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Comic Bandit

In a serendipitous coincidence of fate (in other words, luckily), soon after writing the article on [Jigida Comics](#), I received two actual Nigerian comics in the mail. They were a belated birthday present from my mother.

The 2 comics, [Taboo](#) & [Uhuru](#), are both published by [Comic Bandit Press](#): a new independent Nigerian publishing company. I haven't finished reading [Taboo](#) yet, but I have read [Uhuru](#). The print quality is superb in the both of them, and the art certainly rivals anything you would find here in the U.S.

So it's good to see that not only are Nigerian comics starting to surface on the web, but they are also resurfacing in print within the country!

Comic Bandit

There's something to be said for a cast of all black characters in a comic. Somehow, one can identify with them more. So if my post last month on Jigida wet your appetite, these here are publicly available for purchase both in Nigeria, and on the world wide web. Surely, you have no reason to abstain.

From the price tag on my copies, I can tell you that each comic goes for a very reasonable price of **\$4 (U.S)**, or **N600 (Ng)**. The [CB Press website](#) has a list of online retailers (including [amazon.com](#)) where you can purchase your copies.

From a quick search on [Amazon](#) for "comic bandit press," I have verified that their comics are available... for an even cheaper price of **\$3**

*So go ahead, buy a bunch, support the arts, and become a **comic bandit!***

Police College

Speaking of Nigerian things, last month, a particular news item was brought to my attention by an aunt of mine: [The Channels Expose](#) on the Police College in Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

In telling me how she'd heard about it (my aunt lives in Canada), she directed me to [Linda Ikeji's Blog](#) where in addition to the video report, there were many pictures of the abysmal state of the college as well as several comments from people expressing shock, surprise, pity, sadness, and a few who felt it was so bad that they couldn't help but laugh.

We'll get to my own reaction later, but for those who saw that clip, Linda's post, [a similar write-up on BellaNaija](#), or even some other reports on the situation, I want to first of all state, that that was only the tip of the iceberg. In preparing to do this writeup, I looked for other reports on the situation, and I found a few more clips.

Take a look at [this one](#) where the reporter shows us even worse "rooms" than in the Channels clip. So bad that he goes as far as to call them dungeons. How about [this one](#) where he walks us through the dilapidated restrooms that cater to the hundreds of officers housed in **Block 7**.

Police College

When you then factor in the fact that, there is a limit to what reporters can report on, and that there *must* be areas kept off-limits, the police college begins to appear even more uninhabitable.

The sad truth for me however, more depressing than the state of the police college, was that my reaction wasn't shock. Unlike my aunt who was moved close to tears just imagining that people lived in such conditions, and the seemingly large numbers of Nigerians who were "appalled" by the news, I was unmoved.

I mean, what did we all expect!? Wasn't the **I.G of police caught stealing hundreds of millions** from police coffers some time ago? What about another **officer who stole millions from the police pension fund**? Not to mention the **government officials who are still stealing Nigeria's money** today.

Police College

Listen, all this money comes from somewhere, and someone suffers for its misappropriation. If it takes you and I several years (or even a lifetime) to earn N1 million, then when hundreds of millions disappear, obviously damage gets done to hundreds of lives for several years.

So why are we shocked? Why are we appalled? Why are we surprised? Did we really think policemen and women begged on the street for fun? That their self-degradation for money, and reluctance to give their lives when called upon had no cause?

See here, the work of a police officer is what I call a **sacred profession**. Like judging, preaching, and emergency rescue, it is one of those jobs that is hard to do for the money alone, and ordinarily, what drives people to these professions is a strong sense of moral obligation.

Police College

This is why anywhere in the world, people in these professions are well respected and, I must add, inadequately paid for the jobs that they do. Thus, nobody aspires to a sacred profession hoping to become a millionaire. A fact that serves us well, because it means that those who actually take the job, are those willing to do it under any circumstance.

Yet, like everything in life, the term 'any' is relative. Can a judge remain fair if also the victim of the crime? Can an army officer remain patriotic, if abandoned behind enemy lines? Can a police officer protect civilians, when malnourished, mistreated, and mocked by society? *Of course not!*

So they take bribes to feed themselves, they cobble rooms to house themselves, and when called upon to do their duty, they turn their backs on the society that cares nothing for their well-being.

Now I ask once again: ***Why are we shocked?***

Immediate Gratification

One of the many things I've come to realise through my experiences here in the U.S, is that many of the problems plaguing Nigeria, and indeed most of the African continent, are not just Nigerian problems or African problems. At their most fundamental level, they are all Black problems.

Elements of these issues can be seen in all the black races here. African Americans while different culturally, exhibit many of the same tendencies when it comes to money. As do Haitians, and even some non-black races who live reasonably close to the poverty line.

As such, I used to think that a lot of these tendencies and preferences that push us towards corruption and so on, were primarily the result of moving from a position of poverty, to one of riches - and that a lot of these things happen because people are set in a poverty-stricken mindset and so react opportunistically towards the possibility of having more money.

Immediate Gratification

Certainly there is something to that theory, and it may explain why some poor people begin to flaunt and revel in their newfound wealth, when raised to positions of financial power. But no other race does it quite like we do, and none so commonly across the board. We buy new cars, new houses, expensive jewelry and watches... It is often so flamboyant, that one can tell when a black man has acquired a huge sum of money, on sight.

The question is why? Is it because we like spending money, or because we like looking like we have money, or perhaps because we like the attention and adoration that a rich man gets? I believe that the answer lies in all of these, yet in none of these on their own.

From what I've seen in the NBA players, the stereotypical pimps, other black U.S stereotypes, and our own African politicians, the answer lies in **immediate gratification**.

Immediate Gratification

Wherever you go in the world, you will find that black people maintain some constants in their stereotypes. Hip, flashy, big, strong, powerful... Yet, when it comes to work ethic, you find lazy being the stereotype here, hardworking there... and it flips back and forth. In Nigeria though, I'd never heard of a work ethic stereotype, but it was obvious that the less financially stable were harder workers.

Again, this may be explained away by necessity. Except that here in the U.S, black people are predominantly poorer, but have the "lazy" stereotype. Thus making "necessity" an insufficient argument.

No group of people utterly adheres to a **stereotype**. For argument's sake, I assume that a stereotype represents predominant behaviour.

Immediate Gratification

But what does make this variability in stereotype understandable, is a strong preference for immediate gratification! Because tons of money in the bank does not give immediate gratification, gratification comes from spending it; and making investments does not give immediate gratification, gratification comes in the long term.

The common methods by which wealth is made sustainable, are all processes that provide little to no immediate returns... and so the rich black man is left with the least sustainable options if he wants to invest and be gratified.

Things like buying land to resell and building flats to rent. Things that require saving up to do, and incur fees to maintain. Things that essentially are more difficult to do if you have a constant desire for gratification drawing on your finances. Thereby making sustainable financial wealth a harder target to reach.

Immediate Gratification

Of course harder to reach does not mean unattainable, and is no excuse for the type of behaviour that we see. But it certainly offers a theory for why such behaviour pervades all classes of black society. It could explain why even the richer black people in our societies, continue to succumb to the temptations of corruption:-

The forward-thinkers stealing to invest, because they are spending their honest money indulging themselves, and the common man stealing because he sees his situation as an opportunity to grab as much as he can before it's too late: With a meagre few ever crossing the barriers of sustainable wealth honestly.

This theory lends itself to many other applications in the black man problem sphere, but I'll save those for next time. For now, you may consider this theory of immediate gratification, and see if it jives with you. I'd love to hear what you think.

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Now let's talk about **another primarily Black problem**, and the benefits of **delayed gratification**. For some months now, a friend of mine has been here in the U.S, undergoing treatment to cure his *sickle-cell anemia*, and I have been wanting to tell you all about it for so long. Especially in January, when he began his chemotherapy. I wanted to ask you all to support him during his toughest time, and just as importantly I wanted to let other sickle-cell sufferers know about this free study being conducted by the **National Institute of Health**.

According to my friend Bisade, it took him and his family about 2 years of communication and sending lab results back and forth, to get into the program, because it requires a high percentage match between donor and patient. However since he's been here, he's had nothing but good things to say about the medical teams treating him. The procedure is extremely advanced, with a high rate of success, and is offered at no cost to the patient.

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At this point, Bisade has been released from the medical facility and is being monitored on a weekly basis from home. The good news is that he's doing well, and looking forward to living a healthier life.

The even better news is that throughout his treatment, he kept a blog where he documented the whole procedure. He talks about his treatment, results, and feelings throughout his stay on his blog, and is working on cleaning it up documentary-style to make it more useful to those who may be interested.

So if you are a sickler looking for a solution, or have a friend who is one, it is a great resource for anyone who wants to get into the program, and can make the commitment and trip to come over here and get it done.

Stop by his blog @ dayHundred.tumblr.com for more details.

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So please don't. I don't want to sue anybody.