



The Tragedy of Desire: Living in False Paradise in Nigeria

Chinyere Echefu

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An idyllic life doesn't seem in reach for the ambitious yet naive Nkechi. After receiving her high school certificate, Nkechi moves in with her uncle in Lagos, the most populous and prosperous city in Nigeria, so she can provide for her parents to send her younger siblings to school. Besides an evil aunt forcing Nkechi to play as maid, this true account of a young woman's fight against the sinful distractions of the world quickly falls short of a fairy tale.

Without bribes on an insider's hand, Lagos is the land of the unemployed. Nkechi prays God will release her family from poverty, but as three years pass without a better outlook, she decides to take the crooked path to a new god-money. When Stella, a long lost friend, pulls alongside her in a Mercedes one fateful day, Nkechi decides she too can have the life of a rich man without having to become the 'bride prize for the village dullard.' But Lagos lies in the expensive shadows of sin, exposing and selling its youthful talents for quick cash and easy fixes. Stella mentors Nkechi into her parallel universe of prospering business woman by day and high-end call girl by night. Prostitution gives Nkechi the life few men have in Lagos with the assurance of her family's comfort and education. But this newfound source of power and riches comes with a heavy price as her conscience slowly calls her out.

With the late arrival of Terrie, a young drug trafficker wanting out of the business, sparking love rather than lust, Nkechi begins searching her heart to see if she can let anyone into the mess she has created of her life.

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