

BOOK REVIEW

THE LIBRARY BOY

by
Dr Sola Owolabi

The Library Boy is a window into the life of the typical Nigerian child raised in the ghetto and his struggles to make it out of the rat race. With an unapologetically realistic delivery, a picture of the economically and socially disadvantaged Joe who aims to make something great out of the cards life dealt him was painted. The protagonist, Joe Ateke, is a very relatable character. Like the Biblical Joseph, he's a dreamer- and a fighter too. We can see that from the very first line of the book. At first, Joe fights for acceptance by his peers. He started out naive and blind to the phenomenon of social discrimination. As his mind gets larger, he learns to pick his fights wisely. From fighting with his fists to fighting with a positive can-do attitude and rapt attention to his studies, Joe's transformation is the sweetest thing to read.

The author, Dr Sola Owolabi, believes we can all see ourselves in young Joe. Have we not fought for something? Are we not all still fighting for something? Do we not all have aspirations that make us giddy with excitement? Do we not all have dreams that keep us awake?

Joe is a hero because he beats the odds legitimately. He is not just a poster child for the poor-turned-successful narrative. Joe does not get successful by fraud or some get-rich-quick scheme but a prototype of how the reading culture coupled with determination can bring good success.

The Library Boy explores the themes of the classist nature of society; the role of education in bridging the gap between the rich and the poor; and the role of libraries in transforming the youths. If you are interested in the administration of bibliotherapy to students and future leaders, this book is definitely your cup of tea. It is highly recommended for students of primary and secondary institutions of learning.

The Author of the book, 'The Library Boy', Dr Sola Owolabi is a lecturer, librarian, poet and bibliophile who believes in the potentials the next generation has to offer. He also promotes the reading culture as a vehicle in getting them where they ought to be in leadership. Personally, I have benefited immensely from his mentorship over the years.

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Book Reviewer