

POTS



POT

**'For me; Winning is to smile even when Losing.
That way nothing is lost'**

POTS

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Dedication

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

*****POTS*****

This book is dedicated to everyone who has given others one or more reasons to smile. You are indeed a POT worthy of emulation.

Much thanks to God, my bloodline and my reminder; Muibi Adeshola. You are the reason for this publication. Thanks honey!

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PROLOGUE

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

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Have you ever been abused?

Have you ever be shamed?

Have you have suffered heartbreak?

Have you ever won even when you least expected?

Have you ever been so lucky that you just can't find sleep?

If your response is yay to all question, you are a POT.

Nothing appeals to me more than reading a list of nonsensical belletrism. Not for anything serious but to see the walls of the writer and also drink from it well of thoughts. Many times I have wished to make smiles of others with my letters but nothing fails me more than erratic excuses I orchestrate at the very inception.

I learnt a big thing in a small way. To start with what is success? Quite simple, right? The complexity of it meaning doesn't lie in its simplicity but rather in tailoring its individual meaning in our daily lives. I have come to realize that success is breaking away from your fears and nightmares.

Today, I ink my cursus as a man that has been vicious in time past, a soul that has drawn a thick and decisive line between honesty and dishonesty. For now, my expectations have been met if you are reading this. Because, it is from your readings I derive utmost satisfaction.

Sometimes, money is not everything. Most times, money is all that matters. Are you still wondering what **POTS** is all about? (*Smiles*).Therefore, join me in writing my story again.

ABIRUN

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

Living with my siblings was the toughest thing I realized as a young lad. Somehow, sometimes, somewhere the feeling of everything happening around me makes me feel like I am in a dream land. If this is what a family is, then I need to find my real bloods. Most time I bury my head not to sob but to see if the earth will just listen to me and let me retake the allegiance I swore with it at the beginning of conception. At least, it has been recorded In the bible that humans are created from dust and as such, I could have a conversation with my source.

Evening after evening, I weep tirelessly for non-recognition or maybe I should say I was jealous. At the inception I felt I was envious of the good things enjoyed by my siblings but with each day rolling by I realized it was just mere hatred.

"How come my own mother hated me so much?" I said to myself on a particular Sunday afternoon when I was made to walk all by myself to church while my two older siblings and younger one took a bike to church. I was not really surprised at the Pacheco given to me by mom at the slightest opportunity.

"Abirun!", "Abirun!", "Abirun!" became a part and parcel of my being. The urge to find out what it means made me ask one of our co-tenants a particular day. The manner at which she giggled when I asked her made me felt less as a human. With that angry look of **'sorry for asking you'** she held me back and said. **'So, all this while you never knew the meaning of the name your mom do insult you with?'**

While i was still thinking of whether to answer her or not, at that point she placed her palm on my shoulder and said **'Aburo, Abirun means imbecile or a deformed person.'** Like a vocalno eruption, my feet suddenly became so cold. Sincerely, I tried to cry but the water in me would rather come as urine than pack of tears. **'How could my own mother hate me this much'** I begin to ask myself as I pluck away from her without saying any word of thank you. I am sure she wouldn't have expected one either.

Another thing you need to know is that, I have a father. But somehow I am not connected to him either. He rarely stays at home. He is either out with his folks on a drinking spree or incessantly busy at work.

Dad is a welder. Professionally, let me say, he is an engineer. Even, till this moment the connection between us is like a **2G network**. So, there was no way I could have asked the question of **'why was mother treating me really bad back then?'**

Years climbed years and I found the love of my life 'music'. Soon enough, my name became a household name in the residence. My style of dancing was quite unique and comical. At the very beginning I danced for the fun and joy I derive therein. Not until my immediate elder brother, **Omotoyosi Michael Ojo** started exploiting this very **'Abirun'**. He would collect money from his folks and would make me dance to their delight. I dance making caricatures of deformed people and that was my unique selling proposition.

I and my brother took several turns in gate crashing every party within the neighborhood. And I began to receive invitations to perform at birthday functions and compete with outsiders as well. Everything went on smoothly until a particular day that I met someone who gave me something to think about.

Lest I forget, my favorite dance step was **'Galala'** and I could do so much damage to this dance step. It was just like I was created to dance **'Galala'**. Soon, the name **'Showkey'** sprung like fire within the neighborhood. I became their very own **'daddy showkey'**. Months after months we had to move out of our rented apartment due to a fire incident that almost divided the family. I lost contact with my source of dancing **'the Sisco group'**. **Brother Remi** was a son of one of a co-tenant and he would always return with his friends after school hours to practice some dance step. Just like every child, I started watching them and loved every move they made. Since there was no one to play with amongst my siblings I grew to love dancing. And **Brother Remi** would make me do some funny dance step for them as tip of the iceberg after each session. I didn't stop there. I would take over the stage and try to replicate some of their moves and that was how I became the popular **'Galala dancer.'**

Now back to how I was outmatched at an event. The event was not different from every other parties we gate crashed. It really did took place behind mom's shop. I got there feeling like a man that just got wedded. You know that feeling of **'The king is here'** I was in no way scared of been battered in the dancing competition that everyone kept anticipating. In no time, kids from both far and near filled the dancing floor with the various shoes that would intimidate anyone who has never jostled and tussled the **dust for pride before**. I stood up and walked straight to where I would be noticed and in a blink of

an eye, myself and three others were left on the dancing stage. I was patiently saving my famous dance step for the final sequence of the competition until the Disc Jockey changed the music to the popular diaspora music that was making waves back then '**Awilo**'. Sincerely, I was lost. I didn't know how to slay this very beat. I kept thinking and praying that the music should be change but the DJ kept scratching with the tip of his fingers. I had no choice but to use the available dance style I was famous for. The dance step didn't go down well with the rhythm of the music being aired. I was hurt.

Someway, I knew it wouldn't make any sense but what else could I have done. I could read the disappointment from the faces of my fans as I struggle among the three others who gladly and beautifully danced to the music just like the musician that sang it did. I got know this after, the show though and I couldn't blame myself for not learning how to dance 'Awilo'. If only our two bedroom rented apartment had not got burnt that night, maybe I could have watched the music video on Television before that time.

The moderator was intimidated to tell me leave the stage seeing me struggling to compete favorably with others. Finally, he told me to vacate the stage and I did but it was really embarrassing moment for me. My legs became heavy, I became hot from within all of a sudden. I wish I could run but the fear of people laughing at me wouldn't make me run. Face buried amidst faces waiting to question my struggles. '**I couldn't have done better than that**' I quickly said to my friends before they could question me and that was it. No one said any other thing till the party ended. It was only on our way back to mom's shop that one of my friends told me that the boy that came first was the son of the new occupant of our former rented apartment that got burnt. More so, **Bro.Remi** actually taught him how to dance since I was no longer showing up at their rehearsals. In mixed reactions, I cursed the night our room properties and mom's wares got burnt. After few seconds of grieve, I was grateful to God for sparing our lives in that incidence. With that thought on my mind, I was finally rescued from the defeat I suffered few minutes ago.

Since I was dethroned of my crown as the prolific dancer in the hood i heard to find solace in some other things. I tried hard each day on the lookout of what I could do to find happiness but nothing seems coming. Then during the third term in primary three I came first after many terms of being in the shadow of the class topper, **Omolara**. I felt really awesome becoming the new topper in the class of over twenty school. I attended a private school in the same residence mom sells her wares. That day

was quite unique because I had the best of love and care from dad and mom. Although, this moment didn't last long but I lived on it for months. It was then it occurred to me that I could get the love and care I thirst for as long as I continue to do well in my studies.

After the fire outbreak that made us live in an uncompleted building for years dad finally managed to complete one of the rooms on his land. Like a thunder lightening we packed our debris from the corner of the room in the uncompleted building straight into the truck that would convey us to our abode. My siblings and I couldn't contain our joy as we continue to discuss how we would always live to tell the story of how we stayed put with lunatics in an uncompleted building for years.

On our arrival at our new domicile, we realized that our house was quite lower in class to the houses around. But who cares, at least we are now owners of a house and Rome was not built in a day likewise. My siblings continued with their studies in the public school while I was asked to go around and look for a school. I was so sincere to myself and I didn't bother to make enquiry from the well furnished schools around because I know dad wouldn't be able to foot the bills. I later found a growing school and I went in to ask for enquiry about the cost of schooling in the school. I was glad mom and dad accepted to go with me to the school and to verify my claims. As a very young and adventure loving boy, I didn't set too much priority as regards my academics goals. I was excited like every other student in my class. Barely two weeks after resumption, I got a nickname due to my height and small stature. I was regarded as '**Aki**' and another short fellow was regarded as '**Pawpaw**'. Even the teachers refer to me as '**Aki**' and I felt like a superstar once again. The first time examination approached and I couldn't believe I topped the class despite resuming two weeks after resumption. Somehow, I bragged within myself and said '**this is the biggest mistake these people would ever make**'.

That was how I was reborn. Dad was excited like always after I showed him my report card and same with mom. My elder brother and sister didn't see much about my performance. They opined that I only did well because it was a private school and I wouldn't have done a quarter of that in a public school. Somehow, I managed to ignore them. I continued with the feats and it won me many accolades amidst my peers in school. I became a friend of all and certainly, it gladden my heart .

There was a time dad came home with a **Sony Ericsson** mobile and he was unable to operate it. I took opportunity of this little difficulty of his. I managed to help him out with the contacts plus selecting a

ring tone for his callers. I was quite enthused with the whole operation that I had to sneak into his room that same night and as I was about operating the phone it started ringing and somehow I dropped the phone on his palm after receiving a hot slap from him.

The following day, my siblings tried inciting him to punish me but what happened next was nothing but a *nightmare*. Dad called me and I appeared before him after walking ponderously towards him but still harboring guiltiness of the event of yester night. He stretched the phone to me and said since I know much about it, I should be using it. It was like a nightmare. I didn't know whether it was a prank or reality. I managed to receive the phone from his hardened palm and I gently walked to the backyard with a feeling of superfluous joy. And that was how I became the first students to use a phone in the neighborhood. The news soon traveled wide and evening after evening the non learned parents come to our house to get their phone operated.

I took turns in answering to their needs and demands and always wearing that smile that 'I will be done in no time'. Dad became extra proud of my intelligence and would easily refer me to his folks who need to get one or two things done on their phones.

So, after my First term examination in JSS3 and still leading the class, my siblings told my dad about the need to change my school. He asked them severally on why they insisted on him changing my school and all they ever respond with was "***he is leading the class because the school is not of great standard.***"

I joined ***Jotlad Model College*** which was just ten minutes walk away from home. I was taken to the school by a sister who attends same church dad attends on our street. And seriously I was scared about what lies ahead. First day at school was terrible. Our Maths teacher was raining hundreds on blow on students for failing to get his assignment done. I was scared to the marrow. I couldn't help the rise in the alacrity of my breathe. I wish I could just faint, but hell No! My hormones were not just ready to aid my fainting bid. On my way home, I decided that I shouldn't allow the event of today make me a weakling but rather should see it as a challenge that must be surmounted.

I resumed to school after my Junior WAEC and was still feeling like a stranger despite spending over a term with them in the past. I hurriedly searched for a new chair and desk for use and somehow the pressure of the seniors was something to be worried about. Few weeks into the school calendar I made

few friends (**Daniel Ogundele, Collins Okebunor, Solomon George**) that made me forget the task that lies ahead of me. In no time, the first term examination for **SS1** finished and what lies in my booklet made me realized how much I have been unserious. I came Fifth position in a class of **32 students**. I was even more infuriated the more when I learnt that **females led the first four positions**.

I was laughed at when I got home by the **usual suspects** and Mom stood in my defence. She said I did not do well because I was new to the system of the school. I managed to sleep that night and prayed silently that the second term of resumption should come so quick so as to make necessary amendment.

School resumed and I had to limit my association with my folks. I did my assignment in school and would always give myself additional exercise to know how impeccable I am in such topic. My confidence level grew daily and sitting for the exam was something I wanted so badly. Eventually we wrote the exam and I was patiently waiting for the results for the term. We were told to come for our report card one Friday afternoon before going home. Although, we were initially told to come for our exams script and report sheet on a Friday but due to the absence of some teachers in school the plan was postponed to Saturday.

I had a tough night and **was entwined with the thoughts of what lies ahead**. The night became slow the more and i was left with the sounds of animals to my delight. I woke up immediately mom started her early morning **ritual**. Today was different. I don't need to be beaten before I chorus to the worship songs she utters. I prayed only for better results during the devotion prayer.

Back then, there was always something about the days students assemble to collect their report sheet. Such days are always **synonymous to the much talked about judgment day in heaven**. Students sit and stand in their numbers discussing their fears and the punishment that awaits them at home. I was glued to my stereotype smile and would easily tell anyone that wish to speak of doom about the results of how optimistic we should always be. Soon enough enough, we were called to collect our report cards and this time around the results was much better than the former. I came second.

I told dad to expect a better results the next term. He sheepishly told me to collect a bottle of Fanta from mom. I was glad my confidence was back and promised myself to work more harder next term. I continued the routine the third term and it paid off. I emerged at the top of the class and the excitement was unlimited. I was just too happy to hide my joy. With another hurdle surmounted my siblings had no

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choice than to acknowledge how good i am academically. I said to myself these students have done a bigger mistake by making me top the class. And that was it. Everything I led the class I prayed for the post of a Time Keeper and soon I grew tired of dreaming to be one.

I was announced the head boy of the school even while I was writing my an external exam (NECO-GCE). I was awed and excited when the news flew in while I was on my home from the examination centre.

P.S: I did learn that loving does not need to occur from the very inside. If I had prayed night and day for love maybe I would not have win the hearts of many like I did. I realized that love begins with you and ends with you. Every other that comes is a twist.

In time past, I didn't have a love growing from the inside but today I watered the love seed from the onside to make the inside love grow. Today, I have the best of love from my folks. Although, the love i boast of today cannot be compared to the loads of love enjoyed by many that offered nothing in exchange for their parental love.

Believe me, nothing is definitely impossible. Except if you don't try at all, you won't get to know.

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OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

ON TOUR WITH FEAR

I was introduced to menstrual life three years after college. I left home with many questions rumbling within my *Virgin heart*. I kept peeping through the windows of the bus that plied the roads that leads to the much talked about city in Africa, *Ibadan*. I saw many looks on *faces across the road that scares me to the bone*. One thing made me quizzed throughout the journey. Everyone seems to go about their different business and little or no attention was directed to another. This compounded the already burdened questions in me. After three hours of travel, thanks to the famous bad roads we have in our country, we alighted at Challenge where we took a bike *to Segun sister's husband* rented abode.

We were greeted with much delight and excitement. I was stunned when *Aunt Bisi* said 'is this the *Lekan you have been talking about?*' I quickly added before she could ask me any question "Ma, what did he tell you about me?" Interestingly, she said so many interesting things about me that i had to say "How come you have not said all this to me, Segun?"

That evening, *Aunt Bisi* lectured us on living a good and exemplary life. She said, it is only one's deed that would speak for one when one is absent. She told myself and Segun to always ask ourselves two important questions that would help us grow and live pass the hurdles of school life. '*Where am I and what am I doing here?*' with these two greats questions one should be able to know if he is at the right place and also doing the right thing. She finally warned me through her brother that I should be careful of yellow and red t-shirts because of the activities of cultists on campus.

I became more perplexed when we got to *Eruwa*. Eruwa is a town and headquarters of Ibarapa East Local government Area in south-western Nigeria located in Oyo state. In Eruwa, lies the satellite campus of the Polytechnic, where I had to study Mass Communication for two years. I settled in really fast and was receiving answers to many of my initial questions.

Let I forget, *Segun Adesanya* is not just a casual friend that our path crossed in tertiary institution. Our parents housed one another in *Ayobo, Lagos*. We attended the same senior secondary school and funny enough, we attended same tertiary institution for our National Diploma programme. Segun is a tall dark complexioned guy with a bit of queens English accent. He is a good dresser and always walks with much confidence that would scare anyone who does not live in the ghetto part of Lagos.

I and Segun engaged in both legit and illegit business while in staying together as roommates in school. We were just the opposite of one and another; He is tall while I am of average height, he is dark skinned while I am close to being fair (cackles). During my first week in Eruwa, I learnt how to feast on aromas of meals escaping from the blinds of rooms. I found it strange how one would bathe; dress up only find oneself visiting friends with the hopes of having something to put in the belly.

Well, the lesson of hiding foods away from the preying eyes made me realize that sometimes what works for **Mr. A** may not work for **Mr.B**. There was this very particular day after I returned home after a very hectic day at school hanging on to the thought of masticating the only two packs of noodles left in my provision bag. I managed to cook the noodles with prayers honeying in my mouth because of the low level of kerosene in the stove. Immediately I served the meal to eat, two of my friends, **Hakeem and Ibukun** came home with my first girlfriend, **Oluwafunmilayo**, and some wise I had to hide the meal under the table where loads of books are kept. My expectation was that they would soon leave and that would make me have all the food to myself. But I was wrong. I had to deal with the left overs of the meal that some silly rats feasted on. I was really hurt to the bone marrow on the ground that I had waited for five good hours to save myself the only meal I had but only to see the ugly sights of rats eating what could have saved me for the night. Hence, I made up my mind that nothing would ever stop me from confronting my fears again, not even hunger.

I had to swallow my pride and run away from my fears this second time. This time it was at the mountain side and I had to overrun my shadows. My friend **Ibukun Adeshina Emmanuel**, who was a course mate and as well an hostel mate back then always tease me with the fun I do miss whenever I fail to join them on the mission of '**short put**'. He do bluff about the cool breeze that soothes their skins and the joy of defecating in the open. My excuse had always been my shyness when it comes to exposing my body to another, especially male folks. He laughed each time I said this and would always say '**what is so special about my body?**' Well, I soon gave in to his request and we booked a Saturday for the much talked defecating fun filled journey. I longed for the next Saturday to come so quick and it finally came. I had practice how I would get a place far from the eyes of Ibukun so I could be more free and comfortable. As I lowered my buttocks hoping for the fall of the faeces right inside of me then the impossible happened. I saw a snake crawling towards me and trust me the rest of history. I ran as far as my legs sagging with my under-wears could carry me. I could hear the heavy laughter emanating from

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Ibukun who was at the other side of the mountain. I was mad at him but I had to ignore him. And for days everyone kept heaving teasing me for being too scared about everything. Just as I have learnt, ***everything died down with time.***

All this time, I was frustrated, mad at myself for not been capable of helping myself. I started nurturing the thought of the world coming to an abrupt end. I kept wishing until I met with the right answer to my question during a psychology class. That day, I was called from the inside of myself. It became very obvious that I was ignorant of what life is. In his words "***whenever you are facing any challenges, think about this words; this time shall pass away.***" For years, I lived on those words and it has always been potent. And with a gleeful heart,I know many of the challenges I see today would be a story for a later years.

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I know many would not still be on the same path with me despite reading the two chapters of this book.. ***POT is not just a romantic, action packed and motivational books*** we do come across on tables and shelves of libraries. ***POT is an eye opener, a stimulant, a catalyst*** that everyone needs to live right with another. Just think about this; ***how do you explain the smiles you exchange with the next person sitting close to you in a bus when your mind is occupied with the need to rush home to save your family the shame of being evacuated from your rented apart due to heaps of debts owed?*** You see why I referred to you as a POT.

In a nutshell, everyone is frustrated and despite all our frustrations we still manage to remain cool forgetting our pains and aches.

According to oxford mobile dictionary, ***a POT is a vessel used for cooking or storing food, or for growing plants in, especially flowers.*** Much attention would be given to the ***'cooking part of the functionality of POT.'*** As human we all have our cooking point. ***That point you wished everything could be a dream and you could just wake up from your major fears.***

I could remember the very day I used the word ***'POT'*** in a conversation with folks on a class WhatsApp group, many faulted my use of words and were quick to say ***'I am not a POT, You are also a POT'*** amongst other attacking words. But today, I know and I am sure and I feel these same people and many more would accept my proposition about human being synonymous to a POT.

If you are surviving, you need to learn to start living. To survive is to be enslaved, to live is to fulfill life. But while learning how to live, you also need to learn how to live with others. If you still hold the opinion that someone somewhere would prioritize you more than himself or herself, ***you are wrong.*** Everyone is in a competition to live better than another. Everyone is facing one challenges or the other,so expect little or nothing from anyone. ***This way you would live longer.***

Frustrated people are everywhere. It is not a sin to be frustrated but how well do you manage your frustration? How do you react to challenges? Do you carry it all over you? Do you make other people pay for things they know nothing about? Funny enough, no one is infallible to the syndrome of being frustrated. It occurs so fast that happy moments would pass by without one recognizing the need to

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enjoy such moment. For me, I sleep when I am frustrated. I talk to myself. I work myself out. I can't be **happy when I feel I am choked**. Instead of denying myself and others the joy therein, I speak to my fears and with that I get relieved of my cooking point.

Mother taught me so much in life. She would ensure that we don't suffer for her headaches by ensuring we eat dinner as early as 6pm Though, mother is not learned but somehow she made us do our home-works with the fear that if we score below the average score, we would be heavily dealt with. She managed us despite her matrimonial troubles. She would rather cry her eyes out than beat us up over little things we were not the cause. She unintentionally thought me that we shouldn't make people pay for the troubles they are not responsible for. **That is what I call, Growth**. Same way, I have grown to be this very person that smile even during my worst days without making others pay for my dark days.

You see, there is only a simple way to live right. **Create your own world. A world you believe in, a world you can speak to, a world you can control the thoughts revolving therein**. A sweet and simple fish **,Blessing**, once sent me a mail saying 'There is nothing to enjoy in the day when you're lonely and you don't have anyone to talk to' but funny enough I replied almost with her words 'There is a lot to miss about this world, if you keep hiding in the dark'. **So dear POTS**, stop hiding when you can shine with the sun rays. If you hide, you won't garner much energy to radiate when it is dark.

After my National Diploma, I went home with Funmilayo to visit my family and also make it known to them that I had completed my two years programme and need a placement for my internship programme. I was not really shocked to receive the response my dad gave me after I told him I would love to go back to school to complete my diploma programme after my one year mandatory industrial training. He told me he was not aware that there is another Higher programme apart from the National Diploma. I educated him on what the Higher National Diploma was and the need to go back to school but all my explanation didn't materialized, he had made up his mind on not fulfilling his fatherly responsibilities. Somehow, I summoned courage and thanked him for everything he had done for me since birth. And that was how I ended up staying with my sister and her husband.

It was really a tough one though moving in with a sister that saw no good in me. She saw me as her rival and was ready to make life unbearable for me. Initially, it was **Ayomide** who happened to be my immediate younger brother and the last child of the family that lived with my sister but only lived with

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her for just three months due to many misunderstanding and maltreatment. At first, mom was not happy about me going to live with them but the mere fact that Sister Folashade was the one that requested I should move in with her family, mom had no choice than to permit me.

You see. I knew what I was going to face and I was quick enough to device a means to stay longer than anyone expected. I knew patience wouldn't be enough, I needed a bit of a smiling face and diligence to achieve my goals. My first two days was **Okay** but I was not really carried away with the sweet hospitality. I was given more than enough meat at every meal coupled with a juice to accompany it. Trust me, I was certainly saving for the raining days.

I worked like a corporate house maid in my sister's domicile. I would sweep the floor and mop the floor every day. I washed plates every now and then . Messing the kitchen up was something I was used to about my sister but my arrival in her house worsened the situation. I would scrub the walls of the kitchen to remove the careless stains of oil and pepper planted by my sister during her cookings. My stay with her soon became something noticeable due to the cleaningless of the house after my arrival. Neighbors would tease her about her shinning tiles and neatness of the sitting room. On most cases, I would feign ignorance to their talks and would basically concentrate more on the programmes aired on the television set. Soon after, my sister was prepared towards her travelling trip to Brazil to deliver her second child.

Mom called me many times to remind me on the need to be of good conduct and face what I went there for. I kept to her words and would even hurt myself to make my sister feel superior, because that is exactly what she has always wanted. I wake up as early as 5am to make breakfast and also prepare for work. I did my one year Industrial Training at Egbe Idimu Local Council Development Area, Idimu, Egbeda at the Chairman's office. I was told that I won't be placed on any remuneration. I thought it was a joke, three months after it became dawn of me that I won't be paid throughout my remaining months there. I settled in so quick that I started carrying out many of the clerical works that could have used days on table with no one to attend to it. I became like an indispensable person in the office and my absence could be felt so quick whenever I am sent an errand. Although, there was no payment but I found joy in what I do.

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While I was working at the LCDA, I also took some pupils extra lessons at home and was paid four thousand naira per child and that made my desire to continue my studies a much more realistic desire. I used my first salary to get a white board, marker and duster to make teaching more effective and easy. Few days to the departure of my sister, ***the big one happened***. That very day, I came back from work at around 5pm and was really hungry. I managed to clean and wash the dishes in the kitchen and quickly grabbed a stainless cup to get Garri before I could start the lesson for the day. I poured the ***white substance*** into the cup, added sugar and applied two sachet of cold water. I started the lesson by giving the students some exercise to do based on our previous classes just to allow me feast on the already swollen garri.

I never knew that very day was pregnant with troubles for me. My sister called me harshly from inside of the house that I should stop beating the kids and I answered with ***'I am not beating any child.'*** She came out to chastise me for arguing with her. Initially, I thought it was all a joke but she raised the tempo of her voice and became more ferocious. I tried to explain that I was just putting the children through what they have forgotten based on how previous classes. You see, my sister knew I never caned any child that evening and that I was doing a great job. But she was ready to make me pay for troubles of past years.

I started with just three kids and their examination the following term proved I did a great job. The three kids came first in their respective classes. The following term I got additional five kids and I was really elated about making more money and imparting as well.

Yes, the argument that ensued continued and just like she wanted I raised my voice as well and as quick as she could, she poured the Garri that I was drinking on my face and when I protested about her actions, she hit the stainless cup on my head and gave me a dirty slap. I just kept smiling and that angered the more. She stepped forward and hit my head in the hard and rough wall. She shouted the more to call the presence of the neighbors and it sure did work. The women upstairs came down and asked about what happened, my sister told them I was beating their children and she complained I should stop but I failed to heed. ***Mama Shade***, one of the women who lived upstairs and also have three kids amongst my students said she saw everything that happened that she was surprised that patient men like me still exist. She said, how have I been putting on with my sister ? I just smiled and continued with the teaching. That day, I acted like nothing happened. She thought I would call mom and inform her. She dared me to hit her and she would make me pay for my previous mistake.

I know many of you would think my sister is not too kind. Nay, she was just making me pay for mom excessive love towards me and my one time mistake. While we were growing up, I had an issue with my sister and we had a big fight. I did beat my elder sister, the issue was reported to mom and all she did was that I should kneel down and apologize to my sister. My sister swore never to forgive me and promised to avenge.

I knew she was fulfilling her vows. I had to be cool for her to get over her **cooking moment**. I said nothing to no one, not even my girlfriend. I greeted her the next day like nothing happened between us. I wouldn't have dare hit her not because she was heavily pregnant but because she was older and deserves to be respected. She visited mom the next day and told her everything that happened and she said she knows I would have called mom to report her. But funny enough, I didn't. Mom called me to express her joy that I didn't do anything stupid and she promised to see me the next day that my sister would be leaving the country.

I went to work and met mom already at our place helping her with her luggage. I rushed in to greet mom and everyone present. You see, mom and myself have a way of communicating with our eyes. She told me she had helped me prepare a delicious food that was hidden under the wardrobe based on the fear that my sister could pour it away.

I told her I would love to drink Garri first before eating. And that was how I found out that all the food stuffs in the kitchen **were missing**. I asked my sister and she said ,she had given everything out that I could find my own way of getting food being a man. I shook my head and was almost in tears but mom smile swallowed up the tears. I found courage in her smiles. My sister even told mom to get a keg and drill the remaining fuel in the generator set. Mom questioned her actions but she kept saying she is doing the right thing. Mom managed to give me a Five hundred naira note to manage for the two days before my usual visitation to **Ayobo**.

She told me she is proud of me for acting so matured and keeping to her words. She later told me my sister told her husband she does not want me to stay put in her husband house because she feels I would be in charge of the house before her arrival. She told her husband, i would be bringing in girls into the house and also said I could open the door for armed robbers because I used to sleep walk, she lied.

POTS

I laughed and hugged mom for her trusting and being proud of me. I told her my stay with my sister had showed to me I could stay put with anyone regardless of their temperament. I said to her ***'Mom, I had a goal and I wouldn't let a two minutes cooking point make me lose a a much brighter tomorrow.'***

Succinctly, I saved about ***Two hundred and Fifty naira during my twelve months stay in her house.*** I borrowed her husband money many times even when he least expected.

16.

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

POT 2

I once told someone some years that everyone got an animal *in them*. She was quizzed to find out what I meant by what I said. Many times I tried to elucidate what I meant by that but every explanation led to more question and the purpose of discourse was lost. However, we are only superior animals and as such we act the *animal during our POT* moment.

At first, you may find it hard to discover what animal each person carries. All you need do is to be calm, listen and ask questions. People are always mindful of how they react and act when they observe they are being watched. Therefore, don't watch them, just observe without making it known.

My relationship with Tobiloba was more of a prophecy *fulfilling drive*. Even when no one saw it coming, I did saw it coming. It was really fun at first. We had a lot to discuss and a lot to argue over. Smiles, she was everything a man would dream of but I was not too quick to be swayed by all these. I knew the animal in her would show up soon and I was prepared ahead of such moment.

It was on Friday afternoon, we returned from school after a very hectic day at the Academic Affairs unit of the institution. I had a quickie bath and managed to prepare noodles for both of us to gulp down with a bottle of Pepsi each. One thing I have always done over the years is to make my woman feel happy and make sex a less priority. So I was less disturbed when she said no sex between us until marriage. It was a deal I was ready to accept. We were playing like two love birds that very day and somehow she said she dared me to tell her that she couldn't slap me and before I could even mutter the words was in the island of slap. I was lost. I was swallowed by the quickness of the act. She left hurriedly without saying a word and only to tell me while she was home that she only wanted to see if I would be a husband that would hit a woman. *Just imagine!*

You know. We are all humans and this should not be a surprise. We all have that one attitude that we are sorry about. For me, whenever I am frustrated, I mean choked up, I am always exhilarated to just talk without thinking about how hurtful the words I utter. Fine, such word could be the true reflection of the being in question but I am always remorseful for letting it out at such hour.

While I was in primary school, I had this not too good attitude of avenging the beating bestowed on me by my colleague courtesy my class teacher. The principle has always been that the students with the

highest score would flog the ones whose score falls below the range given by the teacher. Tunji scored highest repeatedly and I was quite unfortunate to have been a victim of his hard beatings. I was determined to avenge the beating by studying harder and becoming more studious but Tunji's remarkable scores wouldn't allow me use the cane on him. I came to the conclusion that I need the extra push to win over him.

There was a particular morning after the time keeper had rang the bell, I went to his myself inside the toilet so as to have enough room to carry out my plans. I stealthily walked into classroom; I flipped through the packs of books on the teacher's table looking for Tunji Afowose's book. I was fidgeting while I was doing this and behold I hurriedly changed some of his answers to a wrong one. I rushed to the assembly ground with so much smiles on my face waiting for the reward of my hideous action. Barely few minutes after the assembly, the class teacher kept muttering to himself and he later called on Tunji to inquire on how his workings are right but end up writing the wrong answers. I was happy and was prepared to give him a taste of how thirsty I am to flog. And somehow, he managed to convince the teacher with his working booking with the answers therein. Our class teacher quickly went through our books to identify the owner of the ink used on Tunji's book. Behold, I was not smart enough to have used a different pen that in used in writing my own assignment. I was beaten and was shamed on the assembly group in the afternoon after the Headmaster called an urgent meeting with the students to tender my case so as to prevent future occurrence from others.

That day, I realized that, if you know you know, if you don't, you don't. Don't force situation. Everyone has an appointed time. Too bad it was Tunji's time and not mine. Tunji was later named the senior boy of the school few days after I messed up. I later got to know that the slot was meant for me, but my actions showed I am not worthy of such modest leadership role.

One interesting thing about animals in human is that it could be controlled. It could be managed. Don't hide it, don't force it, discover it. For some people, they don't even know what animal they have. Just look inward and see that thing in you that you cannot control when you are in a cooking situation. It could be excessive consumption of alcohol to forget your worries, it could be abusive words to retaliate when scolded, for some it could be malice amongst others. Recently, I read in a book that it pays to be silent when angry than to say words that would hurt the other individual to relieve yourself. I was perturbed on why one needs to consider the other party before retaliating but I got the desired answer

to my question. You see, moment of disagreement, rancor would fade off but the words uttered would remain. So once you discover your animal, it become much easier to deal with it. The worst thing is to pretend you don't have.

After discovering your animal as a **POT**, adequate effort should be put forward to ensure you are in control of it. You should determine **when and how** it operates. If you lose control of it, you are **doomed**. I am pretty sure many of us play the game of Temple run either on our android phones or tablets. At first, if you play it according to how tensed the main character appears you would surely end up playing for barely thirty seconds. **The reason is not far fetched**; it is because you allowed the game to control you. **But on the other hand**, once you realized that you are to control the character regardless of how much tensed it appears, you would surely go farther than you expected. That is the logic to everything life throws at us. **You fidget, you lose. You remain calm, you lead.**

Therefore, it is vital to state categorically here that whatever situation, moment of life we experienced, and challenges that we are faced with we should remain optimistic about it without forgetting that too much expectation and worry about things would only rob you of the present joy. So why trade your joy for the unknown. For me, this has worked; when you keep your expectations low, the result is always better than **when the expectation is high, most time disappointment becomes inevitable.**

After our final paper in school, I went for my first interview in Lagos. While I was resting in mother's shop I heard that there was a vacancy via a radio programme and jokingly I sent in my details to the contact number dished out by the presenter. Shortly after, I received a message stating that I have been shortlisted for an interview the following week. I was not really serious about it because I felt I still had to go for National youth service the in two months time. I got to the organization and behold, I met loads of applicants on seats and within two minutes I was ushered in by the receptionist for my share of the interview briefing. I was not there for the job, I went there just because I felt bored at home. I have never been so confident in my life before. **I was gleam with smiles** throughout the briefing. Interestingly, the interviewer asked me if I could drive and I smiled and said, I only drive in my dreams. He was shocked and he kept staring at me to see if he could make me fidget. But Nay, I was resolved to enjoy my first interview and was glad I surely did. The interviewer later told me that I would be contacted if I am considered for the job. I left with a Kahn smile.

POTS

I returned to school two days later and was giving my folks my experience at the interview. Many find my tales strange to believe based on the scarcity of jobs in the country and kept saying why would anyone throw such opportunity into the bin by being careless with it. I tried explaining to them that I had to keep my expectations low so that I would not get too disappointed but they just don't want to buy the explanation. The next message that came into my phone certainly proved my stand. I was sent another message while the issue was still being talked about that I am invited for the second phase of the interview. Why I was invited, sincerely I don't know. For me, I was glad I didn't trade my present joy in anticipation for the message and at the same time I felt delighted that I did well at the first phase of the interview. I messaged the company via their mail explaining why I would not be chanced to show up at the next interview.

Although, what works for Mr. A may not work for Mr.B but somehow we can always take one or two lessons from the story of others. That is why we need to cohabit and socialize.

Succinctly, just like every pot has it own cool moments, it is vital to make much better use of this moment to keep away the thoughts of the imminent cooking moment. With that, you would derive coolness even its hotness.

POTS

Titled: **OUR OWN DEATH**



Let us take a walk of knowledge,

Before he was born we had less troubles and pains
Too bad joy turned pain. He troubles our children, wives, hobbies and homes.
Should the god's be blamed yet again. Obviously not.

We have been robbed of our wives,

We No longer find the joy therein marriage.
See what your birth has caused,
We only see our baes here
Where as they are there,

The dreams we thirst for,

We now rebuke.
What echoes in our rooms
Bastards' sons of lol, lwkmd
Asap, subscription, battery low,
Leaving us with No choice of
Trending the trend.

Thief! Thief! Thief!

That is what you are,
You have stolen our conscience,
Our family bond of an honesty

Replaced by death of thousands

Loss of properties
Lynching of innocent lives
Cos Facebook, Tweeter
Is now faster than 911.

Well, the pains of others

Became the joy of others
Relationship issues No longer
Hide in the inside,
Instead wander in the Streets and walls
Of You-tube, Facebook, Instagram

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POTS

For many that you have killed

For lack of understanding of
Friends,
Who could have helped with water
But chose to tweet
Such moment
I wish a peaceful rest.

Our loved ones No longer

Hug us with happiness at sight
Except ill tags of visitors of no location.
What a world of visitors

I have No regret.

Cos i understand your birth
Came with a mixed feeling.
Social media

22.

###

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

POTS

OSSY

DEAR OSSY,

It warms my heart to ink you this words.

Do you know that ? Every time in my dreams. We met countless time. here and there we oiled on what ought to and not to be. yesterday, you came again with a teaser that compelled me to a bow. Yes **Ossy!** Not for answers to the quiz BUT of words to nail each puzzle. Your smiles, raised my gut to think like the teaser. In there, i invented this even not for you but for many undiscovered Ossie.

Hours ago, I inked....this as a reminder for this Ossy ALONG this same path i fell off your truck 'Ossy'.

Twice i heard of your honesty,

But many times i tire of echoes of
Your woes tongued by souls.

Do you know?

In summer
I have been taunted
By terrestrial skirts and trousers.

...in twilight

I faced anger, bitterness,
raped by injustice
Embarrassed and nutmegged by
The best gamer.

This truth i failed to know?

The very truth
That kept me wandering for years,
The truth,
Of an equipped working life
Ossy.

All i needed to know was just

Someone to spur me to eye
The next chapter of life,
That has kept me dangling more than needed

OJO OLUWASEUN OLAMILEKAN

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But today,
I gelled,
I resisted you
I killed you.

Forget the wasted years,
Today am learned and oiled
For the many chapters that
Awaits my eye.

***P.s:the five senses going outward is good but ossy you need to think inward for a wheel
balance.A BETTER LIFE IS A SIMPLE LIFE.,***

###

POTS

ME

Yesterday, I was born.

Today, I live with the pains of

Errs of yester-years.

Yesterday, was a capture,

Today, is a reminiscence of

What lies ahead

In the obscure Future.

I am not a dud,

But a ghoul of

Success.

I am ME.

###

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN.

Somewhere in darkness I have been subverted by my own doing. After many years of cursus to the world of books I have realized that self fulfillment is not only actualized by skimming and scanning books but rather through proper self consultation.

We have been brainwashed by the colloquial "read to succeed "instead of "hardwork is the sure way round success".

I stand to be corrected, book is only a lubricant but self drive is what propels you to becoming a better person. What works in the 90's doesn't work in the 21st century.

In the 80s and 90s Its quite easier to get a well paying job provided you can read and write reason being that the percentage of literate is low compared to the illiterates, therefore the few ones that are literate were celebrated but it's quite different today.

Let's decide today, not to have a regret of the road not taken. For me, learn a skill and improve upon it by pursuit of academic goals.

What do I mean? It's quite simple...

Do you know 80% people are responsible for their current employment status?

Do you know that many will still end up running the race they ought to have ran before after many years of taking the wrong road?

Do you know that over 90% of us know the right thing to do whereas we tend to ignore those things?

Take for instance,I realized that the causes of many youths living below their potential is majorly because they refused to acknowledge the difference between attaining a university degree or diploma and developing the real potentials in school.

Adeolu once said I want a university degree because I want to be the first to attend a university in my street.Well, it's a good thought but verisimilitudely,it's not a enough compared to the years he wasted in attaining feats that had little or nothing at the end of his cursus in life.

Grace also said,the fact that people reverence corpers makes me wanna go to school.Sighs,It's feels quite interesting to harbor such thought but wait,what happens after the one year of wearing the acclaimed "khaki".

I know it's really cool and a thing of pride replicating feats achieved by ones parent amongst others but I am of the opinion that self fulfillment and consultation should come first before any other

POTS

It's not enough to make people envy you as against what makes you excited. What is the essence of the loads of payment you made while in school and all you can come up with it a certificate.

What is the essence of the loads of paparazzi at matriculation and convocation when you can't even meet up with tremendous expectations ahead?

Like my cousin once said, you can't run away from your shadow. I think he is right. The expensive wrist watch, the beautiful clothes amongst others would fade away someday but your shadow will remain with you.

I am of the opinion that pursuit of academic success should only promote and package us in our chosen field (tailoring, barbing, dancing, acting, singing, carpentry, etc) and not a mandatory step to a fulfilled life.

If only this is done, then we can have a world where people would not run to their job but a world where people wake up to fulfill daily responsibilities.

And at least do away with a world of I am a graduate folks. A world where we flaunts certificates rather than skills.

Taking the wrong path is not the problem here but failure to acknowledge once mistake and correct the ills is what is wrong.

I enjoin you all to run our races without comparing our races and tracks with another. Remember, if you don't run yours others will dictate how you will run.

POTS

MY TEACHER



I would not have walked this far
If not for your steadfast shoulder
That pinned me through night of sleeps
Against the odds of unprofitable dreams.

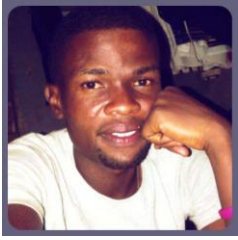
Today, I basked in the euphoria
Of your less profitable hardwork.
Yesterday was ours to flare
Tomorrow we would hold your talk.

What started in the walls of ink and pen
Now blossoms like a pregnant cloud.
Thanks for the trouble in caning me
Thanks for saving me the troubles
Of the unknown world.

For me, you are my success ladder
For you all, I owe everything.

POTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Ojo Oluwaseun Olamilekan is a graduate of Mass Communication from The Polytechnic, Ibadan. He hails from Ikare Akoko area of Ondo State. He works partially as a Teacher, Content Editor and also doubles as a graphics designer. More so, Ojo is a poet who draws his inspirations from the daily hiccups of life. "POT" is the first maiden publication of the author. He is currently working on another superb, eye opening and highly instructional book titled 'Fish'.