

TRAILBLAZER

BY PATRICK JOSEPH.

WRITTEN 7.7.2025.

"To light the way, you have to burn a path"

BLACK.

From the black, we hear:

ANDREW(V.O.)

Uhh, yes-

Jump cut to the face of a young man on a camera recording documentary style, will be interspersed and cut back to throughout. ANDREW, a bit older, more mature but tired looking and cold and wearing a bandage over his right eye.

The camera lingers on him for 3 seconds unshakingly as he looks deeply off camera without saying a word.

INTERVIEWER(O.S.)

Mr. Akpo?

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger, specifically, around his right eye.

ANDREW

Uhm, yes. I'm the director of this film.

INTERVIEWER(O.S.)

The Non-disclosure agreement is in effect.  
So...How did this film come to be?  
Should we get to the genesis of it,  
back when you still owned a 25%  
stake or would you rather start  
earlier?

A beat. ANDREW freezes up again for a second or two.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)

Sir?

ANDREW sighs softly.

ANDREW

It's fine, it has been three years  
and I am this film's director after  
all.

ANDREW faces the camera directly and his stare doesn't brake or flinch in the slightest.

CLOSE-UP on ANDREW's eye. His Iris narrows.

A flash of what we come to learn is EMEKA's betrayal overlays the screen, reflecting on his eye while the classic celluloid movie countdown begins, intercutting the imagery of ANDREW's eye and the betrayal.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Let's begin.

ANDREW stares into the distance, probably recalling more memories.

INTERVIEWER  
Were you ever jealous of EMEKA?

ANDREW  
If you're asking if I planned to screw over my friend for films we hadn't made yet-Then no.  
Because he was my friend.

A beat.

THREE with a beep.

INTERVIEWER  
And how did you meet EMEKA?

ANDREW  
Anime.

TWO with a beep.

INTERVIEWER  
Sorry?

ANDREW chuckles a bit.

ANDREW  
It was over anime.

ONE with a beep.

The countdown ends as we

CUT TO:

BLACK

CUT TO:

Flashbacks to EMEKA and ANDREW's childhood.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
(softly)  
That's right. EMEKA thought I was a  
strange boy as well.

A 10 year old EMEKA walks up a flight of stairs and opens the door to ANDREW's room.

He opens it to a 5 year old ANDREW glued to a screen showing a 80's anime; it's Ranma1/2.

INT. ANDREW'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM-DAY

His room screams NERD! With posters of science facts, cartoons and anime characters especially girls in higher places than a five year old could reach, so he definitely got creative. On the wall is a poster of Naruto drawn out by hand with a pen, it looks like he wasn't able to get that poster. And a CRT Television set with a butterfly sticker on it's corner, in the middle of the room and directly in front of his tiny bed.

ANDREW turns around and gives EMEKA a glare scarier than a disturbed predator. He wants EMEKA OUT NOW!

EMEKA  
(shakily)  
H-Hello, your mommy and my mommy  
said we should-

ANDREW  
Don't you think I'm strange? I'm  
watching a foreign cartoon and I  
already heard your mother call me a  
freak.

EMEKA  
Oh. No. And don't mind my-

ANDREW  
Do you want to watch? I mean if you  
don't find it strange, it's not a  
big presumption to assume you're at  
least mildly interested.

EMEKA is in shock of the words coming out of the mouth of a child nearly a decade younger than him. But it's more of awe than anything else on his face.

EMEKA  
Oya, sure na.

He takes a seat next to ANDREW.

ANDREW  
(still looking at screen)  
I'm ANDREW.

EMEKA  
(looks towards ANDREW)  
My name is CHUKUEMEKA.

ANDREW  
(still looking at screen)  
So EMEKA? Or CHUK?

EMEKA chuckles. ANDREW is still locked on to the screen.

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I want to make one.

EMEKA  
Sorry?

ANDREW  
I want to make an anime when I'm  
older.

EMEKA  
Is that what this cartoon is  
called? And me too, I want to be a  
director in the future.

ANDREW  
But everybody around me treats me  
different for even watching it but  
I'm gonna make one.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
(whispering)  
And they're not cartoons.

EMEKA  
That's nice! Me sef, I want to  
direct my own nollywood movie.

ANDREW'S face has a goofy anime disgust face.

ANDREW  
Bleh! Nollywood.

EMEKA  
It's our films.

ANDREW  
Don't care. Not interested in your  
poorly acted, poorly written trash.

EMEKA  
(veins popping on his head)  
It's cinema like your anime-

ANDREW in chibi form rolls on the ground like the child that  
he is.

ANDREW  
Nyaa! Don't even say that!

EMEKA  
-and I heard they make money die  
from it.

ANDREW stops rolling and gives EMEKA a thousand yard stare.

ANDREW  
You-(a pause as he processes) are  
strange.

EMEKA  
And you're weird, you fool.

ANDREW  
Ekpa.

They cartoonishly glare at each other with white eyes, teeth  
gnawing as lightning crashes from their glares at each other.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER  
And you argued often?

ANDREW  
Till the end.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
We even argued the day EMEKA got  
the job.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

ANDREW(V.O.)

I'll get back to you if I can about  
that mom.

Enter ANDREW, a young man, couldn't be more than 17, looks and sounds like he's got bite but no bark. An intellectual that struggles socially or a Lion in Antarctica. He's wearing a pair of regular trousers atop a big black jacket that's obscuring the anime T-shirt he's wearing underneath.

He's on the phone and pacing in front of an apartment. A shabby looking flat.

ANDREW'S MOM (O.C.)

ANDREW, I don't just want you to  
waste your life chasing down  
unattainable goals and ending up  
like your uncle-

ANDREW

Hey, Uncle Andrew was a one time  
occurrence.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger,  
specifically, around his right eye.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

And I'm making progress, It's hard  
even for EMEKA to break in. All I'm  
missing really are animators,  
producers, investors...(he trails  
off, realizing how it sounds)... an  
understanding team really.

ANDREW'S MOM

(sighs, exasperated)

But sha, just take care of yourself  
on this your journey to make  
cartoons-

ANDREW squats down on the ground.

ANDREW'S MOM (CONT'D)

Just remember that you are not with  
her anymore.

ANDREW

(a pause)

So if I were to succeed and get  
something made, would you watch it?

ANDREW'S MOM  
Of course-

ANDREW  
Not as my mother but as  
a...passerby.

ANDREW'S MOM ponders as she pauses for a moment. A beat.  
ANDREW pauses for a moment as his mother's silence speaks to him. He's listening intently and processing.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Ah, I see.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger,  
specifically, around his right eye.

A large shadow begins to grow behind ANDREW as he stands still.

TYLER  
Ehh, Life's tough buddy.

ANDREW  
(startled)  
Ngh!

Out pops TYLER, an Asian man in his mid 20s wearing a cool leather jacket with ridiculously spiky hair and a mischievous grin. Something's weird about him.

TYLER  
Besides, it sounds like something  
crazy is going on inside, so you  
wanna get in on this?

ANDREW'S MOM  
It sounds like your friends need  
you.

ANDREW  
I will.

ANDREW'S MOM  
Ehn?

ANDREW  
I'm going inside to write a script  
anyway.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I'll make sure you never feel  
ashamed again.

ANDREW'S MOM

ANDREW-

ANDREW prematurely ends the call.

ANDREW looks at his phone, at a picture of his mom and him from about a decade ago.

He exhales a deep and weary sigh that blows across the entire city.

TYLER

C'mon, Mr Parasite, let's go get up  
and ready with that spec script.  
Watcha thinkin?

TYLER tries to play punch ANDREW. ANDREW walks by.

ANDREW(V.O.)

What is Emeka doing?

INT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

ANDREW walks back into his apartment, shared with three other men, all older than him by at least three years.

Two of which are seated directly facing each other as they conspire.

OBI

Guys, we gats find a way to get  
that money. Get that paper! Through  
any way my guy. EMEKA sef talk say  
e get update.

UFOR

Make some cash and get bitches,  
nigga! Listen, we're trying  
illegals-

OBI

Ehen, my drug smuggling.

UFOR

And it's not enough. I feel we can  
catch even bigger fish if we get  
those other niggas blow in this  
film thing.

OBI

Guy, this hustle nor dey easy oo.  
One day, this thing go tire person  
so tey e go sleep nor wake up.

UFOR  
(brushes it off)  
Shut up. You dey talk nonsense  
sometimes. Just make your money and  
nor worry about this nonsense.

OBI  
(notices ANDREW)  
ANDREW! How far na?

ANDREW(V.O.)  
He's not here yet so I'll just go  
on without him.

ANDREW  
I'm okay.

ANDREW walks directly past the two of them and makes a  
straight shot directly to the bedroom.

#### INT. BEDROOM

Inside the bedroom with two beds that sleep two, ANDREW slugs  
straight to the corner of the bed right at the edge of the  
wall, decorated with posters of cute anime girls. This is his  
spot. Like a hermit crab to its shell, he slips right in  
naturally.

He pops open his laptop and begins typing hysterically. His  
eyes locked onto the screen and his fingers moving almost  
independently of his body.

His laptop screens illuminates the title page: "Written by  
A.A."

Tyler takes a seat nearby on the room's desk.

UFOR sticks his head in from the door to observe ANDREW.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
My pseudonym's the first thing that  
matters here.

UFOR  
You good little nigga? We were  
brainstorming stuff and we can  
brainstorm together.

ANDREW  
(still locked in and  
typing)  
I'm writing a screenplay.

UFOR  
(confused)  
Aha.

TYLER  
\*Ahem\*

TYLER signals to ANDREW: "Elaborate".

ANDREW  
If it works out well, I can work  
with EMEKA and we can probably bow  
together.  
Or whatever.

UFOR  
(nodding)  
Okay, so-

ANDREW  
Abeg, If EMEKA comes back, tell him  
that I'm in here.

ANDREW blasts away at his laptop as UFOR exits and leaves him  
to it.

TYLER  
Bye, UFOR.

ANDREW is typing at the keyboard of his laptop as the camera  
fixes itself only on him.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
My mom was wrong, you know?

TYLER  
Of course she was.

ANDREW has begun to sink into his mental factory and set it's  
production output to 100%.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
I'm not gonna end up like my uncle-  
obviously-simply because my goals  
are of a different calibre.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
Sweet uncle Andrew had only ever  
done the art for the fun of it-  
which while valid-isn't really what  
I'm doing here. I'll change the  
world and reshape society via film.

ANDREW(V.O.)

Which it's why it's only fitting  
that my first real big story should  
be about someone trying to do that  
exact same thing and of course,  
it's a shonen action hero. But  
it'll take me about six hours to  
burn through this script and it  
looks like EMEKA is taking his  
time.

TYLER

But how much longer before the  
return on investment?

ANDREW(V.O.)

Well, with plot structure, story  
structure, pacing, dialogue,  
corrections alongside a whole  
second draft rewrite I'm  
accommodating for, I'd say a  
million dollar screenplay takes  
time.

TYLER

Or aren't you being overconfident?

A beat as ANDREW suddenly stops typing at the keyboard.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger,  
specifically, around his right eye.

ANDREW

(aloud)

Or am I being overconfident?

TYLER

No. That was a trick question.  
You're going to change the world.  
Trust me. You'll create a world  
where an artist like you won't need  
to rely on people who rely on  
illegal activity to get partway to  
success.

SFX: BAM! The door is busted open.

INT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

EMEKA, ANDREW's chill looking 26-ish older friend who's about five hours late shows up in a casual pair of jeans and a button up shirt buttoned to the chest, exposing his chest and necklace as he holds his jacket in one hand and papers in another with dreadlocks packed to the back of his head.

He's panting like he just ran for a few kilometres and he's a bit sweaty too.

EMEKA

My friends! I have returned with  
good news!

UFOR stands up and rushes to EMEKA.

UFOR

Ayyyy, bro! You holdin' out on us?  
We been waiting all night for an  
update.

ANDREW walks out of the room, still glued to the laptop before sitting down clumsily on the chair.

He glances up to EMEKA briefly and briefly gives a hidden smile.

ANDREW

(still looking at laptop  
and typing)  
Yeah, You're kind of late.(looks up  
and smiles) Welcome back.  
Hey, I need your help with  
something-

EMEKA

I'm a director.

The dead silence of the news reverberates.

UFOR AND OBI

Yeah!!!/Congrats Bro!

UFOR and OBI rush to embrace EMEKA and jubilate.

ANDREW looks up from his computer with a face that says he's a bit lost.

ANDREW

Oh.

The smile vanishes and his face becomes confused like a computer with an error.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger, specifically, around his right eye.

EMEKA

Yes guy! No, we gats bust champagne for this place. It's bouta be lit fam.

UFOR

I got you bro! I'll even show up on set for you. And for the actresses.

OBI

Omo! Our boy don get am! We go make this money!

ANDREW is left to process, his presence almost devoid from the conversation.

Andrew stands up, ignoring his laptop.

ANDREW

Why you? Why did it have to be you? Like, Couldn't there be another start up director with the dream to actually direct a-a Nollywood movie?!

EMEKA

This is our dream. We've been trying our asses off since we came here and even with the illegals we've been doing, we finally made it guy!

ANDREW is baffled.

ANDREW

This isn't it.

EMEKA

Then what is?

ANDREW

A film we could be proud of and that inspires people.

EMEKA

A film that you could be proud of. I'm doing this to get us out there and it can inspire others.

ANDREW

To accept lesser? To do the very thing we mock?

A beat.

EMEKA

They don't have a writer and I was hoping you would join us but if you insist on fighting me-

UFOR

They ain't got a writer?

EMEKA

(to UFOR)

Apparently. They got a director and a nice idea and-

OBI

But wetin be the story for the film sef?

EMEKA

Na the story of one Mali King wen dem dey call Sundiata Kieta. You don hear of am?

OBI

No.

EMEKA

He was the king-

ANDREW

He was the founder of the Mali Empire who's legend has been passed down orally over generations that portray him as a legendary warrior that battled an evil wizard and rescued his people.

EMEKA

That's the version with magic and-

ANDREW

His strength in that story wasn't about the magic. It was about the destiny part of it and you need to at least acknowledge that part.

EMEKA

I've read that version of the story  
and it was will, not destiny that  
was the point of that story.  
The guy hustled. He overcame his  
disability just through the will to  
hustle and that's what needs to be  
seen.

A beat.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Our version will most likely be the  
more historically accurate version.

ANDREW

Then what's the point of doing  
Sundiata-that takes the myth out of  
the mythology.

It just clicked. A lever has shifted that probably cannot be  
reversed.

EMEKA

Listen, I know you would like  
something like Fate Stay/Night or  
Trigun or something like those  
anime-

OBI

-Animal?

EMEKA

-But this story is probably going  
to be for norm- Something more  
relatable and accurate. So I just  
need you to-

ANDREW just stares back blankly as EMEKA talks on and on.

ANDREW

Mm-hmm, Normal People. Mm-hmm,  
Relatable. Mm-hmm, Accurate.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Listen, I need to get back inside.  
I have something I need to finish.

EMEKA

You're going to write a screenplay?

ANDREW stops. A beat.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Just-...Avoid writing it like an  
anime.

ANDREW  
(to EMEKA)  
What's wrong with the anime we used  
to watch?

EMEKA  
Ehn?

ANDREW  
The anime we used to watch, what's  
your issue with them?

EMEKA  
I dunno. I just found them a bit  
outlandish at times, I guess?

ANDREW just got a bit of insight, a small illumination.

ANDREW  
Hmm.

EMEKA  
But-

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
-I still like them for what they  
are.

A beat as ANDREW stares at EMEKA before he exits.

ANDREW(O.S.)  
And Sundiata's story is more like  
Naruto in terms of anime  
comparison.

OBI looks left and right back and forth at ANDREW and EMEKA's  
directions.

OBI  
Abeg, wetin be this animal thing?

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW stares into the distance, probably recalling more  
memories.

INTERVIEWER

Were the arguments always that severe?

A beat.

ANDREW

Not really, just sometimes.

INTERVIEWER

Same topic?

ANDREW is silent.

A beat.

CUT TO:

Flash to a 14 year old ANDREW talking to a 19 year old EMEKA. They're watching a crappy, low budget nollywood movie.

ANDREW

Again, why do you like these self derogatory, low effort, shit, paint by numbers story movies?

EMEKA

I dunno, it's just interesting, guy.

ANDREW

It's insulting to the art medium.

EMEKA

Abeg e! These things are supposed to entertain and turn a profit so that they can make money!

ANDREW

Yes, but some of the most influential movies ever made were not financially successful and they were a lot better than this slop.

EMEKA

Why do you hate it so much? Isn't this more relatable than a cartoon about a ninja with stupid hair.

A beat.

ANDREW looks at EMEKA, eyes wrenched wide open. He's about to blow.

ANDREW

Do you know where the ingredients  
list for some dish soaps are?

EMEKA

No? Okay I-

Cut back and forth between ANDREW's mouth speaking and his  
mother doing the dishes downstairs.

ANDREW

It's written at the back of the  
label on the front so if you want  
to see it, you'll have to have used  
a good amount of it to get a good  
view of it and do you know how many  
and which of those chemicals are  
potentially hazardous?

EMEKA

No-No-Calm dow-

ANDREW

Exactly and most of the world uses  
dish brands like that everyday for  
the lot of their lives, never  
knowing the chemicals they're  
letting come in contact with their  
skin and dishes on which they put  
their food.

EMEKA

(exasperated)

Okay-your point?

ANDREW

The answer is that companies make  
money off stupidity and ignorance  
and it's the jobs of people like  
Naruto to inspire us to come  
together and better ourselves. But  
with your movies, they enable the  
kind of stupidity that pacifies the  
masses and let people like that  
write the minds of the masses  
through familiarity.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Fiction is the world's most powerful tool and if it doesn't inspire people to innovate, you end up with people like the morons here that unknowingly put Linear Alkyl Benzene Sulfonate on their skin every time they apply soap.

EMEKA

So what are you saying? We shouldn't reflect stories and situations that the audience won't relate to-

ANDREW

Your audience. I'm aiming for a worldwide audience as well. People are sheep. If they see the world enjoy my stuff-

EMEKA

They'll reprogram themselves to be more in line with what you say.

ANDREW

Exactly.

EMEKA

So you're comfortable with rewriting the current history and culture of-

ANDREW

Stupidity and ignorance?

EMEKA

Hustle and perseverance.

ANDREW

Our culture was one to be proud of. One of silence and warriors and scholars and then we started imitating loudness and ignorance and exalting them as a culture. In reality, they're traits that have led us to the shame I feel of nollywood today.

EMEKA

Well, we've taken shots at each other today.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER

After EMEKA came to you with the news, what was the next move?

ANDREW

(sighs)

We went to meet the daughter of the Netflix executive overseeing current projects like ours.

INTERVIEWER

An office meeting?

ANDREW

No. No, she invited us over to her home.

INTERVIEWER

Either of you know her personally?

ANDREW squints.

ANDREW

I'd rather not answer.

INTERVIEWER

I'd rather you did. We're curious.

ANDREW seems slightly furious as he squeezes his face in the interviewer's direction. But it leaves his face just as quickly as it came.

ANDREW looks off into the distance as he leans back more on his chair.

ANDREW

On that day-

CUT TO:

EXT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT-NIGHT

A party rages on inside with girls dancing, making out and some people are off to the side, smoking, dealing and exchanging drugs. OBI and UFOR are amongst them.

EMEKA has his face in a girl's chest as they chant and patry vigorously.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
(remembering)  
Actually-

ANDREW stands alone outside with his jacket closed and covering his shirt.

He's looking up at the stars in the sky as if they have the future written on them. From his expression, the future looks about as solemn and lonely as he looks.

ANDREW  
So this is it.

EMEKA stumbles out and appears behind him with a bottle of alcohol in his hand.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
(noticing)  
Hey.

EMEKA  
ANDREW! Don't kill my vibe. Come  
on! Drink with me!

EMEKA wraps himself around ANDREW.

EMEKA pushes his hand with the bottle towards ANDREW.

ANDREW looks at him sweetly and chuckles softly.

ANDREW  
If they told me I was way younger  
than you, I'd have a hard time  
believing.

ANDREW gestures his hand saying: "No, thanks."

EMEKA still pushes his hand with the bottle onto ANDREW, almost shoving it into his rib cage.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
You ehn- I'm-

EMEKA  
Ahhh, free yourself, drink, go and  
talk to a girl or something like  
that!  
We're here!

ANDREW'S soft expression fades as he looks back up at the sky.

ANDREW  
EMEKA, that's not my destination.  
(a beat)  
I'm going to a different place.

EMEKA  
Then where?! Where are you going?

A beat.

ANDREW stares at EMEKA.

ANDREW  
Somewhere I might have to go alone  
( a small beat) now that I think  
about it.

EMEKA  
(loud)  
Na lie! I go follow you!

ANDREW shifts back a bit and winces his face because of the loud volume.

ANDREW  
It's a lonely path that I'm taking  
not because want to.  
But because I have to. For-

SFX: PHONE RINGTONE

EMEKA'S phone rings.

EMEKA  
Oh shit, it's my mother.  
(re: ANDREW)  
Don't worry, we'll continue this  
deep lecture when I come back.

EMEKA slips away from ANDREW and dives down to answer his phone with his free hand.

EMEKA(O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Mommy!

EMEKA and his mother's dialogue fades as we linger on ANDREW as everything lingers in his head for a while.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
ANDREW? ANDREW!

ANDREW is jolted back as he is flustered like a terrorized chicken.

ANDREW  
 (catching himself back)  
 Long story short- Just listen to  
 me....and understand me EMEKA.

EMEKA  
 I always do na! You're the one who  
 doesn't hear word.

ANDREW  
 I asked for listening not hearing.

EMEKA  
 Party, you nor gree party. Now,  
 you're saying you can't go here- or  
 there- or whatever with us? What  
 the hell is up with you guy?

ANDREW attempts to scratch around his right eye.

He stops himself.

ANDREW  
 You are my best friend but this is  
 a destination I have to go to and  
 it is one paved with loneliness.  
 But I'm doing it for you and people  
 who think like me and my m-  
 I don't hate people or partying  
 with people.

EMEKA  
 Then what is it? Why can't you just  
 put your head in our place and work  
 with us.  
 I've tried again and again and  
again for you!  
 Even at this party! OBI and UFOR  
 are making deals and I'm there  
 making connects!  
 The only one left is you!

ANDREW  
 What do you need from me?

EMEKA  
 Listen, I told you- or I think I  
 did (brushes it off) -anyway,  
 there's this girl on the island.  
 Meet her and work with me.  
 Can we do that?

A beat.

ANDREW  
Let's do it tomorrow.

EMEKA'S face lights up as he hears those words.

EMEKA  
Ehen! Let's do it! Let's go!

EMEKA grabs ANDREW and attempts to lift him up and almost succeeds but drops him.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Finally! You get it!

ANDREW'S face doesn't read the room. It says the look of someone who's been ignored and misunderstood...maybe for his whole life.

A beat as we linger on his face.

EMEKA takes a big gulp from the bottle.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Ah, no worry! The girl go like you!  
And she get big yansh sef!

ANDREW winces his face with a slight disgust and embarrassment at what his friend said.

ANDREW  
(slightly disgusted)  
That's.....nice.

ANDREW scratches around his right eye vigorously as he breathes in and out, trying to stabilize himself.

As he scratches, we-

CUT TO:

INT. CAR

Jump cut to ANDREW inside a car with EMEKA at the backseat alongside him as ANDREW strikes the exact same pose as his future self and stares out the window.

EMEKA is by his side as TYLER is in the front passenger seat.

He sees the struggle, hustle and bustle of Lagos.

A Butterfly perches on the window.

FADE TO:

EXT. FOREST AREA

A butterfly perches identical to the one that perched to the window as we are in a flashback involving YOUNG ANDREW and EMEKA.

ANDREW is revealed behind the butterfly as he just stares at it with intrigue and a passive familiarity and gives a sense that he's looking at a baby.

ANDREW slowly reaches out to the butterfly.

He's almost got it.

EMEKA

Ah! Butterfly!

The butterfly flies to a nearby flower in panic.

ANDREW

You scared it.

EMEKA

I'll just kill it.

ANDREW

What-Why?

EMEKA

It's an insect.

ANDREW

It's a butterfly.

EMEKA

But you told me that all insects drink blood and eat shit abi? Then let me kill the bloodsucker.

ANDREW scurries over to the butterfly.

ANDREW

There are some that exclusively eat nectar and pollinate flowers. Not all are haematophagous!

EMEKA

Just let me kill it!

ANDREW

No! Why?!

EMEKA  
If it can't have the mind to drink  
blood, it will die anyway.  
It can't survive by only drinking  
nectar.

ANDREW looks down trodden.

ANDREW  
Really?

A beat.

The butterfly is drinking from the flower.

It finishes, raises it's head and flies away.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
But it's free to try and teach  
others to.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CAR

The butterfly is smashed by someone who bumps into the car in  
an attempt to jaywalk.

The Jaywalker curses inaudibly at the driver, who ignores  
them.

He looks at TYLER via the reflection on the front mirror.

ANDREW  
Relatable?

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger,  
specifically, around his right eye.

EMEKA  
Don't worry, ANDREW! If this girl  
sees your stuff and she suggests  
you to her father as a writer in  
addition to how I'm pushing you for  
it-

ANDREW  
Is that how it works?

EMEKA  
Of course, I must bring my guy on  
board.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
But you wrote an actual film abi?  
One that sells? Because we're  
talking to exec-

ANDREW  
How do you know that this girl is  
cool? Like she's on our wavelength?

EMEKA smiles deviously.

EMEKA  
She's like you.

ANDREW  
Hmm.

The camera lingers on ANDREW's unsure expression.

EMEKA  
We've reached her place.

ANDREW and EMEKA get out of the car and enter a luxurious  
looking building complex.

ANDREW, wearing a big red hoodie, walks like a meek teenager  
alongside EMEKA who's in a posche looking pair of trousers  
and fuckboy shirt as he greets people he clearly doesn't know  
and TYLER walks along with them in a red leather jacket.

EMEKA stops them at a door as EMEKA turns to TYLER and ANDREW

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
We could have used an extra person  
to make it more lively but (looks  
at TYLER from head to toe) I'll  
take what I can get.

TYLER has a vein pop on his head.

TYLER  
Bastard.

The door opens and they are welcomed by MARIE, an 18-ish  
young woman wearing a white sweater and short black skirt.

MARIE  
Yes? EMEKA?!

EMEKA smiles as he embraces her as ANDREW stares blankly and  
TYLER freeze frames in dramatic shock.

EMEKA

How are you? I came with the guy,  
let's go inside.

INT. MARIE'S APARTMENT

All of them are seated in MARIE's apartment. ANDREW clutches his backpack with his hoodie like an animal in a new habitat.

He glares at MARIE like she's a threat.

ANDREW(V.O.)

How can I trust the script in her hands? I'm sure she's probably like EMEKA. She's going to hate it if so. Then what do I do? Do I play the other spec scripts I wrote? Those may be-

MARIE

EMEKA, the script you sent! It's genius, I mean, from the protagonist to the plot!

EMEKA

(gesturing to ANDREW)

Here's the writer! I was actually hoping you could talk to your father so he could consider having him just write the whole project and maybe even strike up a business relationship.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

His name is ANDREW by the way.

MARIE walks up to where ANDREW and TYLER are seated.

She stretches out her hand.

ANDREW is flabbergasted for a moment and legitimately doesn't know what to do next.

TYLER stretches his hand out to her eagerly.

TYLER

Young lady, it's nice to meet you. Would you like a new boyfriend and business partner? (chuckles) I'm joking, you are intriguing though.

MARIE

Uhh, ANDREW was it? Nice to meet you!

TYLER

Come on.

As his hand cartoonishly wiggles and falls down.

ANDREW begins to slowly stretch out his hand.

MARIE

Ahh, I forgot! I had the script printed out upstairs.

She leaves as ANDREW recoils his hand.

ANDREW looks at his hand as he squeezes it while TYLER looks up as KYOKO runs up the stairs.

TYLER

I can almost see up her skirt.

ANDREW stares at TYLER with an expression that just says "This guy"

TYLER moves close to ANDREW

TYLER (CONT'D)

(whispering)  
P-Point is that, this girl is vulnerable. It feels like EMEKA is using her.

ANDREW(V.O.)

Isn't that the same thing I'm doing?

MARIE rushes downstairs with the script in hand.

She scuttles over to ANDREW.

MARIE

ANDREW-Oh, that's right!  
EMEKA, my dad had something to discuss with you. Something about them wanting to make it animated.

EMEKA and ANDREW's surprised expressions split the screen.

EMEKA

I have to call him first- just be discussing the script with ANDREW, you'll learn something from him.

ANDREW(V.O.)

Man, I'm happy I went dual format  
so even if it does become animated-  
wait, if it does become animated,  
this might be-

MARIE

ANDREW?

ANDREW

Yes?

ANDREW looks at his script. There are sharpee lines drawn all over the lot of his dialogue and other things as well as scribbles and notes. It's either being studied by an actress or filmmaker.

ANDREW(V.O.)

Vulnerable my ass, she's using me  
to learn filmmaking. But it might  
benefit me to have a fellow  
filmmaker on the side of the studio  
especially one that liked this  
script.

ANDREW

Hey, what would you like to know  
about the script?

MARIE

My professor always tells me my  
writing suffers emotion and pacing  
issues and I can't understand it  
but I know it when I see it.

ANDREW

Mm-hmm.

MARIE

But it's not like that for yours.

ANDREW looks at TYLER.

ANDREW

I just tried writing what I liked.  
You know?

MARIE

I don't get it.

ANDREW

Formulas and pacing are important  
but emotion and creativity are  
paramount.

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Ironic coming from someone from a  
place where those things are  
suppressed and chastised.

MARIE looks at him silently for a few seconds.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I'm saying too much, just take  
emotional reference from your own  
life's events and emotions. Not  
exact but emotionally the same.

MARIE stares at him still, unfazingly.

MARIE  
You. You're a good writer.

ANDREW  
Thank you, but it doesn't help when  
everyone else prioritizes  
commerciality over storytelling.

ANDREW looks at EMEKA who is currently on the phone in the  
balcony.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Do you think they'll make the movie  
animated?

MARIE  
Do you like animated movies?

ANDREW  
Animation allows for limitless  
creativity and emotional expression-  
Blah! Why am I still talking?!

ANDREW bows his head.

He leans back with his posture loosened as he looks at her  
with his eyes slightly widened.

EMEKA stomps in menacingly.

EMEKA  
ANDREW, let me see the script.

ANDREW swiftly raises his head.

ANDREW  
You didn't read it?

EMEKA  
Who is A.A.?

ANDREW

It's pronounced A two and it's the  
pseudonym or nickname I'm using.

EMEKA looks at ANDREW playfully mocking him with the look  
before looking down at the script.

EMEKA

I assumed you wrote what you were  
supposed to but I'm hearing that  
you wrote things that only  
animation can do and not cheap  
animation.

ANDREW holds a firm stare at EMEKA.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

They want a meeting with the both  
of us tomorrow.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER

And how did the meeting go?

ANDREW

It was kind of the beginning of  
what we're known for.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO OFFICE

ANDREW and EMEKA stand in front of a board of studio  
executives, both tensed as EMEKA is dressed in a fancy suit  
and ANDREW is wearing a jacket and shirt.

MR STONE

EMEKA and...

ANDREW

ANDREW.

MR STONE

The writer.

MR DANIEL

Welcome gentlemen, we want to  
discuss the viability of this film.

(MORE)

MR DANIEL (CONT'D)  
We're not scrapping it so don't be  
so tense, we're just rethinking the  
uh-creative direction.

MR DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Especially after seeing the  
potential for the script against  
our original vision.

MR WINTERS  
My daughter gave it high praise and  
I do see the potential but I'm not  
confident in how faithfully and  
well it can be portrayed in live  
action.  
It also will not help if it's too  
expensive.

EMEKA  
I implore that you reconsider  
because the live action is a part  
of the relatability-relatability  
that'll sell it to the Nigerian  
audi-

MR DANIEL  
If we go live action with the  
current script, it'll be so  
expensive and I'm not exactly sure  
the local entertainment market will  
be enough to justify the cost.

EMEKA  
Isn't animation more expensive?  
Aren't you losing either way?

MR WINTERS  
Animation can be more expensive at  
times but it holds more global  
appeal and does more for the  
storytelling.

EMEKA  
We can pivot with a page one  
rewrite. Ground it and make it more  
accessible.

ANDREW's head slowly turns to glare at EMEKA.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
You bastard.

MR DANIEL

So you want to rewrite the script when? Because we'll need to show investors at least test footage very soon.

EMEKA

Consider it done. The core idea is still strong but the execution is a bit niche and this is coming from the director. We can fix that.

ANDREW'S head turns slowly.

ANDREW(V.O.)

"Niche".

ANDREW

Accessible is a term used by people trying to appeal to a market instead of create one. Making it as it is would more likely create a new audience and new opportunities for other creatives.

The men shift uncomfortably. ANDREW'S words are making a lot more sense.

EMEKA

(flustered)

(to ANDREW) ANDREW, be realistic!

(to the executives) We have to work with the market we have!

They whisper and murmur amongst themselves.

MR DANIEL

So, we'll be in touch gentlemen.

CUT TO:

EXT. STUDIO BUILDING

ANDREW and EMEKA walk out of the studio building with EMEKA rushing out as ANDREW lags behind looking enraged and beaten.

EMEKA

ANDREW!

EMEKA turns back and walks towards ANDREW.

ANDREW

I knew you would say no to making it animated even though you know I've wanted to make an anime. I knew you would insult the script!

EMEKA

ANDREW, calm down! See, we do this movie, we get into the industry where you can meet people interested in your "spectacular" ideas and when you're making your money, omo, what matters again?

ANDREW

Money is all you care about abi?

EMEKA

ANDREW, I care about more than money, but how do we pay our rent. Is it with dreams?

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Listen ANDREW, the only dreams you'll achieve are the ones you can afford to accomplish.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

What do you, I, OBI, your mother or my mother gain from creativity and heart from a film they cannot understand or relate to?

EMEKA (CONT'D)

You're not Walt Disney, we are ANDREW and EMEKA, doing things only we can do. Now, I need you to promise me that you're on board and you'll rewrite the script properly this time.

ANDREW stares at him and nods in confirmation.

CUT TO:

#### DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER

But you didn't rewrite it properly? Because the board minutes, their accounts, from June 3rd, quote EMEKA on the script as: "Not to the board's wishes"

ANDREW scratches his cheek as he looks down.

ANDREW  
Not to his wishes. He was my friend  
and I just wanted to write  
something for us.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)  
And this caused issues?

ANDREW  
(solemn)  
Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT. SET LOCATION

EMEKA, having just arrived on set, is taking his time to read the revised script and as he reads, his face becomes more and more uncanny as his anger builds.

He blows.

He gets in a car with the copies of the script and makes his way home.

INT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

EMEKA furiously makes his way to ANDREW's room to see him typing on his laptop and rips the laptop from ANDREW's possession and launches it at the wall.

EMEKA  
All I asked was for you to rewrite  
the film! This is how you repay me  
for bringing you onto this thing?!

ANDREW glares at EMEKA as the two are locked in a standoff.

ANDREW  
I wrote something we could be proud  
of and that inspires people.  
What? Did you want me to prance  
around, writing something that  
would stain our legacies? Do you  
think Sundiata himself would-

EMEKA  
Don't give me that nonsense!

ANDREW  
Which part?!

A long beat.

ANDREW and EMEKA tensely stare at each other.

EMEKA  
Abeg, I dey go party!

EMEKA storms off from the room.

ANDREW sits silently as the camera lingers on shots of ANDREW sitting alone on his bed, remorse on his face but for ANDREW himself being his friend and letting the situation get to this point in the first place.

ANDREW stares at his hands.

He looks at them with disgust.

SFX: RINGTONE FROM ANDREW'S PHONE; AN ANIME THEME SONG

ANDREW  
He-Hello?

MR DANIEL  
ANDREW AKPO, the name's a mouthful but we have to discuss something regarding the film. Can you come to the studio building. We'll also be inviting EMEKA.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO OFFICE

ANDREW and EMEKA stand a good distance from each other exactly where they stood not too long ago.

MR DANIEL  
So, we're gonna begin by saying that this production has been quite the hectic undertaking for everyone involved, I'm sure.

A shot of ANDREW and EMEKA.

MR DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Now, the shareholders and investors have suggested a radical and frankly expensive solution which shows their faith in this project.

MR DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Two months to make two test films  
of your visions with two million  
dollars each as budgets.

A drop of sweat rolls down ANDREW's face.

ANDREW  
If-If possible.  
Can we make it an anime?

A pause as silence hits the room.

MR DANIEL  
If you can find, get and train an  
animation studio in one month and  
somehow squeeze a short teaser from  
them, you're free to do so!

ANDREW smiles but snaps back to his senses.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
It's not the time for celebration,  
I have to get an animation crew and  
train them in time and furthermore,  
my laptop is gone.

CUT TO:

Flash backward to a 16 year old ANDREW talking to a 21 year  
old EMEKA. They're watching another crappy, low budget  
nollywood movie as ANDREW is listening in while writing.

EMEKA  
Don't worry little man, we're gonna  
make your anime eventually. I mean,  
I just got accepted into an arts  
school!

ANDREW is writing something on a stack of papers, locked in.

ANDREW  
Your mom considers that a failure  
and my mom says I'll do a science  
course.

EMEKA  
Nor mind her abeg! See, I met these  
two guys ehn, they fit teach us how  
to make money, take enter the  
industry-I'm making progress with  
my directing skills as well sef.

ANDREW finishes writing and sets down his pen and turning to EMEKA's direction.

ANDREW  
Speaking of-here. He hands him the  
stack of papers.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I've been improving on my writing  
and I wrote a story for you to  
check out.

EMEKA reads it as ANDREW waits patiently.

EMEKA finishes, puts down the paper, closes his eyes and  
folds his hands and thinks while humming loudly.

EMEKA  
ANDREW, Sorry-

ANDREW sighs as he bows his head.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
It's just-it feels too cartoony.

EMEKA unfolds his hands and seats upright.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Listen ANDREW, this thing will not  
make money. It's not relatable,  
funny or easy to understand.

ANDREW  
What if that is the point? So that  
anybody, foreign or native, as far  
as they enjoy it, does it matter?

EMEKA  
Who go buy your screenplay? Listen,  
if you want to do this, that's fine  
but you won't go anywhere.

ANDREW looks solemnly at EMEKA.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
See, I heard of a guy that sold his  
screenplay for thousands of dollars  
and his script did not look like  
this.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
I agree that you can write, but we  
need to get screenplays sold anyway  
we can.

EMEKA pauses a bit as he and ANDREW linger stares for a few seconds.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Just come to Lagos and you'll understand.

CUT TO:

EXT. STUDIO BUILDING

ANDREW walks out of the studio building alone as he walks home, sorting through his thoughts.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
I have to find a way to type up a script without a laptop, find animators and a way they won't have to use electronics because of the costs and a building to call a studio.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

ANDREW walks into the flat to meet OBI, sitting down to face him.

OBI  
Guy! Welcome back. I heard you and EMEKA are working on that film but EMEKA talk say una dey quarrel.

ANDREW places his fingers on his septum and squeezes his face.

OBI (CONT'D)  
Listen, no matter wetin happen, I still dey for the two of you.

ANDREW bows up suddenly.

ANDREW  
OBI, abeg, you said you're for me abi? Can you help me with something?

OBI  
Yeah na! Anything guy-as long as you and EMEKA do well with the film and settle your quarrel.

ANDREW  
If you help me with this thing, the  
f-movie will be done and EMEKA and  
I will be fine.

CUT TO:

A SHOT OF THE EXTERIOR OF AN ABANDONED BUT STURDY LOOKING TWO  
STORY BUILDING.

OBI(O.S.)  
So, originally, this place na water  
factory but the owner wan sell am  
after the business fail-

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING

It's a plain abandoned building for now but it'll eventually  
be come to known as DIAMOND STUDIOS, ANDREW's studio.

ANDREW walks onto the top floor of the abandoned building,  
his eyes scanning every corner.

TYLER walks in from behind him.

TYLER  
It looks like a den of and for  
failure.

ANDREW  
And you were able to get me the  
deal with the owner.

OBI walks in last.

OBI  
The power of connections.

ANDREW  
Does that connect also extend to  
knowing people that can provide  
cheap laptops or cheap mass labour?

OBI chuckles.

OBI  
But how come na only us you get as  
connect?

ANDREW  
Apart from you guys, who else would  
humor me? And you guys humor m  
because of EMEKA.

OBI  
Then why not with people like  
EMEKA? Or me?

ANDREW stares at OBI intently.

TYLER  
Why not tell us parasite?

ANDREW  
Because it's hard to find those who  
shares my ambition. It's why I'm  
struggling to find animators.

A slight pause and silence fills the abandoned room.

TYLER  
Aren't you sure you're just a piece  
of shit people can't stand.

OBI  
I'm not sure that that's true sha.

TYLER looks in OBI's direction. ANDREW does so as well in  
split screen.

OBI (CONT'D)  
You just nor understand people and  
they nor understand you. And you  
dey try push them away because  
reality don show you werey.

ANDREW  
(sighs)  
I wish you wouldn't say it like  
that.

OBI  
It's not everybody that is ones  
enemy and it's not all wisdom that  
is written on paper. It's by  
talking to people that you learn  
both.

ANDREW makes a cartoony face of shock.

ANDREW  
Who told you those wise words?

OBI  
E dey for one book one of my boys  
give me.

ANDREW looks at OBI, absorbing and processing every word.

ANDREW

OBI, won't you guys just stop and join me.

OBI

Stop?

ANDREW

Stop fighting me, stop using illegals to get money and just join me on this.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger, specifically, around his right eye.

OBI

Ah, ANDREW, the thing is that - I'd like to join you. I like cartoons even if I don't really know about this anime thing too much, I for like support you and this na the only way I fit.

ANDREW

I know. Thank you. I'll pay you back for this one day.

OBI

No worries bro! But like this, you get people wen go fit do this cartoon thing because they nor plenty for Nigeria and this guy - EMEKA, talk say you need computer or laptop at least.

OBI (CONT'D)

ANDREW. Guy, just come join us and we go fit get the money sharp sharp. Just this place alone go don commot half if not all your money.

ANDREW'S face contorts in the silence like he's about to confront a mean boss or parent.

ANDREW

(pause)

No. It's just a principal thing.

OBI

But you're intelligent and even EMEKA is doing it!

(MORE)

OBI (CONT'D)  
That na how e take fund e short  
films and na how e dey take fund  
some of these his shoots.

ANDREW sighs.

OBI (CONT'D)  
That book also said: "Money and  
success are only by-products of  
applied intelligence and unapplied  
principals".

ANDREW  
OBI, What makes a principal a  
principal is standing with it in  
the face of adversity.

OBI  
How are principals helping you now?  
They're not helping you with your  
career or helping to feed you or  
anything like that. You are living  
in a house partially paid for with  
illegal drug money.

ANDREW  
So I should abandon my morals and  
principals and join you people and  
live and do whatever it takes to  
make it, throw away my morals,  
principals and standards and make  
trash with no morals and principals  
and contribute nothing to the  
world.

OBI  
Do you think that the rest of us  
like doing this? Do you think we  
would not like to give back to  
society and avoid damaging anybody?  
We're just doing what we must to  
survive and carry everybody along  
and make our people laugh the only  
way they know how.

ANDREW  
Then be a trailblazer of the  
industry! Help me do something  
different! Why are you afraid to be  
try?

ANDREW and OBI both sigh.

TYLER

You people will never understand  
ANDREW.

OBI

No, I understand, ANDREW.

OBI (CONT'D)

So what's the way forward?

ANDREW

(looking out the window) Just keep  
moving forward and solve the  
problems as they come. These  
limitations and problems tend to  
drive innovation.

TYLER

That's what any true anime pioneer  
would say.

ANDREW

(realizing)

Actually....., OBI, your boys can  
draw right?

OBI

I think so. Wetin you don plan?

ANDREW

I think I can finish this thing in  
time. All I need is like twenty or  
so people that can draw

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(murmuring)

But that would mean that I'll be  
too busy writing, storyboarding and  
editing...

ANDREW (CONT'D)

But I think I've found a solution.

OBI nods his head with a face of defeat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

OBI, what I do, I'm doing for  
everybody and I don't need people  
telling me that I can't do it. It  
feels like they've given up.

OBI sighs as the two young men stand at the window and look down at Lagos.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER

The aforementioned illegals were-

ANDREW

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, so...

You began sourcing for animators that week. Was that what you'd call the birth of DIAMOND animation studios?

And how would you describe the first months of DIAMOND animation studios?

ANDREW

(sighs)

Stressful. Chaotic. Pandemonium.

INTERVIEWER

Oh.

ANDREW

It wasn't easy getting adjusted to anything. New environment. New people. It was the university experience I never got.

CUT TO:

INT. DIAMOND ANIMATION STUDIOS

ANDREW stands in front of a small group of people at the abandoned building prior but now renovated with painted walls, plastic tables and chairs with stationery on top .

ANDREW

So....yes...hello.

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger, specifically, around his right eye.

ANDREW pauses up briefly.

ANDREW tenses up his body dramatically.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I have gathered you here to work on an animated project that may define the future of African animation and animation as a whole.

Whispers and murmurs flood the room in a dark cloud that weighs on ANDREW.

PRECIOUS

When do we get paid money?!

ANDREW

Yes? I believe in the rhetoric of not making movies to make money, instead making money to make movies.

PRECIOUS

This guy dey try use English take sly us out of our money!

ANDREW

I'm not. You will get paid but after the project is complete and the studio sees potential-

PRECIOUS

Come, we go fight oo!

ANDREW

(infuriated)

Calm down. We'll discuss that later. We will make animation history first.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Now. In the absence of proper hardware, we will be taking a page out of animation studios pre-digitization.

PRECIOUS

So?

ANDREW

You'll be drawing on paper.

Shots of ANDREW teaching the bewildered artists how to animate.

PRECIOUS

Come, I nor sign for this one oo!  
The murmurs increase rapidly.

ANDREW

Damn it! Just-

TYLER

Ay! You expendable illiterates,  
unless you don't want money or  
consistent gig, you will help us  
with this thing. You understand  
that English right? Now sit down so  
that you can learn the work and  
start working.

ANDREW looks at TYLER with shock.

ANDREW and TYLER walk into ANDREW'S office as TYLER storms  
off ahead of ANDREW.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW

Guy, you've made them hate us. I  
didn't even know you were like  
that.

TYLER

Listen ANDREW, we can be all play  
and vibes but we have a dream to  
accomplish and with these people  
especially, we cannot waste time or  
take shit.  
That's why we will work them till  
they break.  
Now, you start writing and  
storyboarding, we have a long way  
to go.

ANDREW

How-How are you and why are you so  
sure and so eager about this film  
and my career? Especially after  
what happened with EMEKA, I-

TYLER

Because I look at the future and if  
you're too much of an idiot to see  
it, I'll explain.  
EMEKA is not in your future.  
Just keep moving forward and solve  
the problems as they come.

(MORE)

TYLER (CONT'D)  
 You're an unstoppable parasite and  
 that's what you'll do until you've  
 made this film and your career. Now  
 get to typing.

ANDREW is quiet briefly as TYLER exits the office.

ANDREW silently begins typing on his laptop.

Shots of ANDREW teaching the artists about to animation.

A shot of him as he stands in front of them as he speaks.

ANDREW  
 The point is to emulate motion via  
 drawings on paper.

Shots of ANDREW manually filming and recording each shot from  
 the drawing paper as TYLER reads through the script.

Shot of ANDREW furiously typing on his laptop, his eye  
 twitching from exhaustion as the camera he uses for capture  
 and recording charges atop stacks of paper drawings he'll  
 eventually have to scan.

New stacks are brought in and dropped near the original  
 stacks. ANDREW doesn't even flinch or move.

TRANSITION TO:

A GORGEOUS, ANIMATED SHOT OF SUNDIATA USING A MAGIC SWORD TO  
 DEFEAT A MONSTER.

ANDREW uses the shot to teach the animators; pointing out  
 errors and areas of improvement, gesturing and emphasizing  
 and analyzing actions.

INTERVIEWER(V.O.)  
 And so, when did you learn of  
 EMEKA'S situation?

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW  
 I was in production and it was  
 actually brought to my knowledge.

INTERVIEWER  
 Did you feel EMEKA would do it?

ANDREW

No. Considering everything that happened, I don't and didn't ever blame him.  
I wouldn't have done it but I can't blame him.

INTERVIEWER

But it was an ass move.

ANDREW'S face squeezes in.

ANDREW

Come again?

INTERVIEWER

I mean, if my friend did that to me, I'd have betrayed him too especially when those shares were worth so much and he constantly talked about making the film together.

ANDREW

Listen, if you want to sit me down here and torment me about my troubled first production and drag me through my personal mistakes, that's fine. I signed a contract. But I will not sit here and let you insult my friend for mistakes we both made in the past. He especially has had enough already.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You have me. You can call me whatever you want but that disrespect should better not spill over.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. SET LOCATION

Shooting is underway with EMEKA'S crew.

EMEKA is holding a Dolby Camera as he peers into it's lens.

He looks away from the lens briefly at something off-screen.

EMEKA

So-

EMEKA moves away from the camera and towards the foreground.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
 So, IYANU, what you just need to do  
 is call back to one frightening-  
 scary memory. Imagine that film wen  
 scare you something wen nor good.

EMEKA goes back behind the camera.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
 Perfect. Now all we need are PRINCE  
 and DESMOND'S scenes to wrap up.

EMEKA is approached by a man in a business suit.

MR OTUS  
 EMEKA, we need to talk. The money  
 for this location don dey finish. I  
 hope this na your last scene.

EMEKA  
 (to the crew) I'm coming, give us  
 one minute!  
 (softly)(to MR OTUS)Walk with me.

The two start walking around the set, maneuvering between  
 people carrying props and costumes.

MR OTUS  
 Ah, this place just remind me of  
 when we dey do play for primary  
 school.

EMEKA  
 (chuckles)  
 You get? That na the kind vibe we  
 dey go for.  
 So wetin don happen OTUS?

MR OTUS  
 First, I gats ask boss for update  
 on how you take dey afford some of  
 these costumes when you still dey  
 pay for transport and rent out  
 location.

EMEKA  
 Guy, illegal dey pay oo!

MR OTUS  
 Which kind illegal be that?

They both pause as they come across two cast members arguing vigorously.

MR OTUS attempts to walk in.

EMEKA steps in before him.

EMEKA

Oya, why una con dey fight na?

DESMOND

Abeg, bros look, this scene, wetin e say for the script-what does it say on the script?!

EMEKA grabs the script from DESMOND.

PRINCE

My brother! The way you dey describe am, I nor sure say that na wetin the writer envision for e head.

DESMOND

But even so, I nor go fit do my own thing as artist?!

PRINCE

Na work the writer come give you, how you go dey do your own thing in another man's vision?!

EMEKA sighs.

EMEKA

(steps between them,  
exasperated)

Listen, calm down! Na my friend ANDREW write the script and even though we...we nor dey like that again-

MR OTUS looks at EMEKA.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Both of una fit do wetin una want as far as e make sense. Omo, you're both free to approach your craft however you want, we're all going to earn money and go places at the end of the day.

PRINCE

Ah, I nor fit work with that kind of mindset. The people here require discipline and respect for their craft and I see that you, you respect money pass my craft and as you see me, I respect this my acting oo! I'm bringing a creative's vision to life.

PRINCE (CONT'D)

(shakes his head)

No respect for the craft.

EMEKA

Well, I don't know how to tell you this but, that respect does not drive our industry but I'm not going to hold you. If you don't vibe with the project, you can leave with no problem.

But, I feel like we can work together to understand each other better so I can see from where you see.

And the words I told you. I wish I told my friend. He would still be here but him-he cannot see from where I see.

A pause envelops the bunch.

PRINCE

Oya, I go take five and we'll try again, just so we can see it from DESMOND'S point of view.

PRINCE goes off as DESMOND storms off.

EMEKA and MR OTUS look at each other and nod before resuming their walk.

MR OTUS

What happened between you and ANDREW?

EMEKA

The guy's just misbehaving like that PRINCE.

MR OTUS

But truly truly, what happened?

EMEKA

Like all human conflicts, opposing goals.

MR OTUS

I ask because your own goal is about to be achieved. All that remains is ANDREW.

EMEKA

Ehn?

They both stop dead in their tracks.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

How?

MR OTUS

They want to buy us. So we gats dilute our shares.

EMEKA smiles.

EMEKA

Bought by Netflix.

MR OTUS

It's not a clean break at all oo. There are still a lot of shares owned by ANDREW AKPO in our film company.

MR OTUS (CONT'D)

So, it's your call to what we do with ANDREW'S share. Let him have it and fund the man that could wreck your dream or...

EMEKA looks down solemnly.

EMEKA'S phone rings.

MR DANIEL

EMEKA.

EMEKA

Yes sir?

MR DANIEL

How far's the film coming because we need to show it to investors soon. I mean, we took a huge risk asking both you and ANDREW to make two completely separate projects but with ANDREW'S side lacking, as I'm sure the lawyer already told you, we're looking to buy out your studio if the test footage can wow investors.

EMEKA

I completely understand sir. Principal shooting will be finished tomorrow and-

MR DANIEL

Good, good, good because we're moving up the screening by two weeks.

EMEKA

No problem sir, I think the small vfx we're doing will be ready on time.

MR DANIEL

Small? Anyway, be ready for the screening soon.

EMEKA

Thank you very much sir.

EMEKA gets off the phone.

EMEKA looks at MR OTUS and nods.

MR OTUS nods back at him.

EMEKA'S phone rings again.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

H-Hello.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Mommy! Ah, my film-I'm making it, we're even screening it at a cinema sef in like a week or so.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(O.S.)

That's wonderful, my son!

EMEKA

Yes, I'll make sure to invite everybody. I'll even send for you so that you can even come.

A beat.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(O.S.)

Is ANDREW coming?

A beat.

EMEKA

I'm not sure.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(O.S.)

EMEKA, this is your chance. Opportunity presents itself to those who are present. And that boy is going to be absent.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(O.S.) (CONT'D)

This is your chance to be a Lion. Not to be a mouse following that rat as he foolishly chases a butterfly. Let that boy chase whatever. YOU, face forward instead of running.

A beat.

A shot of EMEKA looking into the distance.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER

When did you get the info about the pushed up screening?

ANDREW

At a very bad time. DIAMOND STUDIOS was in pandemonium.

INTERVIEWER

Did it not come off as unfair? With the like timing and them knowing yours was animated and animation takes longer?

ANDREW

Hmm.

INTERVIEWER

Really?

ANDREW

The situation sent me into overdrive and overwork at the office. Imagine you'd been told your deadline was moving up to a time you weren't aware of and your friend was making moves and about to overtake you. Saying it aloud makes it seem worse than it was. In reality, I just kept looking forward and assuming I knew, I still probably would've kept on moving.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

But no, It didn't read as unfair to me.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW is pacing around on his phone which is cushioned between his left shoulder and head as he grabs sheets of paper in his hand and attempts to feed them into a printer quicker than it can accept them.

ANDREW

MARIE....Mmm, I'm kind of busy.

TYLER

How did she get your number?

The camera juts over suddenly to TYLER who just appears in the corner of the room.

ANDREW

Aagh!

ANDREW (CONT'D)

N-Nothing.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You need writing help?

TYLER

You need writing help.

ANDREW

Like I said, use personal emotion  
and emotional events, not always  
physical.  
And study. Study a lot so the  
writing beats become more natural.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Oh, it's for school? That's nice,  
really.  
What?, No. I don't like to talk  
about it.  
Why?

CUT TO:

Flash forward to a 15 year old ANDREW talking to a 23 year  
old EMEKA.

EMEKA is on the phone at the corner of an ongoing party

EMEKA

Don't worry guy, just come to us in  
Lagos!

ANDREW

I'm not exactly convinced yet  
EMEKA. I have a probably steady  
path in science laid ahead of me  
and if I fully choose the arts now  
and it doesn't work out-I'm not  
trying to jinx it but my uncle-

EMEKA

Okay then we can compromise on this  
matter.

ANDREW

What do you propose?

EMEKA

Apply to a science course here-but  
here's the hook-we make our way  
into the industry from here.

ANDREW's face says "Woah, wait!"

ANDREW

I'm not trying to make a nollywood  
movie, you know I hate them!

EMEKA

I'll handle that part, they're my bread and butter and you nor know whether from there, we fit see way to your anime thing from there.

ANDREW is silently pondering. He doesn't want to believe EMEKA but it's EMEKA.

ANDREW

(murmuring)  
Will they get anime? Do I like Lagos? I don't even like Lagos! I'm taking years off my life and how are you sure-

EMEKA

Bro! Just come. I got guys here. We get house for here. Omo, just come here, learn your writing, go to school, take on gigs and make your money dey go!

ANDREW bobs his head back and forth. He's searching for something in his head. The final piece of the puzzle for him to agree.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Don't worry ANDREW, I'm sure of it, I'm close to even snatching a good directing gig! I sure-I'm sure of it!

EMEKA (CONT'D)

And there's anime con in Lagos. Your people are here!

A beat as EMEKA waits for ANDREW's answer.

ANDREW stares at the city and looks onto the populace he resents so much.

ANDREW

Screw Sciences, let's do this.

EMEKA(O.S.)

Eh! See girl with big yansh and breasts!

ANDREW

Ugh!

EMEKA(O.S.)  
Don't do like that na!  
We go party like beast for Lagos!  
You sef, you go dance with girls  
and you go drink wetin nor good.

ANDREW  
(chuckles)  
I'm not into that crowd. And I'm a  
minor.  
I should be in-

EMEKA  
Don't worry! You'll still have me!

ANDREW lets out a small chuckle as he puts down his phone.

CUT TO:

ANDREW is still standing with the phone within his head and  
shoulder.

A beat.

ANDREW  
Hey, have you- Sorry, you talk  
first. But I think it's experiences  
like this that go into writing.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
EMEKA, I haven't heard from him for  
a while, have you?

ANDREW listens quietly.

SFX: BASH!

ANDREW looks up.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I will be right back.

ANDREW storms out of his office and into the studio that's in  
pandemonium as PRECIOUS stands in front of a scattered  
workstation, panting heavily.

TYLER  
What was that?

PRECIOUS

I don't tire! I nor dey do again! Ask me to draw this rubbish again and again and again! For what?

ANDREW walks over to the scene.

ANDREW

Why aren't you animating?

PRECIOUS

When are we getting paid money?! I get family to feed!

ANDREW exhales.

ANDREW

We have discussed this. I will make sure you are all compensated when the film is complete.

PRECIOUS

No! At least do something for somebody before that time!

ANDREW

But you signed a contract-

PRECIOUS

Don't do that! If you nor pay me or the rest of us, we go japa. This guy! You're worse than EMEKA! You don't just understand other people and their conditions.

TYLER steps forward.

TYLER

What did he say?!

ANDREW

Just-(sigh) Everybody, calm down. Umm...

ANDREW closes his eyes and taps his forehead with a finger.

ANDREW stops and opens his eyes.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Listen. I will go to my office now. I have a few things I can put in place. So just stay put and keep working.

A beat.

PRECIOUS

Hmm.

PRECIOUS drags his feet back to his desk.

ANDREW and TYLER rush back to ANDREW'S office.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW briefly scratches his face with his finger, specifically, around his right eye as he rushes through the office.

TYLER

What's the plan?

ANDREW makes his way to his phone without even stopping to look any direction.

ANDREW

I still have him.

TYLER

How? I hope you're not talking about-

ANDREW

I still have shares in EMEKA's company and I'm sure I can at least get part of my initial investment.

TYLER

That's almost as bad as what I thought. Stop relying on EMEKA.

ANDREW

I believed in him then and even as things are, I'll believe in him now.

TYLER scoffs.

ANDREW'S phone starts ringing.

It's MARIE.

He ignores it as he makes his way through his phone.

ANDREW'S face changes as he sees something that makes his face contort.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
What is this?

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER  
Financial reports show your shares  
being diluted on July 22nd.  
Why were you only notified only  
later in August?

ANDREW  
It was a series of complicated  
legal procedures and since his  
company's shares were getting more  
valuable and to a truly  
aspirational level, he made sure I  
didn't know. Whether to protect or  
spite me, I'm not sure.

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I know it's the former.  
But it wasn't about the money,  
really.

INTERVIEWER  
But regardless, your shares were  
diluted from-

ANDREW  
Twenty-five percent.

INTERVIEWER  
And they were diluted to-

CUT TO:

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW  
-Five percent.  
And they're worthless.

ANDREW looks up at TYLER.

A beat.

ANDREW puts his hand on his face as he leans against a wall  
and slides down to the ground.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
They were more so evaporated  
rather than diluted.

His phone lights up.

A text from MARIE.

TYLER  
Regret is a waste of time. Let's  
look towards the-

ANDREW grabs his phone.

ANDREW pants as he waits on his phone.

EMEKA(V.O.)  
ANDREW?

ANDREW  
EMEKA! EMEKA!! You issued out new  
shares from your scrappy, worthless  
company because Netflix bought you  
abi?! How much were your shares  
reduced?!

EMEKA  
A-

ANDREW  
Because mine were reduced to five  
percent of class B shares that are  
basically worthless. You think I  
didn't study Economics and  
Technology? How do you think nobody  
found out about your illegal shit?!

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Is this because I wrote the script  
my way?!

EMEKA  
ANDREW, I never said that. Look at  
it from my perspective, I've been  
trying and trying with you ANDREW.  
I just wanted us to make a film  
together and make money and our  
dream come to life.  
But it's like we have different  
dreams. You're my friend but I  
can't let you bring down the entire  
group.

ANDREW nods his head.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
This is not how anything was  
supposed to go.

ANDREW sits on his chair without a sound.

A beat.

TYLER looks down at ANDREW'S phone on the table.

TYLER  
The text is from the girl.

ANDREW looks up at TYLER.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
It says: "I heard what happened.  
I'm really sorry. My father doesn't  
know I'm telling you this, but they  
moved the screening date up."  
"I'll send you the location"?

ANDREW'S Phone starts ringing again.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
More bad news to be delivered over  
the damn phone.  
Don't answer it. You're not-

ANDREW(V.O.)  
I'm fine really-

ANDREW picks up the phone.

TYLER  
ANDREW.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
But this call will determine my  
future.

He checks the phone. It's his mother.

TYLER  
Hey, What if she lost her job or  
something like that?

ANDREW(V.O.)  
If that's the case, I'll do  
nollywood movies and hell even  
illegals to support her like my  
father never would.

TYLER

ANDREW, Don't pick that call! We're going to change the future of animation and storytelling. Think of the future! Did you leave school so you could quit here?

ANDREW

I am thinking about the future. We're weeks behind EMEKA'S crew and we have no resources. I thought I could change the world but the house always wins. That's probably why Nollywood is the way it is. Those who dare to do anything different are punished.

ANDREW touches his phone and puts it to his ear.

ANDREW'S MOM

Hello. Mom. How are you?

ANDREW'S MOM (CONT'D)

I'm fine really. I'm watching some of these your anime things.

ANDREW

Really?

ANDREW'S MOM

Of course my son. Even if I don't understand you, I know that you're going places.

A beat.

ANDREW

Mom?

ANDREW'S MOM

Yes?

ANDREW

Thank you.

ANDREW'S MOM

Why are you telling me "Thank you."?

ANDREW

Don't worry about it.

(A beat.)

Sorry, I have to continue working.

ANDREW'S MOM  
Okay my son, bye, I love you.

ANDREW  
I know.

ANDREW puts down his phone.

ANDREW makes his way out of his office towards PRECIOUS.

INT. DIAMOND ANIMATION STUDIOS

ANDREW stops in front of PRECIOUS, looking him dead in the eyes.

ANDREW  
If you have a problem with the  
existing business model-then get  
out.

PRECIOUS  
Ehn?

ANDREW  
See, what you don't understand is  
that I'm like James Cameron, the  
famous American movie director.  
I can do each and every one of your  
jobs (pointing at the rest of the  
staff) at least as good as you and  
unlike you, I look at the future  
and I know that future is  
inevitable.  
So you can either be a part of it  
or leave because of money.

PRECIOUS starts packing up his stuff from his desk.

PRECIOUS  
If that na so e be, then omo, I'm  
leaving you. I pray that you  
accomplish your dream. But I'm no  
longer part of it.

PRECIOUS walks out of the room.

ANDREW takes a second to himself to just breathe.

A beat.

ANDREW  
I'll be stepping up as animation  
director as we have just lost our  
current one.

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Losing a staff member didn't really  
help us.

INTERVIEWER  
But that was on May fourteenth,  
meaning-

ANDREW  
Two weeks from the test screening.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO BUILDING

EMEKA walks with MR OTUS through the halls.

INTERVIEWER(V.O.)  
What was EMEKA doing?

ANDREW(V.O.)  
They'd all but accepted his draft  
so he was getting the details of  
the screening down but something  
came up.

EMEKA  
But to be clear, you have my like  
accounts and everything sorted.  
Beacuse-

MR OTUS  
Don't worry EMEKA, you're going to  
be a nollywood giant. Your  
financials are sorted!

EMEKA  
The main reason I was talking about  
that was that I was thinking back-  
back to like some things-

MR OTUS  
Things ANDREW said.

EMEKA

He was always against doing that stuff and he's the smartest person I know-

MR OTUS

EMEKA, nor be me and you graduate together? I'm your person. Or did he do cybersecurity for you?

A beat.

EMEKA

He did.

A beat.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

But I want to distance myself from those things so that I can face our community with a clean...face.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

And where is the community? I haven't seen OBI or UFOR for a while.

MR OTUS

How does he do you people's cybersecurity?

EMEKA

OTUS.

MR OTUS

We should call either of them and make sure all is well since I don't doubt they're on your guest's list for the screening.

MR OTUS dials up his phone and pauses for the call.

EMEKA

They're my friends, I made the movie so we could watch it together.  
Test movie.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

And I want to be able to get them off the illegal trade so we could all relax like bosses-why hasn't anybody picked up?

MR OTUS  
Someone will respond eventually.

EMEKA  
No. Something is up.  
After this meeting. Keep dialing  
them until somebody answers.

EMEKA walks into the studio office.

INT. STUDIO OFFICE

EMEKA meets with MR DANIEL.

EMEKA reaches his hand out to MR DANIEL but it doesn't get  
taken.

MR DANIEL  
MR EMEKA, you wanted to meet with  
us to discuss the details of the  
screening and who will be present.

EMEKA  
Yes sir.

MR DANIEL  
But you specifically wanted to  
invite your family and friends to  
the screening.

EMEKA  
If possible.

MR DANIEL sighs.

MR DANIEL  
MR EMEKA, this is not a family  
affair but you are free to invite  
as you like.

EMEKA  
Oh, thank you sir.

A beat.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
What makes you say so?

MR DANIEL  
Excuse me?

EMEKA

I'm sorry but I can't help but feel  
that you sounded like it doesn't  
matter.

MR DANIEL

The film or your request?  
Because both are.  
(A beat)  
Listen, you are making content.  
Content that will reach down to  
entertain and pacify the masses and  
while there is no issue with that,  
it still is what it is.

EMEKA

Really?  
I don't believe so.  
If you can entertain your family  
and friends with what they like in  
a voice they understand, then  
you've succeeded.

MR DANIEL

Son, filmmaking is bigger than  
entertainment. Than money. Than  
themes. Remember that.  
Especially when some in your family  
and friends are entertained by  
problems.

A beat.

EMEKA

Huh?

MR DANIEL

Your friend. OBI.  
Saw his name amongst your guests  
and heard something funny.

MR DANIEL shows EMEKA his phone screen.

EMEKA'S eyes go wide. It's a frightening and haunting sight.

EMEKA

Oh my God.  
Why was this not brought to my  
attention earlier?!

MR DANIEL

You hadn't heard?

EMEKA  
I'd been working so hard and-and I  
wanted to surprise them with the  
good news.  
Oh God.

EMEKA storms out of the office.

INT. STUDIO BUILDING

EMEKA walks past MR OTUS, sniffing and panting.

MR OTUS  
Nobody answered.

MR OTUS walks and matches EMEKA'S pace.

EMEKA  
Call UFOR.

EMEKA picks out his phone.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
ANDREW. Pick up.  
ANDREW!

CUT TO:

EXT. ANIME DREAMSCAPE

A beautiful anime open scenery as we descend from the sky.

A hand stretches out and clenches.

It's five year old ANDREW.

He's designed in a classic anime style.

He looks dazed as he proceeds to check out the scenery,  
turning his head left to right.

He looks at his palm and sees a pair of beads.

A butterfly flies down onto his face.

He chuckles as he stares at the butterfly.

He reaches his hands up to the butterfly. He's almost touched  
it.

YOUNG ANDREW feels a cold shiver as he hears whispers coming  
from behind him.

He slowly turns his head and sees a dark silhouetted figure shaped like a woman.

The butterfly softly flies off ANDREW'S face in the direction of the figure as ANDREW is about to reach out to it but hesitates.

ANDREW stares at the silhouette as he sweats buckets.

He covers his ears as the sound increases.

He runs off and the butterfly flies in chase and so does the silhouetted figure.

ANDREW runs down a hill and runs and runs and runs.

ANDREW stops at a lake and falls on the ground next to the water.

He looks upon his reflection which is his older self.

The water shakes the image away as it ripples forth.

ANDREW looks up slowly as he sees an African warrior, wounded and his wounds covered in black as he strains.

ANDREW runs up to the warrior. He looks around the warrior and the environment.

The warrior smiles as he grabs ANDREW'S hand and ANDREW promptly helps him up.

The warrior turns and limps forward.

ANDREW looks towards the hill he came from. The shadow is still there.

The butterfly flies across the front of his face.

He looks once more at the warrior.

He makes his way to the warrior.

He points at the warrior's hand.

The warrior opens his hand.

ANDREW places the beads in the warriors hand.

He takes the warrior by the hand and helps him make his way.

The silhouette makes it way to them quickly, unnaturally appearing before them.

The butterfly descends onto ANDREW'S face once more.

ANDREW braces and squints his eyes as he grips tightly to the warrior.

The warrior suddenly springs out and the beads magically heal and strengthen him as his wounds heal and his body toughens.

ANDREW looks on in shock.

The warrior and the silhouette both exchange a volley of hits as they fight up in the air.

SFX: BOOM!

Both the warrior and silhouette land on the ground.

A beat.

The warrior exchanges glances with the silhouette.

SFX: THOOM!

The two run towards each other as the camera freeze frames in sync with lightning that strikes as the two collide and exchange blows with a thunderous BAM!

CUT TO:

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW jumps up from his desk which is a mess of scripts and drawing paper.

ANDREW rubs his face as he shakes his head.

SFX: RINGTONE

His phone is ringing and shaking.

He checks it. It's UFOR.

ANDREW looks shocked.

A long beat. UFOR doesn't usually call.

ANDREW answers the phone.

                    ANDREW  
                    (raspy)  
                    Hello Ufor.

UFOR

ANDREW.

(a long silence on the line)

OBI, he...-

ANDREW

(panicked)

What happened?

UFOR

It happened a few days ago man.

EMEKA is here and he said he's been trying to reach your cell.

ANDREW

What happened?!

A beat.

UFOR

OBI died...a few days ago. It was the stuff...th-the new batch. It was too strong and he...didn't wake up.

A beat.

ANDREW is frozen.

UFOR (CONT'D)

We're planning on how we'll gather with his family and plan the burial.

Bro, regardless of what happened between you and EMEKA and the rest of us, can you just show.

A beat.

ANDREW

(solemn)

I'm sorry. I'm-I'm sorry.

UFOR

I understand you now ANDREW. I understand you fully now.

ANDREW puts down the phone.

He bows his head.

A beat.

ANDREW  
Those damn illegals.

A beat.

TYLER  
We all have demons, ANDREW.  
You either confront them, run from  
them or they consume you when you  
can't run anymore.

ANDREW  
I don't want to hear it. Can you  
just be quiet.

A beat as the camera lingers on ANDREW as he bows his head in  
the eerie silence.

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER  
The funeral was held on September  
2nd and there are records of work  
files for that date.  
To be clear, You didn't go to your  
friend's funeral just so you could  
finish your film?

ANDREW remains silent.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)  
Sir?

ANDREW  
It was a crappy thing even I  
regretted and still regret.  
But...I had to keep moving forward.

A beat.

EXT. FUNERAL PROCEEDING

A Casket with OBI'S face is being placed in a hole as EMEKA,  
UFOR, MR OTUS and EMEKA'S MOTHER look on.

CUT TO:

EXT. FUNERAL PROCEEDING

EMEKA goes to his mother, UFOR and MR OTUS.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Where is that insect?!

EMEKA  
Mom-

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Wetin we go expect from am pass  
that?  
You nor fit come from your friend  
burial.  
Use am the way you use me con cast  
am away.

UFOR  
He's busy with his work.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Work ke? Drawing pictures? I wish  
that his useless mother left him  
with me. I for beat that nonsense  
commot e body.

EMEKA  
Mom.  
(a beat)  
Later, you will wonder why he is  
how he is.  
The two of us have issues and if he  
comes here and sees me and you  
especially- I'm afraid what would  
happen to him.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
So you dey defend e rubbish  
behavior?

EMEKA  
No, what I'm saying is that his  
friend died and at least not coming  
spares him from more pain.

EMEKA'S MOTHER hisses loudly.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
Listen, let's just value what and  
who we have here and now.  
I'm screening the film I made next  
week so it will be a chance for  
everybody to just come together and  
be at peace.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Is he coming for that one?

A beat.

EMEKA

I don't know.  
He's making a rival test screening.  
I haven't even asked him yet.  
(a beat)  
But he was at the screenings of all  
my other short films.

EMEKA'S MOTHER

Because person wen nor come for e  
friend burial go waste e precious  
time go screening for your film.

EMEKA looks exhausted and sighs.

EMEKA

Let's just go home and get ready  
for the screening.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE

ANDREW is seated at his office. Not working but face to face  
with a picture of OBI with candles around it as he pours  
fruit juice in cups for both of them.

ANDREW

I'm sorry, OBI.  
(a beat)  
Right now, you'd probably be like:  
"Guy! How far the animal now?!".  
And I would say: "It's anime! And  
it's going bad!"  
And you would say: "Ah! How can I  
help?!"... "I like  
cartoons!".... "How can I help?".

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Hey, TYLER?

TYLER is revealed to be sitting on a chair, looking through  
the storyboards.

TYLER

I let you grieve, so what do you  
want now?

ANDREW  
It's just-Am I a bad person?

TYLER  
Why do you ask?

ANDREW  
I feel like one.

TYLER puts down the storyboards.

He faces ANDREW directly.

TYLER  
ANDREW. Good and bad are perceptions, like you perceive a smell or sight. It just depends on whether you see something or someone as bad or good. The red I see and the red you see are different because we have different eyes.

ANDREW  
But we can both agree that the color is red when we paint or capture it on camera.

TYLER  
It doesn't matter. Perceptions are how we rationalize real world occurrences and sensations. Somebody dies and you perceive it as bad but the world doesn't care. And neither should you.

ANDREW  
But I care. I want to be-I should be a good person. I'm trying to reach to people and teach them with my films.

TYLER  
Good? (scratches his face) A good guy wouldn't screw over his friend and miss a funeral. So what?! You have a goal. There are millions walk around everyday without goals and you plan to give them purpose. You're not the best guy by your actions but it doesn't matter.

(MORE)

TYLER (CONT'D)  
The red you see and I see doesn't  
matter, as long as we can paint  
scenes with it.

ANDREW  
So this is it then?

A Chime comes from ANDREW'S phone.

ANDREW checks his phone.

TYLER  
What's that?

ANDREW  
I had to go for police questioning  
after OBI died. They checked my  
financial records and the like. To  
make sure there's no implication  
between us and OBI'S-I wonder if  
they're going to do for EMEKA?  
But it was because OBI'S father was  
a policeman so if they find even  
the slightest reason to, they'll  
arrest us.

ANDREW squints.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
He said: "You're not the one".  
Why?

ANDREW stands up.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I mean, if they found nothing on  
any of us, they'd say so but you're  
not the one implies something else.

ANDREW picks up his phone.

TYLER  
What's that?

ANDREW  
I'm trying to reach EMEKA. There's  
a very real chance I'm just  
paranoid but EMEKA might be  
arrested.

A beat.

TYLER  
Then what the hell are you doing?

ANDREW  
I'm trying to call-

TYLER  
Why would you shoot us in the foot  
like that?! If EMEKA gets out of  
the way, we'll be in the forefront  
and get our film made! Don't you  
want to make your film?!

ANDREW pauses and is silent as he's about to dial it.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
ANDREW. I've given you space to do  
whatever you like but for once in  
your useless, parasitic life, make  
the right choice!

A beat.

ANDREW  
He's my friend.

TYLER  
He's not gonna answer. Today is the  
day he's supposed to be screening  
his own movie. We're almost done  
with ours. DO NOT DO THIS!

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER  
It was the day he planned to do his  
test screening and also the day-  
your eye...

ANDREW  
Yeah. It was because I couldn't  
reach EMEKA via phone that I went  
to the test screening.  
But I couldn't have imagined how  
badly everything went.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAGOS CITY

ANDREW runs through the streets picking his phone out of his  
pocket.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
MARIE said the screening was at the  
cinema like two kilometers away  
from my studio.

ANDREW runs and runs and runs.

ANDREW  
Before it's too late.

CUT TO:

INT. BROADCAST ROOM

EMEKA is seated on a chair opposite a camera. The small crowd  
is gathered at another end.

The test screening will begin soon.

EMEKA'S MOTHER approaches EMEKA.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Listen EMEKA. That bastard betrayed  
you so what you will do is that  
you'll stop defending him.  
This is your career and don't let  
that boy drag you down.  
I want you to enjoy your success  
with your people instead of that  
parasite wen dey chase foreign  
rubbish.

EMEKA stares somberly at his mother.

A beat.

EMEKA  
Is he here?

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Did you think he would come?

EMEKA bows his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAGOS CITY

ANDREW stops and is panting heavily.

He picks out his phone.

He dials EMEKA frantically.

ANDREW  
EMEKA, please pick up.

CUT TO:

INT. BROADCAST ROOM

A shot of EMEKA'S phone in his mother's bag.

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW  
And it all went to hell when I got there.

EXT. CINEMA

ANDREW is outside the cinema. He's panting but he's here.

ANDREW walks forward.

A shot of the door and a silhouetted figure beside it.

As ANDREW gets closer, we see that it's EMEKA'S MOTHER waiting for his arrival.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
See yourself. No shame. You just showed your stupid, parasitic face here to suffer my son more abi?

ANDREW freezes in place.

ANDREW  
A-

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Get out of my sight and leave my son alone.

ANDREW clenches his chest.

SFX: THUMP! THUMP!

ANDREW  
B-But-

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Did I mistake myself? You're not welcome here.  
(MORE)

EMEKA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
You don't listen to people? No  
wonder your father left you and  
your useless mother.

ANDREW steps back.

A beat.

CINEMA SCREEN

EMEKA(O.S.)  
It's the grounded fantasy of it.

ANDREW looks up.

EMEKA is on a big screen on the cinema building.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
EMEKA! That's it! Remember why you  
came here! It's-

EMEKA  
I was never really a fan of the  
more outlandish fantasy of anime.

ANDREW  
Ehn?

EMEKA  
Like, don't get me wrong, I like  
them for what they are but I feel  
that if it's not grounded or  
relatable to the average person,  
you'll lose them.

ANDREW looks on in shock.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
I feel like those kinds of things  
should not be superimposed onto our  
culture. We should know to meet  
people where they're at.  
Like, I have a friend ANDREW who  
dropped out of school to learn  
writing and he writes like somebody  
living in fantasy-in like a  
fantasyland or something. It's why  
he has not and probably will not  
see success.

ANDREW'S face slips and becomes more uncanny.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

And it's not like he's the best person ever. He is someone who abandoned his friends all for that childish goal. And that's not to speak on their more problematic aspects.(chuckles) I mean since we were small, this guy had pictures of underage girls in his room. That's definitely child abuse in some places.

ANDREW

EMEKA.

A beat.

ANDREW solemnly turns back and begins to walk home.

EMEKA'S MOTHER

Idiot.

CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW

Having your friend say things like that-it's kind of a hard hitting cautionary tale.

INTERVIEWER

In betrayal.

ANDREW

Not really. It's a cautionary tale for the phrase: "No good deed goes unpunished". Story of my life.

CUT TO:

INT. DIAMOND ANIMATION STUDIOS

The studio is empty except for ANDREW.

ANDREW sits on the floor, slumping down beside the desk where PRECIOUS once sat.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(V.O.)

Parasite. Idiot.

Jump cut flashbacks of ANDREW being abused verbally and physically by EMEKA'S MOTHER.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(V.O.)  
Why are you not normal?!

Jump cut flashbacks.

EMEKA'S MOTHER(V.O.)  
Good! Get that parasite out of my house!

TYLER(O.S.)  
I told you. Begged you. Idiot.

ANDREW looks up to TYLER.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
ANDREW, I want to reason with you. After that, what will it take for you to just accept the parasite that woman called you and ditch EMEKA for good. It's better for you to be what they call you than face false accusations!

ANDREW is silent.

A beat.

SFX: BANG!

TYLER and ANDREW are startled.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
What was that?

TYLER rushes downstairs.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
What is it now?! The police aren't coming for me. They're after EMEKA.

SFX: BANG!

Two men rush into the room ANDREW is in, holding small wooden logs.

ANDREW  
Who are you people?

They suddenly rush towards ANDREW and hit him across his face, right in his eye.

ANDREW falls to the floor.

MAN 1  
Where are the computers?

MAN 2  
The woman talk say computers  
supposed dey here?

The men look at ANDREW.

MAN 2 (CONT'D)  
You dey work for here na? Where una  
computers dey?

ANDREW scampers around on the ground but remains silent.

MAN 1  
Nor be this guy be the ANDREW?

MAN 2  
The ANDREW wen like small small  
girls, wen e friend die, e nor  
show?  
This guy, your doings many.

MAN 1  
(looking at ANDREW)  
Disgrace.

A beat.

MAN 2  
Abeg, make we dey go.  
EMEKA don do e own film.

MAN 1  
(to MAN 2)  
Nor be EMEKA send us here.

MAN 1 glares at ANDREW. He spits on the ground in front of  
ANDREW.

The men walk away.

A beat.

ANDREW stops and just holds his injured right eye.

A beat.

TYLER  
ANDREW!

TYLER makes his way back up.

He rushes to ANDREW and kneels near him.

A beat.

ANDREW

Is this what she meant? When she  
said: "-end up like Uncle Andrew."?

SMASH CUT TO:

DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW is directly facing the camera. Eyes dull but darted  
and his body in the exact same position and posture as before  
the cut.

INTERVIEWER

And the-uh- experience...  
How did it affect you?  
It's a- You don't have to answer-  
But did it deter you at all?

ANDREW

No.

INTERVIEWER

And do you have an idea who sent  
the men?

ANDREW

It doesn't matter. I'm not here to  
incriminate anybody. I'm here to  
give an account of the events that  
occurred, making a film I haven't  
really made at this point.

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

And that's what I went to do.  
Make my film complete myself.

CUT TO:

INT. DIAMOND ANIMATION STUDIOS

ANDREW walks towards drawing paper spilled onto the ground.

Blood dripping from his eye.

He bends down and picks them up one by one.

One still left on the ground is stained with his blood dripping on it.

He picks it up and looks at it.

A beat.

ANDREW continues as he picks up all the paper drawing files and makes his way through the desks.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
My name is nothing now.

He makes his way to the editing room where he stacks all the frames of the animation together.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
But I still have my pseudonym.  
I still have my animation studio.  
I still have my film.

He uses a camera to record the frames, passing them by one by one as he records them each.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
I've not lost everything.  
And I will keep moving forward...  
Until I reach my goal.

CUT TO:

EXT. CINEMA - NIGHT

EMEKA is walking out towards his mother.

EMEKA  
I think they were satisfied with it.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
I'm sure they did.

A beat.

EMEKA  
I still can't believe ANDREW didn't come.  
He's as much of a bastard as I thought he was.

EMEKA shakes his head.

EMEKA'S MOTHER grumbles.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
He called you e! E be like say e  
want talk to you but I nor know  
wetin e wan talk to you about.

EMEKA  
Ah, you should have told me na!  
I'll call him back.

EMEKA'S MOTHER  
Hmm. You better be careful before  
that boy will do some nonsense to  
you.

EMEKA looks to the distance.

EMEKA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
You need to remember that he  
stopped being your friend when he  
refused to join you to make your  
film and instead went to make his  
own.

EMEKA collects his phone from his mother's bag.

EMEKA  
I'll remember.

EMEKA dials his phone and puts it to his ear.

EMEKA (CONT'D)  
ANDREW, listen-I know everything  
that's happened. Let's meet and  
settle this thing.

ANDREW(V.O.)  
(cold)  
Ah, let's meet at the old  
apartment.

EMEKA  
Okay. Let's do it tomorrow.

#### DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

INTERVIEWER  
This was your final confrontation  
with EMEKA?

ANDREW looks into the distance.

ANDREW  
It wasn't a confrontation.

INTERVIEWER  
Then how would you describe it?

A beat.

ANDREW  
A Catastrophe.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

EMEKA makes his way to the flat.

He pauses and stands in front of the flat.

He's tensed.

He looks up and down at the flat and sighs as he looks around and sees memories of himself and ANDREW moving in.

He sighs and continues walking forward.

INT. ANDREW AND EMEKA'S FLAT

The Apartment is hollow and cold, devoid of light and illuminated only by the cold light of the window

ANDREW sits on the couch.

A bandage is wrapped around his eye.

A chair is arranged opposite him.

ANDREW gestures to EMEKA.

ANDREW  
Sit.

EMEKA sits down.

A beat.

EMEKA  
So-

ANDREW

Remember, it was here that I got  
mad at UFOR for giving some girl my  
number.  
And remember when OBI wanted to  
chase us out of the house because  
we were rude to his girlfriend?

ANDREW chuckles very softly.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

All conflicts that were resolved.

A beat.

EMEKA is tensed still.

EMEKA

You did to me. I did to you.

ANDREW

And I'm sorry.  
We let our goals get ahead of us.  
We really should not have let it  
get here.

A beat.

EMEKA is shocked.

EMEKA

Really?

ANDREW scratches his face.

EMEKA (CONT'D)

Then guy, I'm sorry too.

EMEKA begins to grow a smile.

ANDREW

But EMEKA, tell me,  
(a beat)  
Why did you enable your mother?

EMEKA'S smile dies immediately.

EMEKA

Ehn?

ANDREW

I mean, when I had no father and my mother pleaded for yours to take care of me and she insulted, abused, cursed me and called me a parasite, why did you let her?

EMEKA looks down.

EMEKA

I'm sorry.

ANDREW

No, it's because I keep asking why. Why did you almost always oppose me when it came to our own shared goal? Why did you say what you said at the screening?

EMEKA

I just wanted to be among and be with everybody.  
And I was willing to sacrifice my friend for it.  
I'm no better than you.

A beat.

ANDREW stares dead at EMEKA.

ANDREW

Was that why you were so pushy for me to do illegal business with you?

EMEKA

Yes, I wanted to make my friends and my mother comfortable.

ANDREW

(a beat)  
That's what I wanted to hear.  
I don't blame you for the past. You were just a child. What would you have been able to do when your mother was preaching her piece to you?

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Even your illegal businesses were for her, your family's sake.

ANDREW stands up.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
And you were right when you said  
were the same.

ANDREW reaches his hand out to EMEKA.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
We are the same.

A beat.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
You liked my first script. You used  
it as the narrative backbone of  
your film.  
You told me different but you still  
kept it. Why?  
Because we are the same.

EMEKA reaches out to ANDREW'S hand.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I'm doing this thing kind of for  
the same reason as well.  
For my mom. To make her proud.  
We're just two mommasboys with  
dreams to make them proud.

EMEKA grabs ANDREW'S hand.

A beat as the two finally hold hands.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
But that's why to make her proud  
and accomplish my dream, I have to  
keep moving forward and overcome  
every obstacle.  
Which is why I'm sorry I couldn't  
help you. I faced my own thing  
instead of helping my friend.

EMEKA  
What?

ANDREW  
Now, the bad guys close in. They're  
here for you.  
They found out after OBI...well...  
and now, I'm the unlucky one  
because I didn't participate.  
(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
I tried to warn you but I  
understood the fear you felt when  
you were younger to act against  
your mother. Your good action being  
punished, because I lived it.

EMEKA  
ANDREW, wetin you dey talk?!

ANDREW just looks at EMEKA dead in the eye.

CLOSE-UP on ANDREW's eye. His Iris narrows.

SFX: BOOM!

The door is busted open as Policemen flood the apartment.

A montage of EMEKA and getting taken in by the Police.

In the police station, ANDREW gets taken in the opposite  
direction.

They lock eyes once more, one last time.

ANDREW looks cold and dead. He's seeing a butterfly being  
caged.

EMEKA looks shocked, sacred and full of remorse. He sees a  
friendship lost to both their errors.

CUT TO:

A MONTAGE OF ANDREW WALKING OUT OF THE POLICE STATION AND  
GOING BACK TO HIS OFFICE.

He seats back in the same seat . Right where PRECIOUS once  
sat.

SMASH CUT TO:

# DOCUMENTARY CAMERA

ANDREW is facing the camera in the exact pose we left on,  
with the same bandage position and posture seen just now.  
We've recapped up to the present.

INTERVIEWER  
That's all?

ANDREW

That is all. After that, I went on to submit my test screening due to or in spite of the lack of competition, we got greenlit and garnered attention and got a cinema release.

INTERVIEWER

But you were a definer and pioneer of this subgenre!

ANDREW

I guess I was.

A beat.

INTERVIEWER

But thank you for your time Mister Akpo.

DOCUMENTARY DIRECTOR(O.S.)

CUT!

INT. DOLBY CINEMA

We finally see the recording room in full as we see the crew and interviewer who have been with ANDREW.

ANDREW coldly looks into the distance.

CREW MEMBER

(whispering)  
That was quite the turbulent pre-production!

CREW MEMBER (CONT'D)

(whispering)  
But I thought he had a pseudonym or hid his face or something? Why would he appear here? Won't everything be exposed?

The INTERVIEWER scoffs.

INTERVIEWER

(whispering)  
Haven't you been paying attention? This guy is smart.

ANDREW stands up.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)

(whispering)  
This documentary's gonna be  
vaulted, who'd want such a  
turbulent production publicized?  
It's documentation due to  
contractual obligation. It's never  
gonna be released.

ANDREW makes his way to the seats.

CREW MEMBER

(whispering)  
Ah, okay, so his name will- oh.

A brief shot of ANDREW'S face as he gives a slight, cold and faint smile.

ANDREW sits on a seat as the movie's countdown begins.

THREE with a BEEP.

He looks down once more at the crew walking about below where he is seated.

TYLER is standing still there amongst them.

A crew member passes by him and he disappears.

TWO with a BEEP.

A beat.

ANDREW looks down sadly briefly.

ANDREW directly faces the camera which is the direction of the cinema screen.

ONE with a BEEP.

The movie is about to start.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.