

W.T.G.I.C.!

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By Katrin Redfern

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## Cast of Characters

MR AYOKUNLE - thirties, African

MARINA - sixties, Eastern European

RUPERT - late thirties or older, English

KYI RAINWATER - late twenties/early thirties, Burmese

## Setting and Time

An unspecified country - casting should be racially and culturally broad, though accent-specific, and carefully balanced to suggest a range of geographical settings. This ambiguity should be supported by the music bridging the scenes, ideally played live with several instruments; but where this is impractical, played by a solo musician on, for instance, a zokra (Arabic oboe/clarinet), pipes, or accordion. This music could start somewhere in Southeast Asia, travel to Turkey, the Balkans and Southern Europe, Northern Africa, west to Spain, and the United Kingdom. The same eclectic principle could apply to the set design, which might appear at times quite alien and hard to pin down, at others quite familiar. Together, these elements should support a sense of a world that's both close and yet a little removed, possibly in time.

ACT 1

SCENE ONE

An office with a hot, tropical bareness about it; a plain desk, two wooden chairs, and a slowly rotating ceiling fan. A formal framed photo of a sashed head-of-state hangs on a wall. Blinds separate the room from two other offices at the back/sides. Largely hidden behind these blinds are two barely discernible figures at work. In the main office, MR AYOKUNLE sits at the desk in a creased linen suit looking through an open file folder of notes. On the other chair sits MARINA, wearing an outdated dress that suggests an earlier time, clutching the handle of the purse in her lap with both hands. It is hot and humid and both of them fan themselves periodically. MR AYOKUNLE is looking not unpleasantly between MARINA and the file of notes on the desk, and wiping his brow with a handkerchief which he folds carefully into his shirt pocket.

MR AYOKUNLE

They say it will get warmer over the next four months. That is until the end of August or the beginning of September, and then there may be a period of cool, most excellently. Now your complaint, was made on the first of December?

MARINA

Yes.

MR AYOKUNLE

(counts on his fingers)

Twenty-two weeks. Usually a complaint will perish before it reaches twenty weeks. But I think we can say that yours is established. Is this your first?

MARINA

Yes.

MR AYOKUNLE

I thought so.

(after a silence)

You wish to go through with this, truly?

MARINA

I do.

MR AYOKUNLE takes an alcoholic hand-cleanser from a desk drawer and cleans his hands methodically before lifting the desk phone, dialing an extension.

MR AYOKUNLE

I need a DV30... thank you Rupert.

He replaces the receiver, and takes out a packet from another drawer. He opens this and removes a pair of white reading gloves, putting these on through the following.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

You will have to answer a few questions.

RUPERT enters with the form in a big manila envelope. He hands it to MR AYOKUNLE, all the time glaring at MARINA with inexplicable malevolence.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

Thank you.

RUPERT goes, glaring at MARINA all the while, making her uncomfortable. MR AYOKUNLE opens the envelope and tips out a form and a piece of string onto the desk.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

Please, draw your chair closer. These are simply formalities, so that your complaint may proceed in a merry fashion. If you cannot answer a question we shall return to it at the end, if there's time.

MARINA

Time?

MR AYOKUNLE

There is a time limit.

(taking a timer from a drawer and setting it)

MARINA

Why?

MR AYOKUNLE

So that it's fair on the others. Although in this case there are no others.

(after staring at her, he reads)

Date... we have established that...

(writes)

December... da-di-da.. Your name...

(fills in)

...and also I shall need the name and address of your closest living relative. Just there... after... no, no don't touch the paper!

(he waits as she fills these in)

Very good.

(takes back the form and the pen, disposes of the pen and takes another out of a wrapper)

Are you married?

MARINA

No.

MR AYOKUNLE

Cohabiting?

MARINA

No.

MR AYOKUNLE

Are you seeing someone on a regular or a semi-regular basis?

MARINA

(hesitating)

Ye-e-s.

MR AYOKUNLE

An irregular basis? I shall put 'yes' but with two e's, to give a sense of uncertainty.

(does so)

How would you describe your relations with this person?

MARINA

I wouldn't.

MR AYOKUNLE

Not at all?

MARINA

Not unless I had to. Do I have to?

MR AYOKUNLE  
(reads on. After a moment... )

No. Have you ever suffered from malaria?

MARINA

Never.

MR AYOKUNLE

'Poss-ib-ly ..'

(fills in)

Next question. Katharine Hepburn or Spencer Tracy?

MARINA

I'm sorry?

MR AYOKUNLE

Which would you favor, for example, in a divorce settlement?

MARINA looks blank. MR AYOKUNLE leans forward  
confidentially.

MR AYOKUNLE

(softly)

They are attempting to build a psychological profile.

(aloud again)

You can put either one, 'both', 'neither', or 'don't know'.

MARINA

I'm not sure.

MR AYOKUNLE

You're unsure?

MARINA

No. Yes. I mean... yes. I am.

MR AYOKUNLE

'Unsure.'

(fills in the box and takes up the piece of string)

Your arm please.

MARINA offers her arm and he slips the looped string  
around her wrist, removes it carefully, marking it and tying  
a knot, stapling it to the form.

MARINA

Why did you do that?

MR AYOKUNLE

I don't know. It is something left over from the past. Everything is, you see, in flux. I will also need to take a photo of your teeth...

(takes a digital camera from his desk drawer)

Would you please sit under the light?... Thank you... and look up... open please...

(takes a photo)

And the top jaw... head back... more...

(does the same, and checks the image, before dropping the camera into the envelope)

We are nearly there. Last question. Would you swear allegiance to the flag?

MARINA

We don't have a flag.

MR AYOKUNLE

No, we don't, that is right.

(looks at the next page)

I see, it continues... if we had one.' There are three options once again... 'yes', 'no', and 'maybe'?

MARINA

Is this another trap?

MR AYOKUNLE

I'm sorry, I can't tell you that.

(softly)

Yes.

MARINA

(softly)

What should I say?

MR AYOKUNLE

(softly)

Nothing.

MARINA

How...?

MR AYOKUNLE

Sshh.

MARINA nearly speaks, but he indicates for her not to. They wait. After a few moments, the alarm goes off on MR AYOKUNLE 's timer.

That was close.

(big smile)

We're done.

Contrastingly bright, clear, evocative music over the short scene change.

SCENE TWO

The same. MARINA is sitting as before. It is even hotter, she fans herself with purpose. The music fades as MR AYOKUNLE enters briskly, carrying the same envelope.

MR AYOKUNLE

I'm very sorry to have kept you drowning in this solitude. It is extremely pleasant to see you again.

(a handshake)

Please.

(sitting as well)

We have good news. I have received back your DV30, and I am delighted to inform you it has been almost unanimously approved. Isn't that fine?

MARINA

Yes. Yes it is.

MR AYOKUNLE

(takes a tin from a drawer)

Would you like a butterscotch?

MARINA

Thank you.

MR AYOKUNLE

(after staring at her)

There was only one area of concern.

MARINA

Concern?

MR AYOKUNLE

I have asked you in, so that we might go through it...

(the phone rings)

Do you mind? It is a personal call but this is the only telephone that still works in the present conditions.

(into phone)

Yes? Excuse me, I shall pass you on to him.

(waiting, and then in a different accent)

Hullo... yes?... Well, they assured me they would... I gave you my credit rating, it was confirmed, we discussed... they called you?... You'll have the confirmation but I'd like to put it on record I think this is appalling!

(puts phone down, and back to his own voice)

I am trying to purchase a suit. From a tailor's in London. In tweed. But it seems these days a fellow cannot even buy himself a suit on the expectation of his future fortune without knowing somebody. The banks are out of control! Forgive me raising my voice. Do you know it's twelve degrees warmer than when you last were here?

(checks his watch)

However, our fan has been reconditioned. We have a new speed, and between two and four p.m. we can make use of it willy-nilly. Shall we give it a burn?

MR AYOKUNLE points a remote control at the fan, which speeds up imperceptibly.

Brrrr.

MARINA

I wonder... could you stop him staring?

RUPERT is glaring at MARINA through the blinds.

MR AYOKUNLE

I'm afraid I cannot tell him that because he's not in this office, I'd be stepping on toes. But I can ask, politely. Rupert, my friend?

RUPERT

What?

MR AYOKUNLE

I wonder if you would mind not staring at the lady.

RUPERT

Go to hell.

(disappears)

MR AYOKUNLE

Pay no attention to him. He's gone anyway. Let's not allow ourselves to be distracted...

RUPERT suddenly runs into the office and aims a vicious-looking blow at MARINA, who manages to avoid it, screaming in surprise. MR AYOKUNLE wrestles RUPERT off and pins his arms.

There's no call for this at all, my dear fellow...

RUPERT

(at Marina)

Maniac!

MR AYOKUNLE

Go to lunch!

(letting Rupert go)

Go!

MR AYOKUNLE fetches a handgun from his desk drawer.

RUPERT

I'm going...

(at Marina)

Snake!

RUPERT shakes his finger at MARINA, a dire warning, and goes.

MR AYOKUNLE

Ignore him. He has been suffering from personal problems. Someone is sleeping with his wife. Now, let us use this invigorating air and discuss your situation.

MARINA

There's a difficulty with my complaint?

MR AYOKUNLE

No, no, the complaint is proceeding marvelously well. They had just one small concern.

MARINA

Who are 'they'?

MR AYOKUNLE

No one. Merely a turn of phrase. All complaints are sent as a matter of course to an independent advisory network, or 'Ian'. Ian casts an eye over the preliminary documents and recommends the best course for the complaint to take thereafter, if there's felt to be a problem.

MARINA

So there's a problem...

MR AYOKUNLE

No no, not a problem.

MARINA

You said there was.

MR AYOKUNLE

*If* there's a problem. There is no problem. Only a concern.

MARINA

A concern is less serious than a problem?

MR AYOKUNLE

Many levels less, yes, yes, oh yes. A concern is only one level above the lowest level of all - a slight concern - then there's a concern, and then, ascending from there, an issue, a serious issue, a slight difficulty, and so on up to a problem. Then, confusingly, there's a plain difficulty, which is actually separated from a slight difficulty by a problem. I don't know why it's like that, it just is. But a concern is really very minor indeed.

MARINA

But it's more than a slight concern?

MR AYOKUNLE

Yes.

(looks Marina directly in the eye. )

The concern... was not slight.

(lets the significance sink in)

That is why I am going to recommend you speak with someone who can help you.

Music, and fast scene change.

### SCENE THREE

The courtyard - a large open space, dramatically half in shadow, its sunny half seeringly bright.

MARINA waits on a bench, conscious of being watched from the windows above. She turns and stands as she hears KYI RAINWATER approaching, clip-clopping along in noisy heels. She wears a long silk wrap around skirt.

### KYI RAINWATER

KYI RAINWATER

(they shake hands)

I thought it would be nicer to meet down here in the courtyard. There was a rumor of a breeze...

(evidently false)

Shall we sit in the shade? I like to be informal, don't you? It's so much easier to create a rapport.

They sit on the bench. We can just hear the faint chattering/echoing of voices coming from the windows above.

I remember when shade was something one could feel. It's such a shame, this courtyard's hardly ever used. Don't worry about all the people looking down.

As MARINA looks up the chattering above them subsides.

I'm assuming Mister Ayokunle explained who I was. Am. I think you're so lucky to have Mister Ayokunle working on your behalf. He's a very dedicated man. Don't you think so?

MARINA

Yes, very.

KYI RAINWATER

What?

MARINA

Quite dedicated.

KYI RAINWATER

'Quite'? Or 'very'?

KYI RAINWATER produces a form from her briefcase,  
and is poised to fill out MARINA's answer.

MARINA

Very.

KYI RAINWATER

(ticking a box)

I think he's an extraordinary man. Person. Now, let me tell you a bit about me. My name is Kyi Rainwater, hello... and I'm the Society's Liaison Advisor. However, you must understand that I don't work for the Society. I'm only attached to the Society. I'm leading on your case for the Society but I'm not from the Society.

MARINA

I see. I would like to understand something before we start.

KYI RAINWATER

Of course you would.

MARINA

You're not from the Society?

KYI RAINWATER

No.

MARINA

But you report to the Society?

KYI RAINWATER

Correct.

MARINA

You're independent?

KYI RAINWATER

(after a moment)

No no no.

MARINA

You must be one or the other.

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. Or neither. I may be neither. And I'm neither. As Liaison Advisor my function is to advise people, in this instance you, on the best way for the Society to process your complaint.

MARINA

You advise me on the best way for the Society to process my complaint?

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. I believe 'Ian' had some remarks. The Independent Advisory Network. Did you read them?

MARINA

I did.

KYI RAINWATER

You read them?!

MARINA

They were read to me.

KYI RAINWATER

'Read to you...'

(ticking another box)

MARINA

By Mister Ayokunle.

KYI RAINWATER

Who else!

(beat)

That was a question.

MARINA

No one.

KYI RAINWATER ticks a box on a different sheet of paper, takes out a little stamping machine, stamps the sheet of paper, tears it off and staples it to the back of the form. As she finishes...

KYI RAINWATER

Sometimes I don't know what time of day it is. Do you ever have that feeling?

MARINA

Sometimes.

KYI RAINWATER

How often? Do you have that feeling? How often are you disoriented? The other day I completely forgot where I was. I woke up and looked outside and for about an hour I couldn't say. Everywhere's so like everywhere else, isn't it? Or maybe it's the weather being so interesting. At one moment I was convinced I was in Istanbul, the next it felt like Paris! And then it sort of seeped in I was here. Do you ever get that feeling? Of not knowing where you are?

MARINA

I know where I am.

KYI RAINWATER

So did I. Do I.

MARINA

I'm not disoriented.

A peel of muffled laughter goes round the courtyard.  
MARINA looks up and it stops.

KYI RAINWATER

Well, in any case, I'm here to advise you. However, before I advise you, I have to advise you I cannot legally offer you advice.

MARINA

I thought you were the Liaison Advisor?

KYI RAINWATER

I was. Am. It's confusing, isn't it? Let me explain. I do advise, but only within the Society.

MARINA

But you said you didn't work for the Society.

KYI RAINWATER

Exactly. I don't. I interface between members of the Society.

MARINA

May I ask you another question?

KYI RAINWATER

No. Not that I can answer. That would be giving advice. I'm here not to advise, but to listen to you,

and by listening, assist you in understanding the nature of your concerns.

MARINA

My concerns?

KYI RAINWATER

Ian's concerns.

MARINA

There was only one, as I understand it. They felt...

KYI RAINWATER

It. Ian's a network.

MARINA

It said it felt it didn't feel it knew enough about me, as an individual, and it wanted to get to know me better before assessing the substance of my complaint.

KYI RAINWATER

Hmnn. I think that's very sensible, don't you? And this is why I'm here, so I can get a sense of what-you-just-said, and take that back to Ian. But first I'm going to tell you a bit about the Society, and its position in the overall ecology. That way everyone gets to know where everyone's coming from. Ecologically. Does that seem like a good idea to you?

MARINA

Fine...

KYI RAINWATER

(on a new form)

An excellent idea? Or a bad idea?

MARINA

Whichever.

KYI RAINWATER

`Whichever'...

(ticking another box)

Now. I want to explain to you how the Society's placed, in reference to itself, apropos its function, especially... and I don't want this to go any further than us... as it approaches its annual review. Going forward. You see, since the reforms, the Society has been in a constant state of self-evaluation. In fact, self-evaluation takes up about ninety percent of its resources.

That's why it's so important they're spent wisely. It just so happens that this time is a very delicate time in the current climate, and by climate I don't mean climate... but this could in fact be the worst possible time for a complaint to be brought against the Society, going forward, at this time.

MARINA

And when would be a good time?

KYI RAINWATER

I can't advise you. Can I just remark that I've really enjoyed listening to you? It's been fascinating and from my point of view very worthwhile. I hope it has been from yours too?

MARINA

(confused)

Yes...

KYI RAINWATER

Moderately worthwhile? Or unsatisfactory?

(off Marina's look)

You said 'very' so I'll put that. I'll put very.

She dates the form, folds it, puts it away, stands, and offers her hand.

KYI RAINWATER

(continuing)

Let's stay in touch.

MARINA

What do you mean?

KYI RAINWATER just smiles, they shake hands and she exits. The hum of talking from the windows starts up again. MARINA stands, looking up at the windows. Music over the scene change.

SCENE FOUR

The office. MR AYOKUNLE is standing in his undershirt, having his measurements taken by an irritated RUPERT.

RUPERT

The neck is seventeen.

MR AYOKUNLE

Exactly?

RUPERT

Perhaps you'd like to measure it yourself!

MR AYOKUNLE

It cannot be approximate. It must be accurate to a twelfth of an inch. I could be called away at any time...

MARINA knocks on the door jamb, but is unheard. She enters a step or two into the room and waits.

RUPERT

You won't be called, you fool. There's only so far you can rise, you know, even with a tailored suit.

MR AYOKUNLE

I could be called imminently...

(seeing Marina, surprised but covering)

Oh. Please come in.

(to Rupert)

We'll finish this later.

RUPERT

I may not be free to do it later.

MR AYOKUNLE

You'll do it later.

RUPERT

You can't make me.

A very short, very untidy scuffle between them that MR AYOKUNLE wins.

MR AYOKUNLE

You trouble your luck, Rupert.

RUPERT

*I* trouble my luck!

MR AYOKUNLE

Pull yourself together.

RUPERT

Damn it, she's watching!

Both men glance at KYI RAINWATER watching through the blinds. As soon as they look, she flips the blinds up and disappears.

MR AYOKUNLE

Why don't you return to your work.

RUPERT straightens himself out and exits, reappearing moments later in his own office where, during the following, he roughly turns up the blinds.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

Tempers are always a little thin when the humidity reaches a hundred. Can I ask how you managed to find your way past security?

MARINA

I waited until it was asleep. Sorry not to make an appointment. I'm here because I wish to lodge another complaint. A second complaint.

MR AYOKUNLE

I see. Did you not meet with the Liaison Advisor?

MARINA

It concerns the Liaison Advisor.

MR AYOKUNLE suddenly becomes aware of RUPERT and KYI RAINWATER watching again through the blinds, which both immediately twitch and close.

MR AYOKUNLE

Your meeting did not go well?

(indicates for Marina to take a chair)

MARINA

At first I didn't understand the purpose of the meeting. But then it became clear that Miss Rainwater's motive was to try to shanoogle me away from bringing my complaint.

MR AYOKUNLE

Shanoogle?

MARINA

Yes.

MR AYOKUNLE

That is a very strong word. Please continue.

MARINA

It seemed to me, rather than to listen to the details of my complaint, as I had been led to believe was the purpose...

MR AYOKUNLE

By who?

MARINA

By you.

MR AYOKUNLE

Go on.

MARINA

...it seemed in fact to be to morally blackmail me.

MR AYOKUNLE

Morally?

MARINA

Yes.

MR AYOKUNLE

Morally? That's the very worst sort. Go on.

MARINA

She told me that my complaint might embarrass the Society in its upcoming spending review.

MR AYOKUNLE

Let me get this clear. She told you it might be an inconvenient time for you to bring your complaint?

MARINA

Yes.

MR AYOKUNLE

She had no right to say that. And even less right to imply it. I'm going to get to the bottom of this. Please, wait here.

MR AYOKUNLE heads towards the door, then hesitates and goes to his desk and takes out his gun from the drawer.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

Take this.

(softly)

Don't worry, it's not loaded. But he doesn't know that.

(loud voice)

It should keep him off if he tries anything. I won't be long.

He exits. MARINA settles to wait, immediately disturbed by RUPERT at the blinds. An odd game of peek-a-boo develops, making MARINA jump.

RUPERT

Hsst.

MARINA

What do you want?

RUPERT

You don't fool me. I know a subversive when I see one. You think you can slip through the wire. You think because you appear innocent you won't be spotted. But I know what you're doing. You must have planned this minutely. Attacking the Society with your complaint. You'll never get it through. I'll tell you something you ought to know. In here, your friends are your enemies, and your enemies are your friends. Do you know why? Because your enemies sometimes tell you the truth...

RUPERT suddenly closes the blinds, having heard MR AYOKUNLE coming.

MR AYOKUNLE

(enters, looking thoughtful)

I don't want to dance around your pond. I shall come straight to the point. I spoke with Miss

Rainwater, and she told me it was you who raised the matter of the spending review.

MARINA

She told you that?

MR AYOKUNLE

She said it was you who raised the subject. Not her.

MARINA

Why would I do that?

MR AYOKUNLE

I don't know.

MARINA

Do you believe her?

MR AYOKUNLE

This is very awkward.

MARINA

What if I told you I'd recorded our conversation?

MR AYOKUNLE

This conversation!?

MARINA

My conversation with Miss Rainwater. That I routinely record all conversations with officials, after a frightening childhood experience.

She produces a tape recorder from her bag. MR  
AYOKUNLE is momentarily knocked off balance.

MR AYOKUNLE

I shall talk again with Miss Rainwater.

He goes. RUPERT reappears at the blinds.

RUPERT

That was clever.

He disappears from behind the blinds and reappears at the door, holding a large piece of paper and some marker pens. He goes to MR AYOKUNLE's desk and begins writing on the paper.

MARINA

What do you want with me?

RUPERT

I want you to desist! Cease and desist. You'll never succeed you know.

Draws on the paper to illustrate his points, every so often stopping to listen for MR AYOKUNLE's return.

You have to understand the Society is an organism... like this, look at this genius... it's not designed, it has evolved, like coral, a brain... not fixed at all., the individuals inside it are like 'thoughts'. Here and gone phhht!... and when a thing... like you... attacks..., or penetrates... it moves... reorients itself around you... and consumes you. It can't be defeated! But there's a problem. Isn't there? With your complaint?

MARINA

A concern.

We hear the faintest hint of MR AYOKUNLE and KYI RAINWATER 's love-making coming from the other office. RUPERT looks deeply anguished.

RUPERT

Now they're doing it in office time. Bastards. My life is wretched. You wont survive here. That's all I'm telling you.

(hearing giggling from the other office. )

That's his leaving-the-room laugh.

Quickly rolling up the sheet of paper, he scuttles out the door. A moment later MR AYOKUNLE enters.

MR AYOKUNLE

This is most embarrassing. I don't know what to say...

(looking around)

Was Rupert in here?

(Marina shakes her head)

I talked again with Miss Rainwater. And it appears, that in fact, she never claimed you brought up the matter of the spending review at all.

MARINA

You said she did.

MR AYOKUNLE

This is why it's so embarrassing. I misunderstood her. I inferred she had said that you had been the first to mention the spending review, but she hadn't. She never said it at all.

MARINA

Then she admits she was the one who mentioned it?

MR AYOKUNLE

I didn't ask her that. I should have asked her, I agree, but my priority was to ensure I understood what she had not said. It may in fact transpire that neither of you said it first.

MARINA

So she didn't deny it wasn't unsaid?

MR AYOKUNLE

No, and that's probably how the confusion started. I've taken the precautionary measure of disciplining Miss Rainwater if indeed it does transpire otherwise. I've requested she be removed, sideways.

(takes a pen from a wrapper, writes on a sheet of paper)

We cannot have this sort of thing going on. We cannot allow your trust in the Society to be hurt in this way. For this reason I'm sending you directly to Internal Complaints. They will be able to make an independent assessment of exactly what's been happening. This is a map of how to get from the main entrance to their office. Here's a compass. Count your paces carefully, and head equally north and west. Trust me, this is more reliable than verbal directions. Words can sometimes be ambiguous, don't you think?

He hands her the piece of paper. They shake hands. Music over a fast scene change.

SCENE FIVE

Another office, a reverse of MR AYOKUNLE's, with identical furniture. MARINA enters with the compass. She looks around and sits on one of the two chairs. She waits, looking uncertainly around the office. KYI RAINWATER enters carrying a cardboard box. They both seem surprised to see one another.

KYI RAINWATER

You!

You!

MARINA

How are you?

KYI RAINWATER

Well thank you.

MARINA

It's the devil to find, isn't it?

KYI RAINWATER

I had a compass.

MARINA

This is Internal Complaints?

KYI RAINWATER

I think so. It seems like I've walked round the whole building.

MARINA

May I sit here?

KYI RAINWATER

She sits in the other chair and puts her box on the desk.

MARINA

I suppose they wanted to talk to both of us together.

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. Who?

MARINA

Internal Complaints. I'm sorry you lost your job.

KYI RAINWATER

Don't think about it. I don't. I never dwell in the past.  
(gesturing round the office)

A bit bare, isn't it?

MARINA

All these offices look the same to me.

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. It could do with more of a personal touch. I have a plant!

(takes a cactus out the box)

That would look nice there I think, on the corner.

(she hands it to Marina, who puts it on the desk)

That's better. Did they tell you when the interview was going to start ?

MARINA

At three.

KYI RAINWATER

Three. I've actually got something else here that might look right.

(producing an intray)

That could be quite useful, couldn't it?

MARINA

Probably. Are these from your office?

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. I was asked to clear my desk.

(she pulls a desk lamp from the box)

MARINA

Shouldn't you keep that?

KYI RAINWATER

What for?

MARINA

Your next job.

KYI RAINWATER

That's really thinking too far ahead.

She tips everything from the box, pens, clips, etc, onto the desk.

MARINA

I don't think you should do that. They may not like it.

KYI RAINWATER

Who?

MARINA

Internal Complaints. The manager.

KYI RAINWATER sits at the desk to arrange everything.  
The truth suddenly sinks in for MARINA.

MARINA

(continuing)

It's you! Isn't it? They made you Internal Complaints Manager.

KYI RAINWATER

Yes.

MARINA

This is...!

KYI RAINWATER

What?

MARINA

My complaint is against you!

KYI RAINWATER

That was in a previous life. I assure you. I've checked any personal considerations at that door. I shall be completely impartial.

MARINA

I think this is being done to divert me, because you can't find anything wrong with my complaint.

KYI RAINWATER

Who told you that?

MARINA

The hysterical man in the office next to Mister Ayokunle's.

KYI RAINWATER

That hysterical man, as you put it, is my husband.

MARINA

Rupert is your husband?

KYI RAINWATER

Oh, they call him Rupert just to annoy me. I know you're wondering why I married him. When I met him he was a different man entirely. They thought he would even make Prosecutor. I was one of his... clients. I can still remember the feeling when he cross-examined me. He was so dynamic, I was completely in awe of him. Well, everyone was. I became his secretary, after. You see, he was the victim of his own success. No one dared cross him, and so the work dropped off. I retrained as a Liaison Advisor. And then Mister Ayokunle moved in to the office between us. It's all your fault. If it hadn't been for your complaint, nothing would've happened. The excitement when it first came in... the shock... it was all so... alive. There would have been no late nights creating the paperwork. If I'm thrown out, I won't be able to bear it. Do you think an administrator's heart doesn't beat? That the world doesn't exist beyond your silly complaint? That we aren't human? Don't pretend you don't find this baffling. You do. Say you do!

MARINA

Yes yes. If you like. Now how do we go about this?

KYI RAINWATER

(recovering)

Okay. Now. You must register your secondary complaint.

MARINA

Very well, I wish to lodge a secondary complaint...

KYI RAINWATER

Against?

MARINA

The Liaison Advisor.

KYI RAINWATER

I'm filling in her name.

(writing)

Can I ask the grounds?

MARINA

She attempted to morally blackmail me.

KYI RAINWATER

Morally?

(tuts)

That's the worse sort, isn't it? How did that make you feel? I bet you were furious. Out of control

even. Were you? And you'd have every right to be. And she definitely said that?

MARINA

Yes.

KYI RAINWATER

It infuriates *me*, and I'm not you.

MARINA

It won't work, you know.

KYI RAINWATER

What...?

MARINA

This. If you think this will drive me crazy or put me off filing my complaint, you're wrong.

KYI RAINWATER

I don't understand. You find my demeanor too professional?

MARINA

Just tell me. What will happen to my complaint?

KYI RAINWATER

This one or the original...?

MARINA

This one.

KYI RAINWATER

It depends on whether you want to take it further. Of course, it will have to be resolved prior to the processing of your original complaint, because it directly calls into question the personnel involved. Me. Her. Us. We're the personnel. So there'll be a delay.

MARINA

How long a delay?

KYI RAINWATER

Two weeks to... a year.

MARINA

Then I wish to make a third complaint.

KYI RAINWATER

(after the shock)

A third...? A third.

(flustered)

Of course. But you'll need to make an appointment.

(she picks up the desk phone, pulling its wire from  
the wall)

At reception. This isn't connected. Why are you laughing? It isn't funny at all. From your point of view, it's very frustrating.

MARINA

I'll make an appointment on the way out. Thank you for your time.

MARINA exits. KYI RAINWATER goes to the door and checks she has gone, looking up and down the corridor, unnerved, returns and picks up the phone to make a call, remembers it isn't working. Music over - lengthy, and with a break in the middle, suggesting a passage of time.

ACT 2

SCENE ONE

MR AYOKUNLE 's office. MR AYOKUNLE, in a very sharp, tailored tweed suit, is opening a bottle of champagne. RUPERT is seated on the edge of the desk, relaxed and smiling. The champagne pops. MARINA enters as MR AYOKUNLE pours the champagne into an improvised assortment of cups and glasses.

MR AYOKUNLE

Come in, come in!

MARINA

Am I interrupting?

MR AYOKUNLE

No no, join us! We are celebrating good news. I am so sorry it has taken so long to find you an appointment.

MARINA

Four months.

MR AYOKUNLE

Is it? Was it? Has it been so long?

MARINA

Four months.

MR AYOKUNLE

Four months. Well, we've been so busy. And so much has changed. The pace of reform. You know on average your waiting time, aggregated and divided by your number of appointments overall has been only three weeks, which complies comfortably with our waiting-time target.

MARINA

Is this celebration connected to my complaint?

MR AYOKUNLE

It is, indeed, indeed connected. To your complaint. How did you know that?

(silence)

I can tell you, very happily, that because of the most unsatisfactory way this department has handled your complaint, that we are to receive a massive increase in funding.

RUPERT

It's a great vote of confidence in the future of the department.

MR AYOKUNLE

I myself am personally being sent to a secret location to be retrained. I am to have my management practices upgraded with the most recent techniques from abroad. All in all, therefore, I can say everything has worked out marvelously well.

Clinks glasses with RUPERT, they drink. There is the sound of a horn outside.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

My bus.

(taking up his hat)

In my absence a special report has been commissioned, that will look into every aspect of the department's activities in order to assign blame. Rupert here has been appointed to deliver it. I shall leave you in his capable hands.

(softly)

He's a completely different man.

(loud)

Farewell.

He empties his champagne glass and exits.

MARINA

You seem a happier man.

RUPERT

I am... refulgent. I don't know if that's a word but it sums up my state of being precisely. My life has been entirely turned around. How fast things move these days. Would you like to share my picnic?

MARINA

I've eaten.

RUPERT

Let me tempt you. I have farki and some chermoula. There's even some mergueza, done in the American manner, with pickles, cheese, and ketchup, in a sesame bun.

MARINA

Perhaps some chermoula.

RUPERT

And the best part of it all? Not only has he been sent away, but my wife has been given a year's contract to investigate herself. She has moved into my old office.

(the blinds twitch and close)

So, it really has turned out remarkably well. Thanks to you.

(softly)

She's upset he's gone, of course, but that's my opportunity, isn't it? To win her back.

(loud)

So. Here we are.

(produces a form and a wrapped pen from his pocket, offers it from its wrapper)

You need to sign this.

MARINA

What is it?

RUPERT

It permits you to use the gymnasium, and facilities, for overnight stays, the cafeteria, showers, locker area, etcetera. They're very generous in that way. Just there. And there. Don't touch the paper! Thank you.

(disposes of the pen in the wastebasket and indicates the chair)

Please, have a seat.

MARINA

What's this for?

RUPERT

You'll be staying here until the report finds your complaint unwarranted. We've been gathering information. All using proper protocol of course. What should have been done before things got this far.

MARINA

Is that why it's taken four months?

RUPERT

Probably. It must be water tight, we must prove your guilt beyond a shadow of a doubt.

MARINA

I'm not guilty, I just want to see through my complaint.

(sitting)

Before we proceed, I must ask a question.

RUPERT

No.

MARINA

What?

RUPERT

I'm sorry, I was too quick. Ask what? Of course.

MARINA

What has happened to my complaint?

RUPERT

In what sense?

MARINA

Where is it? In the process. What has happened to it in these four months?

RUPERT

Ah I see, yes in that sense. Your complaint has been upheld.

MARINA

Upheld?

RUPERT

Indeed.

MARINA

By who?

RUPERT

The Complaints Review Committee.

MARINA

When did that happen?

RUPERT

Tomorrow. No. That would make no sense at all. They will meet tomorrow. But in order to meet they first had to uphold the complaint.

MARINA

Shouldn't they have met before they upheld it?

RUPERT

You'd have thought so, wouldn't you? But this report can't go ahead unless your complaint was first acknowledged. Of course by 'upheld', I mean it has only been temporarily upheld. What goes up must come down. It would be more accurate to say your complaint has been suspended, until this report has been completed and processed.

MARINA

I'd like to ask something else. It's something that's concerned me since I first approached the Society with my complaint.

RUPERT

Please.

MARINA

I still haven't stated what it is. The complaint! No one even knows what it is!

RUPERT

That's why it's been taken so seriously, that's why everyone's been running round in circles. That's

been its genius. Its devastating and unanswerable quality. Will you also read this please and sign?

MARINA

What is it?

RUPERT

It permits the use of a polygraph. If you're not interrogated properly it won't look good in the report. It will help the process enormously.

RUPERT pulls a small machine from a desk drawer, puts it on the desk and untangles some lengthy wires.

MARINA

A lie-detector?

RUPERT

You don't mind? Why should you, if you're innocent. Now you hold these two ends here, and here..., squeeze tightly... and I tape around your fists, like this... clench..., and like this... again..., and there we are. Is that comfortable?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

It should be moderately uncomfortable. Now I just have to adjust the settings. To do this I will ask you some questions. I'd like you to listen, count to three, and then answer 'yes' to each question. Are you ready?

MARINA

(pauses)

Yes.

RUPERT

I haven't started yet. You didn't have to pause. I shall start now. Are you sitting on a chair?

(pause)

MARINA

Yes.

RUPERT

Are you a human?

(pause)

MARINA

Yes.

RUPERT

Are you apprehensive?

MARINA

No. I mean...

(pause)

yes.

RUPERT

Are you sitting on a chair?

(pause)

MARINA

Yes.

RUPERT

Are you the Emperor of China?

(pause)

MARINA

Yes.

RUPERT

Now we can begin. Take your time. Think very hard about the questions, and answer each one truthfully.

Music, very briefly, over a rapid scene change.

## SCENE TWO

The same - but later. RUPERT is in the middle of some impassioned questioning...

RUPERT

...then why are you terrorizing the Society?

MARINA

I'm not.

RUPERT

Is your plan to bring the whole edifice down about your ears?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

Then what are you doing here?

MARINA

Only seeing through my complaint!

RUPERT

(checks the polygraph)

So you say. Your life seems to have been designed to cause trouble. Everything you've done seems to have been for that purpose. Tell me once more, what you say you do?

MARINA

Nothing.

RUPERT

Where? Do you do it?

MARINA

Anywhere.

RUPERT

I shall tell you what you do, and you can agree, or disagree. You stand. Don't you?

MARINA

Sometimes.

RUPERT

And sit.

MARINA

Occasionally.

RUPERT

And sometimes you walk? And now and then you'll dress in provocative clothing.

MARINA

I don't wear anything deliberately provocative.

RUPERT

(reading from the file)

Once you stood in the square with a question mark on your back.

MARINA

It was a scarf.

RUPERT

In the shape of a question mark.

MARINA

So I was told.

RUPERT

You don't deny it then?

MARINA

It was just the way the material fell.

RUPERT

You like to stand, don't you? Very still.

MARINA

Yes, we established that.

RUPERT

And walk.

MARINA

Daily.

RUPERT

But not in the way that others stand, or walk.

MARINA

I don't know what you mean.

RUPERT

(checking the polygraph again)

Tell me about the plinth. You stand on. In the square.

MARINA

Is that what it is?

RUPERT

Why do you do it?

MARINA

To get a view.

RUPERT

Of what? What are you looking at? When you stand on your plinth.

MARINA

It isn't my plinth. It's just there.

RUPERT

Nevertheless, some refer to it as your plinth.

MARINA

Do they?

RUPERT

You've stood on that plinth on over twenty separate occasions.

MARINA

Have I really? You've counted.

RUPERT

Staring.

MARINA

At what?

RUPERT

The buildings. Whose buildings are they in the square?

MARINA

They belong to the Society.

RUPERT

Has it crossed your mind that by standing as you do, regularly, on a plinth in President King Square, and staring at the buildings, you might be drawing attention to yourself?

MARINA

I hadn't thought of that.

RUPERT

Now tell me. Are you an artist?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

(checks the polygraph again, then looks at his file)

So it seems. Or at least you don't consider yourself to be an artist. On one occasion standing on your plinth, however, you sang. Didn't you? A foreign song. Do you remember what it was?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

(checks the polygraph)

Tell me about the sign.

MARINA

I don't know what you mean.

RUPERT

A wooden sign. About so big. It was placed against your plinth.

MARINA

This is the first time I've heard about it.

RUPERT

So someone else put it there?

MARINA

Did they?

RUPERT

A confederate.

MARINA

I don't know anything about it.

RUPERT

Are you saying you were not aware of the sign? That whoever put it there was entirely unknown to you?

MARINA

Yes.

RUPERT

(after checking the polygraph)

Apparently so.

MARINA

What did it say? The sign?

RUPERT

It was blank. Which could be seen as quite incendiary.

(brings out a form and puts it in front of Marina)

Will you sign this? An assent form for receiving shocks through the polygraph. It's a little adaptation I made. I discovered if there's the threat of an electric charge a polygraph becomes almost completely reliable. So the form is very much in your interest if in fact you're guilty of nothing. I can't electrocute you unless you agree.

MARINA

(reading the form)

Five hundred volts?

RUPERT

Up to. I'll never actually administer that level. That's just a legal cover. In case of an accident.

Music, over scene change

SCENE THREE

A basement. MARINA is lying on a mattress in a pool of light on the floor. A heavy door opens and KYI RAINWATER enters with a tray. She puts it on the floor, and pours two cups of tea from a height, from a long-spouted silver teapot.

KYI RAINWATER

I thought you might like some peppermint tea. Very cooling. When I saw you were an overnight I switched my roster. I act as a warden on occasion. I'm afraid it's rather basic down here. I hope you take sugar.

(hands Marina a cup)

It's quite a process, isn't it? In other places this sort of thing is left entirely to the courtroom. It's the luck of the dice, frankly, how you come out of it. I think this is a much better way. Far better to be cross-examined by a sympathetic ear. It's such a good thing for Rupert too. Listening to him question you through the wall... I have to admit something did stir in me again. He's been dreaming of something like this that he could really get his teeth into. I'm physically so attracted to Mister Ayokunle, he's absolutely my type. I find a strong-willed man irresistible. He's the sort of man you want to bite. He was Rupert's junior, but he shot past him during the reforms. Everything's been in such a... flux. I'm so admiring of what you're doing, taking on the Society like this, so brave. Sacrificing yourself.

MARINA

Do you mind if I don't speak?

KYI RAINWATER

Not at all. They ought to have given you a pillow. You should complain. A fourth complaint! Did you know your third would trigger this report? You must have known! Who told you? An insider?

(Marina is clearly not going to say a word)

Things are moving so fast. There's so much changed about the Society even since you came here.

(after another silence)

I'm so unhappy you mistrust me. It makes me so sad. I don't know why we never became friends. Is it because of our previous misunderstandings?

(the door opens slightly and closes again)

It's nice they look in every now and then.

MARINA

I intend to see through my complaint.

(they drink tea for a while in silence)

KYI RAINWATER

Yes. I'm going to go.

She suddenly takes up the tea things and goes. Music, over-

SCENE FOUR

Mister Ayokunle's office, RUPERT in full force.

RUPERT

Once more. Are you an artist?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

Are you an artist?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

(checks the polygraph)

It's remarkable, your ability to go undetected by the polygraph. Your ability to keep your biorhythms level. It may be evidence against you. Have you acquired advanced meditative capacity? Perhaps it's a skill you developed standing so long on your plinth. Is it why you've been chosen to lead this attack on our Society?

MARINA

I don't think I've been chosen for anything.

RUPERT

Do you know you were shot at?

MARINA

Shot at? By whom?

RUPERT

It was never discovered. The investigation calculated it must have come from a window on the north side of the square, passed very, very close to your ear and travelled down President King Avenue - a child playing in the street was hit by the bullet half a kilometer away.

MARINA

Let me think... when did this happen?

RUPERT

The beginning of October. You don't remember? You don't recall a bullet whistling past your ear one morning, at about 9.40 a.m?

MARINA

No.

RUPERT

Possibly taking a little nick?

(close to her, inspecting her ear)

MARINA

I do remember that! I thought it was an insect bite. It seemed odd at the time...

(screams from an electric shock)

RUPERT

There was a small variation of the needle on your answer.

(consults his file, taking his time as Marina recovers)

When you were arrested...

MARINA

I've never been arrested.

RUPERT

When you were escorted from President King Square, what were you doing?

MARINA

I was standing.

RUPERT

On your plinth, yes, and what happened? Someone approached you. Who?

A scraping noise is heard from beneath the floor.

MARINA

What's that?

RUPERT

It sounds like...

(listening)

Yes. There's a reticulated python loose somewhere in the building. Someone's pet. Must have gotten into the ducts. Now. Who approached, on your plinth?

MARINA

I don't know. A woman. She told me she was a member of the Society. She asked me to walk with her.

RUPERT

And what did she tell you?

MARINA

She told me if I went back to the square I would be arrested.

RUPERT

And this happened again. According to your file you were asked to move on, on no less than ten occasions. On each occasion you were standing, walking or sitting in a public place in a way that could be described as 'expressive'.

(observing Marina very carefully)

That is why I ask again if you're an artist. If you are we can end this here and now.

MARINA

Was that you asking?

RUPERT

Yes.

MARINA

I am not. An artist.

RUPERT

The reason I ask if you're an artist is because, as you know, if you were you would have a licence to be expressive. But you're wise to deny it, because, as you also know, it is illegal to be a public artist without a licence.

MARINA

I don't agree I was behaving in a way that was 'expressive'. And I would ask you, with some curiosity, to say what you mean by 'artist'.

RUPERT

(takes a book from the desk, thumbs through, reads a loud)

'Art can be said to occur when a person is aware of looking at something of interest'. What else... 'Art also takes place when a person is conscious of being observed, or produces, or intends to produce, an object or event for that purpose. A person alone in their home, or among family, goes largely unobserved, and that is why an artist must leave the home in order to commit art.'

MARINA

That's an interesting definition.

RUPERT

It's from an article by an eminent French criminologist. Now, if you are not an artist and you do not wish to be observed, what is your reason for doing what you do in public places?

MARINA

No reason.

RUPERT

You are not aware of being observed?

MARINA

Who by?

RUPERT

The Society! Now, don't you see your position has altered? Now that you know you're being observed, you face the extremely serious charge of being a self-appointed artist!

MARINA

But no one's looking at me, here. Apart from Miss Rainwater.

RUPERT

But they are! They are looking at you by your absence. Are you in a dream? Is that the trick? Have you hypnotized yourself! Have you persuaded yourself the world is a dream? That there are no such things as lies, or truth, that one thing is unconnected to another in any causal way? Is that how you're able to lie so undetectably?

(he tears off the wires and taping around  
her hands)

You are forcing the Society to go on the offensive.

RUPERT takes an alcoholic hand-cleanser from  
a desk drawer and cleans his hands, dials a  
number on the phone.

RUPERT

(continuing)

Internal Complaints. Hello? Hello?

(shakes the phone)

Damn this infernal place!

(slams it down)

Excuse me...

(goes to the blinds)

The phone isn't working, would you come in here, please.

KYI RAINWATER  
(from the other side of the blinds)

Certainly.

RUPERT goes to the desk again, rummages and brings out some extra-large headphones with a small old-fashioned cassette recorder.

RUPERT  
Please put these on.

MARINA  
What are they for?

RUPERT  
So you can't hear what we're saying. We're obliged to... the reforms. Which music do you prefer? Classical or modern?

MARINA  
Modern.

RUPERT  
Are you sure? Some of it was quite avant-garde.

MARINA  
I'm very open-minded.

She puts on the headphones. KYI RAINWATER enters. RUPERT guides her forward to talk discreetly. They check MARINA is occupied by the music, and feel confident that she is by her growingly confused expression.

KYI RAINWATER  
Why did you stop?

RUPERT  
I can't get anywhere with her. I can't find her guilty of anything. How can I turn in this report?

KYI RAINWATER  
But you were doing so marvelously, I was listening...

RUPERT

We have to dispose of her.

KYI RAINWATER

What do you mean?

RUPERT

Get rid of her for me.

KYI RAINWATER

I'm not your mother.

RUPERT

What are you talking about? My mother would never get rid of someone for me, even if I begged her.

KYI RAINWATER

Then I don't see why I should.

RUPERT

Why don't you just admit you have stronger feelings for him than you do for me?

KYI RAINWATER

Don't keep bringing him into this. My feelings for Mister Ayokunle are stronger, yes, but they're not as complicated. I'm not doing your dirty laundry.

RUPERT

I'm not asking you to do my laundry personally, just arrange for it to be done. Because I can't! I'm meant to be writing a balanced report and it would be a serious breach of professional detachment to be involved.

KYI RAINWATER

I don't even know where one would find a person to do such a thing.

RUPERT

The phone book, nitwit.

KYI RAINWATER

Don't be so nasty.

RUPERT

I'm sorry. I'm finding this... balance... very stressful.

KYI RAINWATER

Rupert, you haven't changed at all.

RUPERT

That's a terrible thing to say. I have changed.

KYI RAINWATER

Well, it doesn't feel like it.

RUPERT

Please just find someone. A professional.

RUPERT looks back at MARINA, listening to music on the earphones. Music, over -

#### SCENE FIVE

The same - RUPERT is pacing, MARINA is perched on a chair clutching her purse. Enter KYI RAINWATER, followed by a man dressed as a nomadic TUAREG (the actor playing MR AYOKUNLE), in tribal robes of royal blue. Wrapped round his head, face and shoulders is a headdress of the same color. He wears a pair of reflective shades so that only his hands and a sliver of cheek are visible. A very deadly and non-ornamental-looking knife hangs from his belt in a scabbard. RUPERT nervously gestures him towards one of the wooden chairs, placed in a corner. RUPERT brings KYI RAINWATER forward. They talk softly, while MARINA and the TUAREG watch each other.

RUPERT

This is him?

KYI RAINWATER

Yes.

RUPERT

How did you find him?

KYI RAINWATER

He was recommended.

RUPERT

He's unusually dressed.

KYI RAINWATER

He's a Tuareg. It's not unusual for him.

RUPERT

Is he discreet?

KYI RAINWATER

I don't know. No one speaks Tuareg. I suppose that would make him discreet. I don't want to be here when... you know.

RUPERT

We'll be a very, very long way away, somewhere there'll be plenty of witnesses.

KYI RAINWATER

Oh, darling. You're yourself again.

MARINA

Who's this?

RUPERT

Please don't be alarmed. Our friend is here to help us. We only need to fill out one final form and we can bring all this to a conclusion.

(takes a form from off the desk and puts it and an unwrapped pen in MARINA's hand)

MARINA

What's this one?

RUPERT

A statement that there's been a complaint, and that it's been dealt with, and everyone has acted correctly, and you haven't felt under any threat, personally, or pressure...

MARINA

What threat?

RUPERT

Yes, it's rather silly, formal language, but it's necessary I'm afraid. A sort of indemnity, stating in the event of disappearance, that you, or your relatives, absolve the Society from any blame, and you understand and accept the reasons for your disappearance. And at the bottom is a little clause apologizing for embarrassment or expense to the Society. And that's it. All quite standard. Ridiculous really, but we're obliged...

MARINA

You're not suggesting to kill me?

RUPERT

Dispose of you. That could mean a range of things. Only in this case does it have that connotation? Yes, to be fair, it does. The form... you ought to think of your family. Their standing in the community. The statement clears them of any complicity. Which I'm sure will be an important consideration. And there's also a generous financial package. A pension scheme. Final salary linked. It may seem morbid to you now but if you think about it unselfishly...

MR AYOKUNLE

Stop! There!

The TUAREG stands dramatically, takes off his shades with a flourish and reveals himself as MR AYOKUNLE

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

It is I.

KYI RAINWATER

Mister Ayokunle!

(To Rupert)

I had no idea, really...

MR AYOKUNLE

She didn't know.

KYI RAINWATER

...I looked in the phone book but I couldn't pluck up the nerve, so I called him. He said he'd arrange it, and when this man arrived in his desert robes, I thought Mister Ayokunle had sent him.

MR AYOKUNLE

A smart disguise, no? Purchased, I must tell you, from the airport shop, for one hundred and ninety-nine dollars. I thought it might do also for weddings and occasions. It is a most providential thing for all of us that I am returned, and just in time, I think, to persuade you things do not need to result in such an unfortunate circumstance. You see I come from the wilderness beyond these city walls, where I attended a great meeting of our people, administrators from the four corners of the world. In that gathering, in that great silence, we ideated, one administrator to another, and we listened to a great personage, who wears the title 'Motivational Speaker'. Now, let us sit together, as I did at this most

momentous retreat, and I shall tell you the message we received. You sit. I shall stand.

MR AYOKUNLE tries unsuccessfully to climb up on the desk in his robes.

RUPERT

You've broken my heart, a second time.

KYI RAINWATER

I didn't know who else to turn to.

RUPERT

I shan't trust you again.

KYI RAINWATER

I didn't know he'd come himself. Assassination is new territory for me...

RUPERT

Anyway he's gone insane.

MR AYOKUNLE

Not insane Rupert, merely motivated.

MR AYOKUNLE clambers out of his robes to reveal an extremely sharp suit beneath them.

I ordered two suits. Tweed for casual, this for day. They say a man is known by his clothes.

MR AYOKUNLE climbs on top of the desk, remembers his headdress, and throws it to the floor. He waits for his moment, enjoying himself.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing)

Now. I have gathered you here so that we can...

(conjuring)

...next-level.

RUPERT

Next-level?

MR AYOKUNLE

Ah you see, I bring many new words back with me. Powerful words. That is only one of them. Two of them. Now my friends, my brethren. For in that wild place, amongst a gathering of our kind, none there looking out across that sea of administrators, could deny we are a people. Now you are ready to hear the revolutionary message of change I bring. But I am not a revolutionary. I am a *solutionary*. That's another word you can use.

MR AYOKUNLE holds forth, now and then referring to scribbled notes on scraps of paper in his hand.

It started like this -

(deep, booming voice)

'We come together, here in the wilds, to ask 'why not?' as opposed to just 'why?'" So spake the Motivational Speaker, shining in the moonlight, his white hair flowing.

(looks to see if they're appropriately impressed)

He spoke for three hours without notes, in his shirtsleeves. He wore sandals, and he was called Cleve or Steve... or something like that, with a 'v' in it... but his name is not important. It is not important.

RUPERT makes to go out the door.

MR AYOKUNLE

Don't miss out, my pedantic little friend. There is a big 'wow factor' here in the words of the speaker. That's another phrase. I urge you to listen further. For he continued, as we sat like children, astonished by his truth. 'We come seeking to leverage our...

(checking his notes)

...core competencies. To learn the difference between being ineffective... and inefficient!' A great cheer went up from the gathering. Some wept openly. He also said, and I thought of you here Rupert, 'we must examine the behaviors in and around poor performance'. I've paraphrased...

(consulting his notes)

He went on to caution us that 'problems cannot be solved by the same sort of thinking that created them'. Or something like that, I have not done his words justice... he said it so much better than I. He then guided us in a most amusing team-building exercise.

KYI RAINWATER

(clapping)

Bravo! Magnificent!

MR AYOKUNLE

I wish you'd been there with me, Miss Rainwater, to take in these sentiments firsthand. Ah yes, and then finally we repeated a mantra, "Working Together Generates Innovation and Creativity!" Or W.T.G.I.C.! for short. Isn't that fine?

RUPERT

Can you come down now?

MR AYOKUNLE

And finally, you'll all be wondering, and our guest here as well, how we can apply this powerful motivation to our own problems. Concerns. Specifically, the investigation of our department, and the wider embarrassment to the Society, posed by your Complaint.

KYI RAINWATER

That's why I called you to find someone...

RUPERT

The report is not complete. Despite best efforts...

KYI RAINWATER

He tried his best.

RUPERT

...I've yet to locate something on which to pin her guilt.

MARINA

That's because I'm not guilty of anything.

KYI RAINWATER

Five days of interrogation...

RUPERT

...and there isn't sufficient evidence.

KYI RAINWATER

Unfortunately.

RUPERT

If the report is inconclusive, what happens to the complaint?

MR AYOKUNLE

There must be an outcome of some sort. A complaint must be processed one way or another. Either the Society is to blame in not upholding her complaint, or we find her guilty, which you didn't, and have it dismissed. And yet... there is a way forward. A complaint carries such negativity, does it not... and creates bad feeling... it casts a poor light on proceedings. Cleve, or Steve, stressed the importance of positivity. So.

I will write a proposal to the Complaints Review Committee that the Society...  
(drum roll please)  
...reategorize complaints as recommendations!

RUPERT

Recommendations?

MR AYOKUNLE steps back, almost falling off  
the desk, the ringmaster, observing indulgently.

MR AYOKUNLE

Yes! You see, once the complaint is a recommendation there will be no need to have it dismissed,  
and no need to find anyone guilty. Much more positive!

KYI RAINWATER

Subject to a review by the Independent Advisory Network of course.

MR AYOKUNLE

Of course.

KYI RAINWATER

We'll need to create a new form.

RUPERT

Don't you listen to him. Making a mockery of proceedings.

MR AYOKUNLE

What an accusation.

RUPERT

Damn you!

MR AYOKUNLE

I make no mockery.

RUPERT

You do!

(pointing at Kyi Rainwater)

And you!

KYI RAINWATER

Don't accuse me!

RUPERT

I will! It's your fault he's here anyway.

KYI RAINWATER

I was doing what you asked, so nicely, that I help you with.

RUPERT

You always go running to him.

KYI RAINWATER

I didn't know he would send himself.

MR AYOKUNLE

Come, come. Enough of your marriage squabbles.

RUPERT

So patronizing! This isn't a private matter, this concerns following correct procedures and bylaws. Which you are attempting to alter with your chicanery. Let this be noted by all, that Mister Ayokunle is attempting to take matters of protocol into his own hands.

KYI RAINWATER

Only with the assent of the appropriate committees.

RUPERT

You're running roughshod over established...

MR AYOKUNLE

For God's sake man be constructive! We must get this complaint through one way or another.

MARINA

Yes please.

MR AYOKUNLE

What wrong can you find in a recommendation! I'm exercising innovation and creativity. W.T.G.I.C.!

RUPERT

Oh, no. We'll have none of that here. And you...

(to Marina)

...don't think your complaint will get through as a recommendation. I take very seriously my vow to protect the Society, the same vow all of us took, don't forget.

MR AYOKUNLE

No one is questioning your loyalties.

RUPERT

Well I'm questioning yours. How would you like to submit to my polygraph.

MR AYOKUNLE

Your polygraph.

RUPERT

(growing hysterical)

Yes *my* polygraph!

KYI RAINWATER

He's not his best under pressure.

MARINA

I've seen that.

RUPERT

Now you've emboldened the defendant! You've gone far enough for my taste.

RUPERT runs to the desk and pulls MR  
AYOKUNLE's handgun from a drawer.

MARINA

It's not loaded.

MR AYOKUNLE

Actually it is.

MR AYOKUNLE climbs swiftly down from the desk.

RUPERT

I would rather suffer death than bear witness to this... this... defamation of the Society.

RUPERT points the gun shakily in the direction  
of his own heart.

KYI RAINWATER

No!

RUPERT

Don't stop me!

MR AYOKUNLE

What will that do for anyone? Once they have mopped up the explosion of blood and bone and sinew.

KYI RAINWATER

You haven't considered the emotional consequences.

RUPERT

I shall be dead. A martyr to the Society...

KYI RAINWATER

For other people! What about me? What will this do to me? Have you thought of that? How can I continue my affair with Mister Ayokunle carrying the burden of your martyrdom? Have you thought of anyone but yourself? How can I look Mister Ayokunle's children in the eye knowing their mother is harboring the guilt of a sacrificed husband? You rush in headlong with your ideas but never think of the human consequences. Has there been a proper consultation process? Have all affected parties been canvassed?

MR AYOKUNLE

Of course, Miss Rainwater is right. We have not observed process. We ought to hear all sides first.

(to Marina)

What do you think?

MARINA

I'm sitting here until you see through my complaint.

MR AYOKUNLE

And we shall.

RUPERT

No we won't! Not even as a recommendation!

RUPERT, waving the gun around towards MARINA, accidentally fires into the air, hitting the framed photo which smashes on the floor. He screams and drops the gun in fright.

RUPERT

(stunned, examining the glass on the floor)

We'll all be strung up! I'll draft a complaint on our headed paper, so it's known that our department

was the first to complain about the mess, and the danger it poses to public health. We cannot have broken glass spread around!

MR AYOKUNLE

I knew you wouldn't sacrifice yourself. You haven't filled in the necessary forms.

KYI RAINWATER

Keen observation, Mister Ayokunle.

RUPERT

(imitating)

Keen observation, Mister Ayokunle. Do you know what else he keeps in his desk, your precious little friend here? Files! With our names on them! Yes! We have a spy within our ranks.

RUPERT goes to the desk triumphantly and pulls out two files from the back of the bottom drawer, holding them up in the air.

MR AYOKUNLE

Don't be alarmed. They're there for your own protection. I've simply been documenting your innocence. This way you have a record if anything ever comes up of a... suspicious nature. Miss Rainwater, you might like to know...

MR AYOKUNLE grabs the files from RUPERT and opens one of them.

MR AYOKUNLE

(continuing shyly)

...yours is of a special sentiment.

MR AYOKUNLE turns her file upside down and rose petals flutter out. He scoops some up and scatters them around KYI RAINWATER.

MARINA

How romantic.

KYI RAINWATER embraces MR AYOKUNLE.

RUPERT

In front of me now!

KYI RAINWATER

(to Rupert)

You're making yourself look very foolish.

MR AYOKUNLE

Rupert my friend, Miss Rainwater and I, we've come to a special understanding. Now let's keep this civil and move along with processing this recommendation. There's a foreign film this evening I'd like to take her to, if she'll have me.

RUPERT is beside himself. He runs at MR  
AYOKUNLE who pins his arms at his sides.

RUPERT

Cretin!

(wrenches himself free)

Fine, have my wife if that's what she wants. But you won't tamper with the Society. No recommendations on my watch.

RUPERT gets a box of office stationery from the  
desk.

RUPERT

(continuing, to Marina)

Here, write down your complaint. In full. I'll take it to the Review Board myself.

MR AYOKUNLE

Excellent solution! What initiative.

RUPERT leans on the desk arms folded while  
MARINA writes. She hands him the paper, he  
folds it, walking to the door.

RUPERT

I'll see this is delivered. You...

(shakes his finger at Mr Ayotunle)

You'll be up for review.

RUPERT slams the door.

MR AYOKUNLE

Solutions.

KYI RAINWATER

Are intoxicating.

They kiss, then KYI RAINWATER produces a form and a pen from a wrapper.

KYI RAINWATER

(to Marina)

Well. You must be feeling triumphant.

(filling out the name on the top of the form)

Are you generally satisfied with the outcome of your complaint?

MARINA

(after a moment)

Yes.

KYI RAINWATER

(fills it in, as after)

Was there anything in the way your complaint was dealt with that you felt could have been improved?

MARINA

Yes.

KYI RAINWATER

Per-ha-ps... Was the process generally clear and understandable?

MARINA

Yes.

KYI RAINWATER

Were those who dealt with your complaint polite and helpful?

MARINA

Yes. At times.

KYI RAINWATER

Have you suffered any permanent injury or damage during the process of your complaint?

MARINA

No.

KYI RAINWATER

Have you suffered death or loss of property as a result of the processing of your complaint?

MARINA

No.

KYI RAINWATER

Would you recommend bringing a complaint to the Society to anyone you know? If the answer to this question is 'no' please state briefly why.

MARINA

I'd rather not say.

KYI RAINWATER

If you would rather not say please explain briefly why.

MARINA

No.

KYI RAINWATER

(after a moment of reading on... )

If your answer to this question is also 'no' please go to the last section...

(turns page)

You may, but are not required to, use the space provided to explain why you are applying to be part of the administration.

MARINA

But I'm not applying to the administration.

KYI RAINWATER

No. No, you appear not to be, I agree. I suppose we should leave it blank in that case, shouldn't we? Let's leave that space blank. Now just sign here...

MARINA looks at KYI RAINWATER and at the form,  
then takes the pen offered to her.

Don't touch the paper!

MARINA signs.

Blackout.