

AMINA: A SURVIVOR

A SHORT ILLUSTRATIVE PICTONARY STORY

DEI (Diversity, Equity&Inclusion/Fairness) of Women By

AJALA, OLAJUMOKE ELIZABETH



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PREFACE

Tevfik Fikret asserts that “*societies that do not educate their daughters make their sons miserable.*”

T. Fikret wished to emphasize that although this condition is detrimental to ladies, and it also harms guys significantly.

In fact, it is evident in real life that a child raised by a mother who is illiterate cannot be sufficiently valuable for herself and society because a child’s family is their first and most essential source of education.

The mother is also the backbone of the family since the female bird constructs the nest.

Additionally, the youngster spends more time with the mother than the father.

Today’s girls can, however, perform any task that a boy can. Girls do not have anything more or less in this regard.

On the other hand, despite the fact that almost all Abrahamic and human belief systems encourage reading, particularly for girls, some members of these belief systems are more adamant about upholding traditions, and some bigots utter crude phrases like “*What will happen if a girl child is being educated?*” But nations that educate their daughters have always been rich, tranquil, and trouble-free nations. History is replete with instances like these.

Sincere thanks...

Muhsin KONUK, Ph.D Professor

Üsküdar University
Vice President

INTRODUCTION

In the heart of adversity, where the shadows of inequality and injustice loom large, there emerges a tale of resilience, courage, and triumph. *Amina: A Survivor* is a story of African women awakening from the darkness of ignorance and inequality and is one that reverberates with hope and inspiration. This Pictionary narrative paints a vivid picture of their journey from the stifling clutches of limited education, gender bias, and early forced marriages, to the radiant light of education, empowerment, knowledge, and self-determination.

The challenges faced by African women have been monumental, yet their spirits remain unbreakable. They have stared down the societal norms that sought to confine them, proving that barriers are meant to be shattered, and glass ceilings were made to be cracked. In a world where opportunities were often denied, they reached out and carved their own destinies, defying odds that once seemed insurmountable.

An African proverb says, “**She who learns, teaches.**” This ancient proverb encapsulates the essence of the transformation African women have undergone. Fueled by an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, they not only rose above the shackles of ignorance themselves but also extended a helping hand to guide others along the path of enlightenment. Their journey mirrors the profound truth that education is not just a tool for personal growth, but a torch that illuminates the lives of those around us.

The tales woven within the pages of this book are not merely stories; they are a testament to the power of the human spirit. They remind us that education is a formidable weapon, capable of eradicating the deeply entrenched roots of gender inequality and injustice. The struggle against early forced girl-child marriages is a fight for liberation and a declaration

that every young girl deserves a chance to dream and grow before she takes on the responsibilities of womanhood.

As we delve into these narratives of courage, persistence, and transformation, let us recognize that the journey is far from the heartbeat of Africa. The fight continues to ensure that every African woman has the opportunity to learn, to lead, and to inspire. Their stories are a rallying cry for change, a call to action to dismantle the barriers that hold back potential and to uplift the voices that have been silenced for far too long.

In turning these pages, may you find inspiration to contribute to a world where every African woman can stand tall, armed with knowledge, and empowered by choice. For it is through education and gender equality that we pave the way for brighter tomorrows, not just for African women, but for humanity.

AMINA:
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In a village called “Kojo”, there lived a 7-year-old girl called “Amina”.



She lives with her family.

Her father is a poor farmer with a small piece of farmland.

Her mother is a housewife.

She has a little brother, “Isa”.

At age 12, Amina does all the house chores.

She goes to the river to fetch water.

She helps her mother take care of her brother, "Isa".

Her father is poor and only has a small farm where he grows vegetables and sells them at the village market.

She cooks food and cleans for the family.

She takes care of her family members.

Her little brother, "Isa" is 5 years old.

He is about to start school.

Amina doesn't go to school.





For Amina, some days are bright and colorful as the sunshine, other days are gloomy and boring!



She knows she deserves better than cooking and caring for the family at the expense of Education.

Amina and her best friend, "Bintu" always go to the river to fetch water.

Amina is always looking up at the sky and loves seeing planes flying overhead.

Amina is always curious and wonders how a plane can fly so high. She wishes to become a pilot someday. She knows her wish is an impossibility because her father is just a poor farmer.

Her father said he was only going to use his little savings to send her brother, "Isa" to school when he grows up.

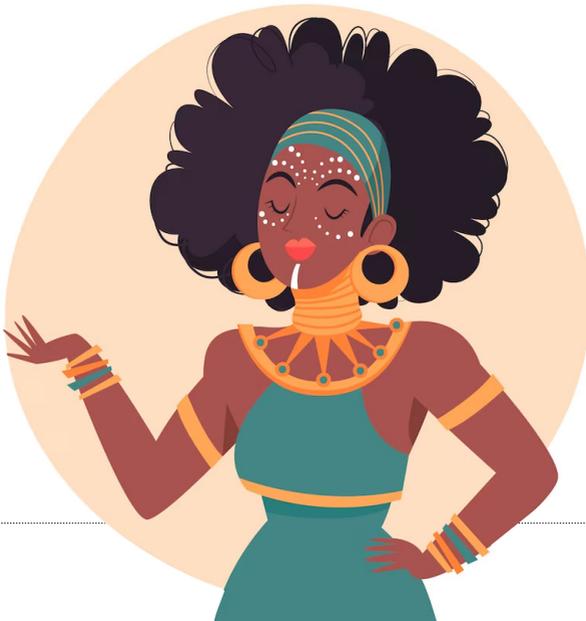
Amina has been hopeful for a miracle since she was 7 years old.

Now she's 12 and no miracle seems to be on her horizon.





She's a Girl and not a Bride!



At age 18, Amina was married off to a 60 year old man who lives in another village.

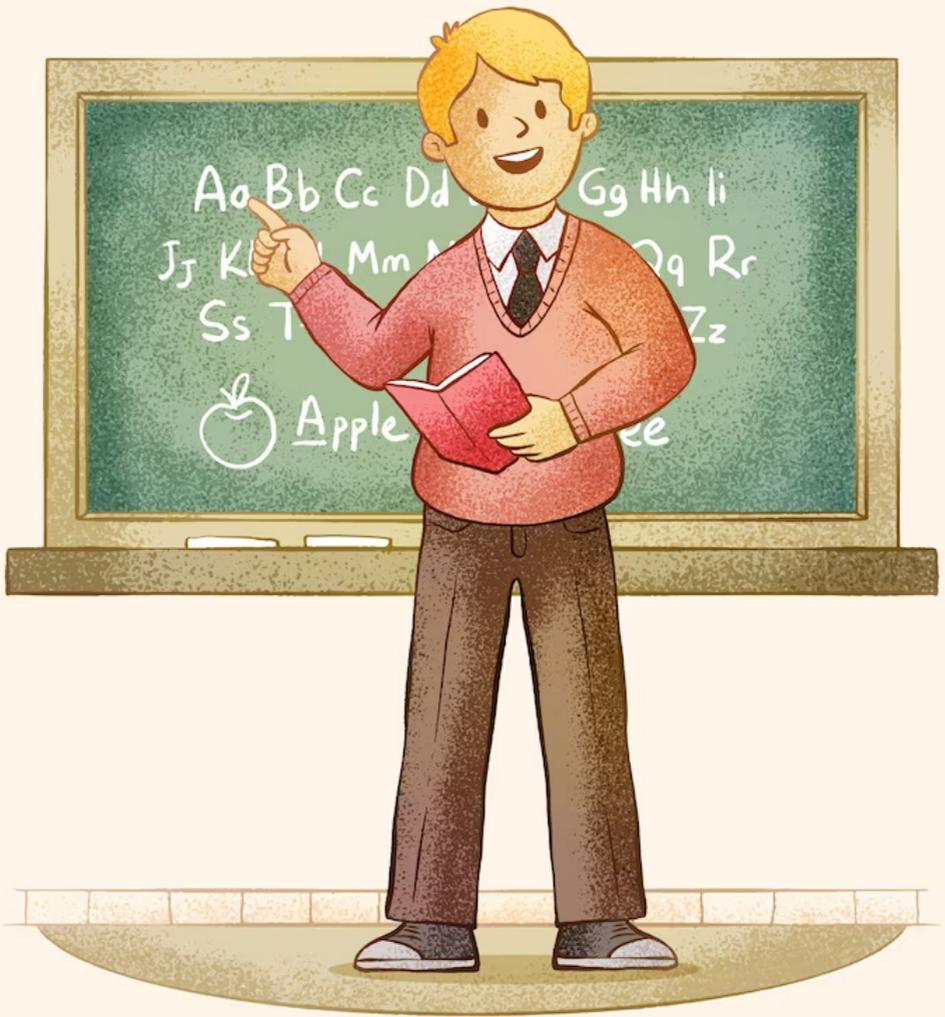
She felt her world crumbling right before her very face.

She was sad and cried all day and night but whenever she sees a plane up in the sky.

Her face lights up and she starts to smile.

Her dreams come back to life at every amazing sight of an airplane in the sky.





A few months into her marriage, Amina ran back home and never returned to her husband's village.

She met Mr. Garry, an American teacher who came as a Christian missionary to Kojo Village.

After she told Mr. Garry her life story he promised to help by enrolling her in a school.

Dreams are valid.
As a girl, keep dreaming.
Nothing is impossible
if you believe and work
hard.





Despite all the odds, Amina finally became the first educated woman in “Kojo” village.

She became a pilot with the help of Mr. Garry who helped her study hard.

She got a scholarship to study in the United States of America.



Today, in Kojo village, all girls go to school.

Thanks to Amina's inspiring story. Educate a girl today.
She is a girl and not a bride. She deserves an equal future of
opportunities and possibilities. Just like a boy. She must be included.
Be fair to her and she will make you proud.

Say Yes to Gender Equality.
Yes to Inclusion of Girls.
Yes to Fairness.
Yes to Equality!!!





*When
you educate a
Girl-child,
You're educating
the World!*

She's a Queen...
She's a warrior...
She's a fighter...

She always rises above all that's meant to pull her down...

Even right before she is born,
There is already a responsibility awaiting her.
She lives her life for others;
bearing children, caring for and nurturing the children,
Her husband, in-laws, aged grandparents
and the family as a whole.

All the above are her non-negotiable job description.
Which has already been culturally assigned to her.
Even before she's born into an African Home!

Educating Her is the least of all priorities...
In Africa,
Education isn't a right but a privilege that is only affordable by the
middle and high-class citizens.

A Girl-child born into a poor home is an option and not
A priority with regard to education.
A Boy-child will automatically be chosen to go to school
In place of a Girl-child.





The Pride of Africa!

Dignity in Labor.

The majority of Africans are living in abject poverty, but always have broad smiles on their faces.

Africans lack a lot, yet they are contented and happy with the little they have.

In Africa, little is truly much!

EARLY CHILD MARRIAGE IN AFRICA: A GRIEVANCE!

Child marriage is a serious issue in Africa, with high rates of child marriage occurring in many countries on the continent. According to UNICEF, 37% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa are married before the age of 18, and 12% are married before the age of 15.

In some countries, the rates of child marriage are particularly high. For example, in Niger, 76% of girls are married before the age of 18, and in Chad and the Central African Republic, the rate is 68%. In Burkina Faso, Mali, and Somalia, the rate is over 50%.

The reasons for high rates of child marriage in Africa are complex and include poverty, cultural and traditional practices, lack of education and economic opportunities for girls, and weak legal frameworks. Child marriage can have serious consequences for girls, including an increased risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, reduced educational and economic opportunities, and increased risk of violence and abuse.

UNICEF and other organizations are working to address the issue of child marriage in Africa through a range of interventions, including increasing access to education for girls, promoting girls' rights and empowerment, and working with communities to change social norms and attitudes towards child marriage.



End Note

To every girl-child out there,

Keep dreaming.

Your dreams are valid.

I know it seems hard and unachievable.

Nothing good comes easy.

The sky is limitless for you to fly.

Keep flying!!!

You are a Queen.

Never let anyone tell you your dreams are unachievable.

Until it's done, don't quit.





An African Girl-child Affirmation

I recently concluded my Ph.D. research in the field of Applied Linguistics and I am a native English lecturer at Uskudar University in Istanbul, Turkey. I am very passionate about educating the African girl-child. My passion is deeply rooted in my African background which culturally affirms the relegating positions of women and the confinement of women to be only useful as caregivers, baby makers, and sexual satisfiers, and relevant in cooking and all kitchen-related affairs. Education isn't usually ascribed as a primary necessity for a woman; being good in the kitchen is her primary responsibility instead. As a young Nigerian woman, I rose above these limitations and found my voice amongst thousands of silenced African girls. These girls are culturally made to believe education isn't a right they are entitled to simply because they are girls, whereas, education is a boy's undeniable right. I greatly value the education of a girl-child, that is why I ensured I am well educated to the highest level of education (Ph.D.) not because I want to prove a point to the male counterparts, but simply because I am a girl-child and education is my right and not a privilege given to me by chance.

Ajala, Olajumoke Elizabeth



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