

Knock Knock



Knock. Knock.

On the quiet mechanics of informal diplomacy, explored through the lens of mediation and communication. Through vivid narrative imagery, the piece examines how messages are really transmitted intact or filtered through interpretation, omission, and adaptive strategy. What unfolds is a structural meditation on information asymmetry, negotiated realities, and the subtle distortions that shape relationships from households to the broader architecture of power.

Ko ko ko.

“Who’s there?”

“Chinyere? Is your mommy at home?”

“No. *What is it?*”

A pause.

“*My mommy said that you should...*”

In another dozen *my-mommy* moments, codified agreements would pass between daughters of daughters, now wives.

Ko ko ko.

It is the sound of diplomacy before dealing.

One mother, surreptitiously sneering at the rapidly growing bump, would smilingly receive the message of wedding fabric.

The mediator—a child at heart, a scheming adult above top—would travel to the other neighbour’s home, purposely omitting the sneer. The judgment, in the face of cold cash exchanged for the wrapper, barely veiled.

If she had good sense.

Nary a time was *my-mommy-said* followed by an exactitude of what the mommy said. And mommies in developing quarters, as you will grow to know, are rather colourful creatures.

Smiling at their babes and brethren one second. Snivelling and screeching the next. How much more the neighbours, then?

They got the shorter end of the stick.

Mommies with future mommies—aged sixteen or so—nested their young and found solace amongst themselves. Sometimes in squabbles over budget costs.

Other times, they traded *Did-you-knows* like exotic merchants at trade borders. Agreements where necessary. Codicils where appropriate. Half-baked decrees. And never enough enfleshed conclusions.

The half-baked lies were, in fact, less dangerous than the half-turned truths.

These mommies I liken to motherlands across the homeland earth. Mommies of power. Or of trade and commerce. Of weaponry and guile. Of technology and hidden knowledge—all wearing a sheen of *my-mommy-said*: a veil of many colours. And of many textures.

Their counterparts, as well, receive. In part hearing. In part listening.

But after all is said and done—*who* is the mommy that said?

Are her interests truly represented? Or has the scurrying child gone and made sense of it?

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