

**RATED E**

**RATED E PRODUCTIONS**

**PRESENTS:**

# **CINDERELLA**

A Survivor's Story



**RATED E PRODUCTIONS** PRESENTS: AN **EMIL B. GARUBA** SCREEN STORY

**"CINDERELLA: A SURVIVOR'S STORY"**

WRITTEN & PRODUCED BY **EMIL B. GARUBA** © 2012

RATED E

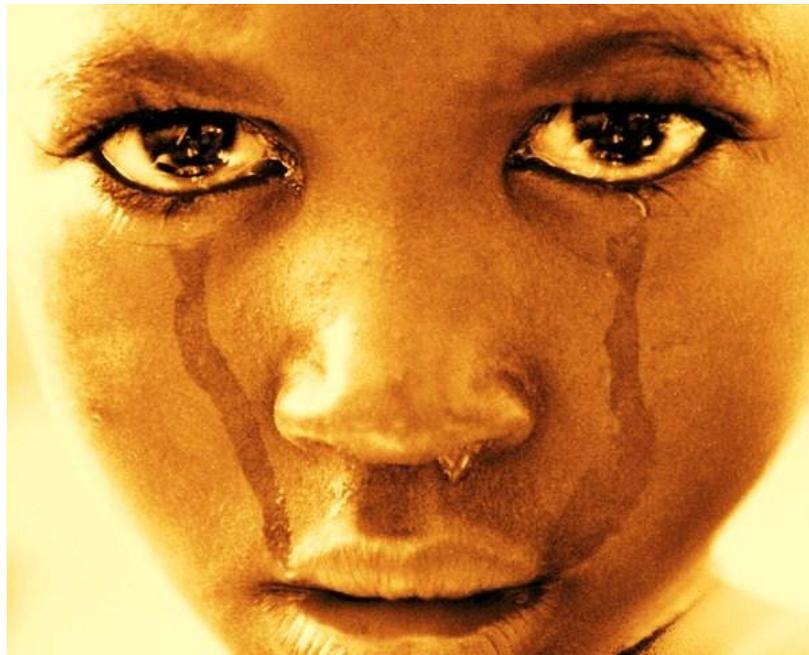
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**THE STORY:**

On a dark stormy night, a pregnant young girl is admitted into the ER with no memory of who she is or how she came about her current condition. As the night progresses and with the help of a caring doctor, her memory slowly returns and with it a tale of sorrow, pain, and ultimately triumph.

**CINDERELLA: A SURVIVOR'S STORY** is a 15 page screen story inspired by the classic fairy tale but written as a contemporary piece for issues surrounding the girl child as it relates to Millennium Development Goals (MDG'S). This story reemphasizes the reality of child abuse in Nigeria and other developing nations and hopefully will act as a public awareness campaign. NGOs working with abused children are welcome to lend their name and support to this project.

*\*If you'd like to read the classic fairy tale, go here:  
<http://childhoodreading.com/?p=21>*



***\*Cinderella: A Survivor's Story and all characters and situations described are creations of Emil B. Garuba for Rated E Productions © 2012. All Rights Reserved.***

FADE IN:

**EXT. NARROW ALLEY - NIGHT**

*It's 9:30pm and rain is pouring. A **YOUNG GIRL**, 14, hair soaked and barefoot, staggers in the dark. She winces and braces herself on a nearby wall as she grabs her very **PREGNANT BELLY** visible through her dress.*

*She hears **SOMETHING** behind her and turns in panic. She musters all her strength and staggers forward, quickening her pace. She looks back in the dark constantly like she's being followed.*

*She notices lights and sounds of varied activity and hurries forward...*

**EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS**

*The young girl limps into the street. The sound of commotion around startles her as **CARS** honk their horns. She grabs her belly again and falls to her knees. We see blood trickling down her legs. She tries to get up just as --*

**TWO BLINDING LIGHTS** rush at her. She screams!

CUT TO:

**INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HOSPITAL BUILDING - NIGHT**

*A sparse emergency room ward during the late night hours. **TWO NURSES** are on duty:*

***NURSE PATIENCE** is asleep on the counter with a gossip magazine in front of her. **NURSE SAFFIA** sits in the waiting room area flicking through TV channels but only getting static.*

*She hisses and walks to window, watching raindrops pelt the glass as lightening **FLASHES** overhead. She moves to the counter, checks the wall clock. It's past 10pm. Still static on the TV. Nothing much going on here tonight.*

*She wrestles the magazine from under her colleague's head, jolting Patience from her slumber. Saffia smiles as Patience wipes the drool off her cheek.*

NURSE PATIENCE  
I was reading that.

RATED E

**RATED E**

NURSE SAFFIA  
No, you weren't. You were sound  
asleep.

*Patience looks around, clearing the sleep from her eyes.*

NURSE PATIENCE  
Where's the Doctor?

NURSE SAFFIA  
Where do you think? He's chatting  
with one of his babes again. That's  
all these young residents do.

*She flips through the magazine while her colleague staggers  
from behind the counter, yawning.*

NURSE PATIENCE  
I'm going to the bathroom. Shout if  
something happens.

NURSE SAFFIA  
Don't hold your breath.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

*We see the young male **DOCTOR**, 27, reclined in his chair, on  
the phone. We can hear a **FEMALE VOICE** on the other end.*

DOCTOR  
... Babe, you know it's not like  
that. I can't just leave the  
hospital and come over!

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)  
So, what you're saying is that  
you're abandoning me on my  
birthday?

DOCTOR  
I'd leave if I could, but you know  
how important my residency is.  
Besides, it's raining heavily AND  
I'll have to get a taxi...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)  
Excuses, excuses! You don't love me  
anymore!

RATED E

4.

DOCTOR

Babe, I never said that! Just bear with me a few more hours and I'll come over in the morning. I even got you a little gift.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Really?

DOCTOR

Still think I don't love you?

**EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HOSPITAL BUILDING - NIGHT**

*Nurse Saffia is still engrossed in her magazine when she hears a loud **THUD** and looks up. Nothing but the sound of the blowing wind outside and the static on the TV. She shakes her head.*

*She hears it again, coming from outside. She leaves the counter and steps cautiously towards the front entrance. She unlocks the door and swings it open --*

***THUNDER BOOMS** and **LIGHTNING STRIKES!** She's taken aback by what she sees --*

CUT TO:

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - SAME**

*The Doctor is still on the phone, his voice a soft whisper in romantic mode...*

DOCTOR

... Then I'll make sure the bathtub is filled with rose petals and extra bubbly... I know how much you enjoy your bubble baths...

*He's startled by **BANGING** on the door. Without pause, Nurse Patience enters the room.*

NURSE PATIENCE

Doctor, come quick! We have an emergency!

CUT TO:

**INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HOSPITAL BUILDING - NIGHT**

*We see the young girl from before unconscious on a wheeled stretcher bursting through double doors into the ward. The stretcher is accompanied by Nurse Saffia and the **MATRON**. Two **SECURITY GUARDS** follow behind the trolley.*

MATRON

Where did she come from?

SECURITY GUARD #1

I don't know. A taxi just stopped outside the gate and she was in the back.

SECURITY GUARD #2

The driver said she was in the middle of the road when he accidentally hit her!

MATRON

At least he did the right thing by bringing her here! Let's get her to the operating theater. Where's the doctor?

NURSE SAFFIA

I've already sent for him --

**INT. OPERATING THEATER - NIGHT**

*The girl is being prepared for an emergency Caesarean. Monitors and drips are being attached at double speed...*

*The girl is unconscious on the gurney, her blouse, covered in blood. Surgical scissors slice through it, exposing her bruised flesh including multiple scars on her back and inner thighs.*

*Nurse Saffia notices that her wrists and feet are covered with ligature marks. All the while we can hear frantic activity from the operating table...*

NURSE SAFFIA

Her stats are very poor. The baby's very distressed.

MATRON

Let me check... I trained as a midwife --

*The matron checks.*

**RATED E**

**RATED E**

MATRON (CONT'D)  
It might be shoulder dystocia...

*Saffia moves to the young girl's head -- she strokes her face and speaks softly.*

NURSE SAFFIA  
It's okay, my dear, we're going to help you... can you hear me?

*No response. Nurse Saffia checks the monitor.*

NURSE SAFFIA (CONT'D)  
The baby's heart beat is dropping!

MATRON  
I'm trying to rotate the shoulder... damn it, where's that stupid doctor?

*The matron is breathing hard with a look of utter panic as she attempts to free the baby when --*

*The doors burst open and the Doctor enters at a gallop, accompanied by Nurse Patience. They join the matron, who looks out of her depth.*

DOCTOR  
Christ! Somebody tell me what's going on?

MATRON  
Pregnant young girl was hit by a car. She's bleeding profusely! Mother and child are in distress --

NURSE SAFFIA  
Baby's stats are falling fast!

NURSE PATIENCE  
I'm not getting a pulse.

MATRON  
We need to get the baby out now! You're a surgical resident, correct? You can do this!

*The doctor thinks for a moment...*

DOCTOR  
OK, let's go! No time to scrub in --

*All hell is let loose as the Caesarean process begins at frantic speed. The crosstalk between the medical attendants becomes more and more frantic. Soon, we hear a **BABY CRY**.*

MATRON

Well done, doctor...

*A nurse weighs the screaming baby as the doctor wipes his brow with the back of his bloody wrist.*

DOCTOR

Thank you... all of you. Okay, let's get her to recovery. And pray.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER**

*The young girl lies still. Thin plastic tubes run from her broken, frail body, to big, square, pale-colored machines.*

*Suddenly, her eyes open, staring straight up. She tries to move but winces in pain. She looks down at her belly, notices something is different and it freaks her out --*

*The Doctor walks in with a chart and comes to her side. She recoils and he steps back.*

DOCTOR

It's okay... you're safe. You're in the hospital...

*She slowly moves her neck, taking in the machinery, the tubes, the room.*

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You were brought in last night. I operated on you --

YOUNG GIRL

My... baby...

*Her voice is plain without a hint of any distinguishable accent.*

DOCTOR

You delivered a baby girl. She's fine. Maybe later you can see her. But first I need to find out a few things... what's your name?

**RATED E**

YOUNG GIRL  
I -- I don't remember...

*He walks forward slowly and sits, looking up at her in a non-threatening manner.*

DOCTOR  
You don't remember your name? Or how you found yourself in the middle of the road?

*She shakes her head.*

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
And the baby? Surely you can remember how you became pregnant?

*She just stares at him, wide-eyed.*

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Sometimes the mind can forget things as a way to deal with extreme trauma...

*He looks at her with a doctor's eyes, examining everything -- every bruise, every cut, every scar on her body.*

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
(gentle)  
But in time, you'll remember what happened to you... for the sake of your daughter. One day, she might want to know where she came from, who her father is.

*She starts to cry. He takes her hand.*

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I'm sure it's painful to talk about. I can't imagine how alone you must feel now. Your family must be really worried about you.

*She looks at him.*

YOUNG GIRL  
My family... I don't have one... I think my parents are dead.

DOCTOR  
You remember?

YOUNG GIRL  
 Yes... in a car accident. That's  
 how I came to live in the city --

FLASHBACK TO:

**EXT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - DAY**

*A bungalow in a vast estate somewhere in the city.*

YOUNG GIRL (V.O.)  
 I was sent to live in the city with  
 my Aunt... Eucharia -- and her two  
 daughters Annette and... Regina --  
 We were supposed to go to school  
 together... but they had other  
 plans for me...

**INT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - DAY**

*We see ANNETTE and REGINA, both 14, pushing the young girl  
 around. They laugh at her tattered clothes and call her  
 names.*

ANNETTE  
 Cindy looks like a rag doll!

REGINA  
 Why don't you go back to the  
 village where you belong, Cindy!

ANNETTE  
 She can't go back because her mummy  
 and daddy are dead!

YOUNG GIRL (V.O.)  
 ...Cindy! My name is Cindy! I  
 remember!

DOCTOR (V.O.)  
 Go on. What else do you remember?

**INT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - DAY**

*AUNT EUCHARIA, 45, with hideous makeup, stands over the  
 malnourished young girl (CINDY), her hand ready to strike.  
 Cindy tries to defend herself but Aunt Eucharia snags her  
 right across her face. She falls on the ground, crying.*

RATED E

**RATED E**

AUNT EUCHARIA

Cindy, how many times have I told you to clean the house when you wake up?

CINDY

I'm sorry, Aunty!

AUNT EUCHARIA

Let this be the last time! Now stop crying and get to work! And make sure food is ready when I return from the salon.

*Aunty Eucharía hisses and walks out.*

CINDY (V.O.)

She used to beat me a lot. I ate only once a day and that was in the morning. I slept on the kitchen floor and wasn't allowed to bathe in the house. I had to bathe outside very early in the morning and late at night when no one was looking...

**EXT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING**

*We see Cindy with a bucket of water by the side of the house in the early hours of the morning. She shivers as she stands in the cold only in her small towel.*

CINDY (V.O.)

I had to bathe outside very early in the morning and late at night when no one was looking...

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

*Cindy is lying down on the bare floor with a torn wrapper barely covering her. She sobs quietly.*

CINDY (V.O.)

Sometimes I wished that I died with my parents in that car, then I wouldn't be left at the mercy of my wicked aunt and my cousins... but just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, they did --

**INT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - DAY**

*JONATHAN, 37, sits in the living room watching television. He's a handsome man, dressed gaudily with a gold chain necklace and matching watch.*

CINDY (V.O.)

Aunty Eucharria's boyfriend was always in the house when she went to the salon. His name is... Jonathan. And I never liked how he looked at me...

*Jonathan turns away from the TV to stare at Cindy sweeping in the kitchen.*

JONATHAN

Cindy, come here. Come and sit on my lap...

*Cindy reluctantly does as she's told. Jonathan smiles as she slowly perches on his lap.*

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Has anyone ever told you that you're a beautiful young girl?

*She flinches when he stroked her hair and puts his arm around her waist. She tries to pry his hand away but he grabs her tighter and pulls her close.*

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

I see the way you look at me... like you are better than me or something. Just like your aunt does. But I'll show all of you I'm not just some jobless boy-toy!

*Jonathan grabs her face and kisses her. Cindy struggles to free herself from his grasp. She bites his lip and he recoils in pain. He wipes the blood from his mouth and slaps her across the face.*

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Stupid girl! Now I'll teach you to behave once and for all --

*Jonathan stands over her and unbuckles his belt --*

CINDY (V.O.)

And that's when he... did what he did to me. He said never to tell or else he would kill me.

(MORE)

RATED E

**RATED E**

CINDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

So whenever my cousins went to school or aunt Eucharía was away, he'd come to the house and --

(sobbing)

I didn't have anywhere to go. I didn't know anyone in the city to tell. I felt trapped... then I started getting sick. That's when Aunt Eucharía found out I was pregnant...

**EXT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - DAY**

*Aunt Eucharía drags Cindy out of the house in tears and flings her on the ground. Annette and Regina are by her side, laughing and pointing fingers, while Jonathan stands silently behind.*

AUNT EUCHARIA

Foolish girl! You're pregnant, eh? So you've learnt how to pursue men! I'll flog you until you tell me who impregnated you!

*She flogs Cindy with a cane while the others laugh.*

CINDY (V.O.)

She flogged me until she was tired, but I didn't say a word! Later, she tied me up in the storeroom until she could decide what to do about my pregnancy.

**INT. STORE ROOM - NIGHT**

*Cindy is bound hand and foot in the dark. She weeps and begs for mercy but Aunt Eucharía simply gives her the look of death. She slams the door behind her when she leaves.*

CINDY (V.O.)

I don't know how long I was there but my stomach kept getting bigger and bigger. I ate what I found in the store -- dried yam and cassava and drank small rain water that leaked from the roof... again I prayed for death, but it did not come.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. STORE ROOM - NIGHT**

*Darkness and silence -- broken by the **FLASH** of lightening heard outside and the **RUMBLE** of distant thunder. Cindy is barely conscious, weak from malnutrition and heavy with a grown belly.*

CINDY (V.O.)

I remember it was dark and damp... another night of rain. I heard the door unlock and feared the worst -- that they had finally reached a decision on what to do with me...

*The door opens and Aunt Eucharía enters accompanied by Jonathan. He produces a small knife and Cindy starts crying.*

CINDY

Please...

AUNT EUCHARIA

Do it now, Jonathan! Do it or she'll bring all of us down! I'll be waiting outside when you're finished.

*She closes the door behind her. Jonathan steps forward, knife in hand. He cuts the ropes around Cindy's arms and feet.*

JONATHAN

Close your eyes. This will only take a second...

*He places the knife at her throat and is about to cut her when --*

*A mangy **RAT** jumps on his arm, startling him! He yells and shrugs it off, dropping the knife.*

CINDY (V.O.)

I saw my chance to escape! I picked up the knife and swung it at him!

*The blade slices Jonathan across the face! He screams and falls back in the darkness. Cindy struggles to her feet, clutching her stomach, and moves towards the door just as --*

*Aunt Eucharía appears in the doorway --*

AUNT EUCHARIA

What's all the commotion?

*Cindy slams the door in her face! Eucharía stumbles back in pain and Cindy limps out of the store room...*

**RATED E**

**RATED E**

CINDY (V.O.)  
 I remember stepping out of the house and into the rain... I knew I had to get away from that place, so I ran...

**EXT. AUNT EUCHARIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

*Cindy comes out of the house, barefoot in the pouring rain. She hobbles away into the darkness...*

CINDY (V.O.)  
 I went as far as my feet could carry me... I heard voices following me so I walked even faster. The last thing I remember is two lights flashing in my eyes. Then --

DOCTOR (V.O.)  
 You woke up here...

BACK TO:

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

*Cindy wipes tears from her eyes. The Doctor writes in his chart.*

DOCTOR  
 You were hit by a taxi when you tried to cross the road. You were very lucky. So was your baby. She's two months premature but doing well.

CINDY  
 Can I see her?

*The Doctor nods.*

**INT. N.I.C.U. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

*In a private room in the Neonatal Intensive care Unit, Cindy approaches her baby's plastic crib. The baby is tightly bundled up, sound asleep. Through the windows of the room, the Doctor waits, watching her.*

*Cindy stands over the baby, her face full of emotion. There we see pain, loss, shame, emptiness, isolation. Tears begin to roll from her eyes, and then she is sobbing soundlessly.*

*Cindy takes the little baby in her arms and sings a lullaby softly to her.*

CINDY

My little girl... I'll call you Precious, because that's what you are to me. My precious little angel.

*Finally she lays a sleeping baby back in her crib. She sits down on the bed where the mother should be and stares at the crib in fierce determination. The Doctor watches her a while then leaves.*

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY**

*The Doctor is on the phone again, this time his tone is serious.*

DOCTOR

...Mary, do you still work with that NGO that aids abused women? Good. I need a favor...

**INT. WAITING ROOM - HOSPITAL BUILDING - DAY**

*The Doctor moves through the hallway when he's approached by two unlikely faces -- Aunt Eucharia and Jonathan, sporting a fresh SCAR across his face.*

AUNT EUCHARIA

Excuse me doctor, I'm here to find my niece. I was told she was brought her last night after she was involved in a hit-and-run.

JONATHAN

And she's pregnant.

DOCTOR

Pregnant you say? And the patient's name?

AUNT EUCHARIA

Cinderella Obi -- well, we call her Cindy for short. I'm her aunt, Eucharia Obi.

*The Doctor's face drops. He looks like he's seen a ghost, realizing who is in front of him. He looks her in the eye without attitude, but also without any sense that she is better than him, or anyone.*

**RATED E**

**RATED E**

DOCTOR

I'm sorry, Ma. But that's not the name of the patient that was brought in. Furthermore that patient succumbed to her wounds and passed on shortly after midnight.

JONATHAN

And her baby?

DOCTOR

Dead as well. Perhaps you can check another hospital for your niece.

AUNT EUCHARIA

No. That's quite alright. Thank you, doctor.

*Eucharia and Jonathan exchange looks. They smile and walk away. The Doctor shakes his head, moves down the hall. His phone **RINGS** and he answers --*

DOCTOR

Mary, you're here?

CUT TO:

**INT. N.I.C.U. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

*In the half-lit private room, Cindy watches over little baby Precious in the crib. The door opens and the Doctor enters accompanied by **MARY**, 26, a young woman dressed conservatively. He speaks softly.*

DOCTOR

Cindy, I have some good news. This is my friend Mary. She works for an organization that helps girls in your situation. She's going to help you too.

*Mary shakes hands with Cindy.*

MARY

Hello, Cindy. I've heard a lot about you and how brave you've been. I'm here to take you somewhere you'll never have to be afraid again. You and your baby.

*Cindy looks at the Doctor. He smiles, letting her know everything will be alright. Cindy nods and gets to her feet.*

RATED E

CINDY  
I don't know how to thank you  
doctor. You've done so much for me.

DOCTOR  
It's been my pleasure, Cinderella.

CINDY  
Cinderella -- yes, that's my full  
name. But I don't know yours.

DOCTOR  
Princeton.

FADE OUT

**THE END**

*FURTHER READING:*

**THE AFRICAN CHILD POLICY FORUM**

The international community now acknowledges that violence against children is a serious problem and cause for concern. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as many as 40 million children under the age of 15 are victims of violence every year. In its resolution 56/138, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to conduct an in-depth study on the issue of violence against children, upon the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In February 2003, the Secretary-General appointed an independent expert, Prof. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, to direct the study. The report was to be based on available evidence, information and a series of regional consultations, and be carried out in collaboration with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO.

The conference - **VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS IN AFRICA** - organized by The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), was designed to complement and enrich the study process. This conference adds the voices of African women, women activists and leaders, as well as policy-makers, human rights activists, African youth and prominent African figures, to the debate on preventing violence against girls in Africa.

*To read more about the conference go here:*  
<http://www.africanchildforum.org/site/index.php/resource-centre/the-second-ipc-on-the-african-child%3A-violence-against-girls-in-africa%3A-conference-proceedings.html#.UNJObOQ6-So>

*To find out what the ACPF are all about, visit their website:*  
<http://www.africanchildforum.org/site/>

*Thanks for reading :)*

*Emil @ Rated E*

*December 2012*

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