

MR. LECTURER

Written

By

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FADE IN:

1 **EXT. UNIVERSITY - DAY**

Establishing shot of university campus...

2 **EXT. HALLWAY - DAY**

STUDENTS gather around a notice board, checking names on a list. Some cry out in jubilant praise, while others simply hang their heads, sulking.

Nearby, CHUKS [23] stands the wall with a folded newspaper under his arm looking tense.

3 **INT. PROF. OLIVER'S HOME - DAY**

PROFESSOR OLIVER [42], a studious looking man, is about to leave for work. His wife ABIGAIL [35] steps out of the kitchen holding an empty pot.

PROF. OLIVER
Abigail, what is the meaning of
this?

ABIGAIL
I just wanted to show you that
there's no food in the house. The
store is empty and there's even no
gas in the container!

Prof. Oliver ignores her, grabs his briefcase.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
I thought they said you were being
promoted to Deputy Vice Chancellor?
How come they haven't decided yet?

PROF. OLIVER
Abigail, I haven't been paid in
three months. I have tons of exam
papers to grade. Plus, I'm getting
to work late again because the car
is still in the mechanic's shop --
And I don't even have the money to
fix!

He calms down, fixes his shirt. Abigail shrugs.

ABIGAIL
No problem, we'll manage.

PROF. OLIVER
 Good. I'll see you after work.

And he's out the door.

4

EXT. STREET - DAY

Prof. Oliver walks down the street and flags down an *okada* rider.

5

EXT. PROF. OLIVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

The Professor enters, finds the place bursting with STUDENTS, all competing for his attention at once: "Professor Oliver!" "Prof!" etc., etc.

He quickly shoulders his way to the desk of his overwhelmed SECRETARY.

SECRETARY

Professor Oliver! Thank god you're here! Your mail is on your desk. Here are your phone messages. This is your appointment schedule. And these term papers still haven't been graded.

Prof. Oliver takes the term papers. Students once again clamour for his attention: "**Professor!**" "**Mr. Lecturer!**" "**Wait, my grade!**" "**Sign my registration card!**"

He silences the mob with a raised hand.

PROF. OLIVER

(very efficiently)

Okay! My secretary will put everyone's name on a list, in the order they arrived, and I'll see each and every one of you in turn.

The Students descend upon the poor woman, each claiming to be first. Prof. Oliver quickly slips into his office.

CUT TO:

6

INT. PROF. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

Prof. Oliver on the phone with his mechanic --

PROF. OLIVER

...So, you are saying that it will cost me two-hundred and fifty naira for a new engine? Why do you mechanics charge so much?

There's a KNOCK on the door.

PROF. OLIVER (CONT'D)

...Listen, I'll call you back.
(hangs up)
Come in.

Chuks walks in, still looking nervous.

PROF. OLIVER (CONT'D)

Young man, what can I do for you today? And please be fast, I have tons of other students to see.

He manages a slight smile as Prof. Oliver offers him a seat.

CHUKS

Yes, sir. My name is Chuks Anyere from your Advanced Physics class. I wanted to ask you about my grade.

PROF. OLIVER

So, ask?

CHUKS

Sir, I failed the last exam and even the make-up one. This will be my sixth year in university following the numerous strikes and whatnot... I just want to be done with everything.

Chuks places the folded newspaper on the desk. Prof. Oliver looks at it hesitantly.

CHUKS (CONT'D)

I know I don't have much, but the little I have is yours, if it means getting a passing grade on the final exam! Please sir, you're my last hope!

On that, Prof. Oliver opens the newspaper to find an envelope filled with CASH. He recoils, stares at Chuks --

PROF. OLIVER

Young man, you want to kill me? You want to sabotage my career with bribery and corruption! Is this what it has come to now!

CHUKS

I didn't mean to, but I'm desperate! That's two-hundred and fifty thousand you're holding right now! Think of all the things you can do with it!

Prof. Oliver stops cold, thinks about it, a little longer than he should. Chuks sees his chance and gets up to leave --

CHUKS (CONT'D)

Thank you for your time, sir.

And he's out the door. Prof. Oliver realizes he's gone and stares at the envelope in his hands.

PROF. OLIVER

My god!

Prof. Oliver is still contemplating his next move when he hears another KNOCK on the door. He quickly hides the envelope in a desk drawer.

PROF. OLIVER (CONT'D)

Yes, who is it now?

A young lady enters: extremely beautiful in a tight, sexy dress. Meet SCARLET [21].

SCARLET

Good afternoon, sir. I hope I'm not bothering you. I know you're very busy, but I have to see you now.

Prof. Oliver's jaw drops! He watches her walk forward and slink into the chair. Her every move is a tease, an enticement.

PROF. OLIVER

(flustered)

Not at all, young lady. But how can I help you? I don't ever recall seeing you in my class. Are you a new student?

SCARLET

No, sir. My name is Scarlet and I'm a 400 level student.

(MORE)

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, I've been ill these past few months and couldn't attend the majority of your lectures, that's why you haven't seen me before.

PROF. OLIVER

That's very unfortunate. But there's nothing I can do. You'll just have to re-take the class next semester. I'm sorry.

Scarlet breaks down, sobbing.

SCARLET

Oh, Professor, please... you're my only hope. I have to graduate or my parents will disown me!

He's about to say something when she gets up and throws herself on him, sobbing louder.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Everyone says you're too rigid, but I know you're not. Can't you find somewhere in your heart to help me? I'll do anything to pass. Anything! I'll even offer you my body! After all, what am I a woman for?

PROF. OLIVER

Young girl... Scarlet... please, I can't do that... I have a wife and a family...

Scarlet hugs him, burying her head in his shoulder.

SCARLET

And I have a hotel room.

Prof. Oliver can't move or respond. Scarlet stops sobbing and snakes herself all over him. She whispers into his ear.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

I know you want me, I can see it in your eyes. Why deny it? We are both adults and everyone gets what they want! No one will ever have to know.

Prof. Oliver looks down at the luscious creature in his arms, considering the request. Scarlet wipes her face, backs away slowly.

She slowly and seductively removes the hotel key from her purse and drops it on the desk. Prof. Oliver remains speechless.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Now, what do you say?

She prepares to grind on him some more but the moment is interrupted by a KNOCK ON THE DOOR! The Professor seizes the opportunity to release himself from the siren's hold as the Secretary barges in.

By now, Prof. Oliver and Scarlet stand apart, awkwardly.

Scarlet smiles and sashays her way to the door. She turns and winks at him before leaving. He wipes the sweat off his brow.

PROF. OLIVER

Please, don't let anyone else come in!

The secretary nods and returns to the commotion. He locks the door behind her.

Prof. Oliver takes out the envelope in the drawer and removes holds the hotel key in his hands, staring at both, dismayed and confused. He stuffs them in the drawer and heads to the WINDOW.

7 **EXT. PROF. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY**

Prof. Oliver sneaks away as throngs of students wait outside his office door...

DISSOLVE TO:

8 **INT. OFF CAMPUS LOUNGE - DAY**

Prof. Oliver sits alone in deep thought. His colleague PROFESSOR PETERS [55], arrives and is surprised to see him here.

PROF. PETERS

Prof. Oliver, fancy meeting you here. You look lost... What seems to be the problem?

PROF. OLIVER

Prof. Peters, you know how it is during exam time. The students are driving me crazy!

Prof. Peters takes a seat.

PROF. PETERS

Oh, I'm sure it's nothing you can't handle.

PROF. OLIVER

(beat)

Has this ever happened to you before when a student tries to bribe you for grades, with money or otherwise?

Mr. Peters laughs.

PROF. PETERS

Is that all? Listen my friend, it happens all the time. Haven't you heard of STM? It stands for Sexually Transmitted Marks! Some lazy students are paying lecturers and other individuals to do their assignments for them and girls are offering themselves to lecturers for passing grades.

PROF. OLIVER

But it's risky. I could lose my job, and worse, the damage to my reputation!

PROF. PETERS

Abeg, forget that whole code of public conduct nonsense! Have we been paid in three months? *Is it code of conduct we're going to chop?* I mean who are we really hurting? Most of these students come here with the knowledge that the system is corrupt... why change that!

PROF. OLIVER

But we are the educators. We are the ones to set a good example.

PROF. PETERS

It's not as if you are the one imposing your authority on them. They came to you right? Female students who face academic challenges approach lecturers for such favours. Just sit back and relax. *Abi who no like betta thing?*

Prof. Oliver mulls over his colleague's logic...

CUT TO:

9

EXT/INT. PROF. OLIVER'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Prof. Oliver enters through the window, bypassing the students still waiting outside.

Back to his desk, he's lost in thought. VOICES and IMAGES invade his thoughts --

MECHANIC (V.O.)

...Oga lecturer, I no go lie! The car no fit move without engine and na market price be that! If you still dey wait, more things fit spoil inside...

CHUKS (V.O.)

I know I don't have much, but the little I have is yours, if it means getting a passing grade on the final exam! Please sir, you're my last hope!

SCARLET (V.O.)

We are both adults and everyone gets what they want! No one will ever have to know.

PROF. PETERS (V.O.)

Abeg, forget that whole code of public conduct nonsense! Have we been paid in three months? Is it code of conduct we're going to chop?

The voices echo louder and louder he has to hold his hands up to his ears! Ultimately, he can't take it anymore and SCREAMS!

He hears KNOCKING on the door and the Secretary's voice --

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Professor? Are you alright? Prof. Oliver...

He shakes his head back to reality. He looks around the room, spots his DEGREE framed on the wall in the company of other accolades. He also notices a framed PICTURE OF HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN on the desk.

10 **EXT. PROF. OLIVER'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON**

Prof. Oliver comes out to address the rowdy crowd. Just like before, he calms them with a raised hand.

PROF. OLIVER

It has come to my attention that most of you will do anything to pass your exams, even lie, cheat, and steal. I'm here to inform you that I will not stand for it! Short cuts would not be tolerated as they dilute the country's education system. If you get your qualifications through other means, you have wasted your time and your parents' money!

More students gather round to hear him.

PROF. OLIVER (CONT'D)

As a result you will add to the skyrocketing high number of unemployment, because you won't be able to defend yourself when the time comes. I'm here to teach you, not encourage your bad habits!

Prof. Oliver spots Chuks way in the back of the crowd and goes over to meet him. He slaps the envelope on Chuks' chest, shakes his head in dismay --

PROF. OLIVER (CONT'D)

You're better than this. Keep trying.

Chuks nods. He pockets the envelope and slowly walks away.

11 **INT. PROF. OLIVER'S HOME - AFTERNOON**

Prof. Oliver returns home. Abigail comes out to meet him.

ABIGAIL

Welcome home. How was your day?

Oliver looks at her and smiles.

OLIVER

Fine. We're all going to be fine.

Abigail helps take off his suit and tie.

ABIGAIL
Well, sit down and let me get you
something to eat.

FADE OUT.

POST CREDIT SEQUENCE:

12 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING**

Scarlet lies in bed, still waiting for Prof. Oliver to show up. She checks her watch and grumbles. Then --

A PHOTOGRAPHER walks out of the closet, holding a CAMERA and sweating profusely.

PHOTOGRAPHER
*Kai, this one na mission failure!
Wetin we go do? In five days that
man go get promotion to Deputy Vice
Chancellor and everything go
change!*

SCARLET
Shut up!

Scarlet just fusses even more.

THE END.