all of this transpired and my mutation was ending; Her Majesty's face was sliding off mine. Seeing the end of my mutation jerked Her Majesty back to reality. She looked like she was going to throw up which would have made me laugh if it wasn't such an ironic situation with her dead husband looking like the world's worst focaccia dough before going into the oven.

My biggest problem was still the mess. My method when doing jobs is to spill as little blood as possible. I either gas my targets or inject them with an untraceable nerve agent. Now I had a scene out of a horror movie to deal with.

“Your Majesty, we need to stage this to ensure that you get away scot-free. You're not going to like what I have in mind.” I said while putting her mutation face in a disposal bag.

“I'm sorry my dear, but I couldn't stand it when he started with the name calling.” She responded, “I'm glad it's over now.”

“No problem Your Majesty, I've seen this scenario play out a few times,” I lied. “Now, I am going to inject you with a non-lethal dose of this nerve agent and put you on the bed. I will stage His Majesty's death to look like a crime scene and then make my way out via that secret door. You will wake up in about two days by which time everybody would have found out about His Majesty. He has a lot of enemies; I would advise that you allow the public to speculate which one of them got to him.”

Her Majesty nodded slowly, and I put my plan into action.

By the time I was back home, the news had broken. However, there was a lot of speculation about how His Majesty had died with one media outlet claiming it was a heart attack and Her Majesty had been sedated due to shock.

Anyway, Diary, I should probably stop here. Places to be, people to see and all that good stuff. Olamide's first birthday party is today, and I can already hear guests arriving. I still need to make sure that the party planner has executed the jungle theme perfectly, this party must top the one BamBam threw for Junior when he turned one.

See you next year?