

CHARACTER : ALH. UMAR LOKO

AGE:62

8. INT. ALHAJI LOKO'S RESIDENCE- DAY

Loko and the Party Chairman sit, with a few others, discussing. Kankada is there, looking subdued

CHAIRMAN

Alhaji...we have run into a few challenges concerning the upcoming election and candidates

LOKO

What challenge? I thought the decision had been made about Kankada here...

Jibrin Kankada appears flustered and then speaks

KANKADA

Well...the idea was to declare a unanimous candidate, ko, that is me, so as to avoid the process of the primaries

LOKO

(impatient)

Yes yes I know the process. What is your point?

KANKADA

There is the issue of Kalifah Maiyaki, Sir. He is fast gaining ground and supporters...and he is in this party too so

LOKO

So? So what??! You just go ahead with what I told you to do and I will handle Kalifah Maiyaki!

CHAIRMAN

It is not that simple at this point, Sir. It may have been easier if Kalifah Maiyaki was not the Emir's son. But that factor alone makes him appealing to a certain part of the masses and...

Loko stands up, irritated

LOKO

Masses? What bloody masses? When have the masses ever mattered? Do they even have the brains to know what is good for them?!

Everyone is silent for a moment, shocked and cowed into silence. Loko then gathers himself, takes a deep breath and speaks calmly

LOKO (CONT'D)

Leave the matter of Kalifah Maiyaki to me to handle. I have said Kankada is the man for the job and that is final

CHAIRMAN

And the Deputy Governor? He too is agitating. He is upset because he was overlooked in favour of Alhaji Kankada for...

Loko leans forward, a dangerous glint in his eye

LOKO

Tell him to behave himself there. Tell him to remember who pushed out his competition to ensure that he became Deputy after Bula arranged his superior. Let him remember all that and understand that I am not a man to be played with

He turns around to Kankada

LOKO (CONT'D)

You see? This is what happens when people are ungrateful and try to rise above their station: they are neglected and cast aside in favour of someone else. Does he think that his puny political structure can get him far?

(he turns back to the chairman)

Tell him to cool down or I will crush him.

Once again there is silence until the Chairman clears his throat.

CHAIRMAN

Sir, I...uh...if I may be so bold

LOKO  
Yes, what is it?

CHAIRMAN  
You have chosen Alhaji Jibrin  
Kankada here as the forerunner for  
the party...but what of a deputy?  
I...uh...I have been loyal to you  
and...uh...is that space open?

Loko regards him for a moment and one is unsure if he is  
angry or not. Then he bursts out laughing, wagging his finger  
at the Chairman. The men join him in uneasy laughter

LOKO  
Kai! Kai! Kai! Walahi, you have  
liver!  
(his laughter slows and he  
imbibes some seriousness)  
But really, you are right. I  
already considered you as  
Deputy...but unfortunately, you and  
the present deputy come from the  
same region and we cannot have  
that. But I promise you: you will  
be compensated

The chairman looks slightly crestfallen but nods

CHAIRMAN  
Ah...na gode, Alhaji. Thank you,  
Sir.

Loko grins and pats the guy roughly on the back, pointing at  
him

LOKO  
You will go far, Chairman. I like  
humble men like you. You will go  
far.

He turns to Jibrin and points

LOKO (CONT'D)  
Take note. This is the first one to  
get a contract, eh? A good one  
of...say, N200 million, eh?

The chairman and Jibrin join him in laughter as they rise and  
Loko ushers them out.

FADE OUT.