

# Mr. Perfect

*A Novella by Tinukemi Olooye*



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## About the Novella

Mr. Perfect is the story of Sola. From the age of 14, she decided that she would only date and marry The One. This wasn't a problem, except that she started a list of the attributes that The One had to have. And as she grew older, the list grew longer, peaking at No. 45.

This is the story of her search for perfection in a man and how she finally met her 'The One'.

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*August 2003*

### **THE ONE**

These are the attributes of the man that would be fortunate to be my man. He must:

1. Be tall (Absolutely Important)
2. Be slim
3. Be dark (Absolutely Important)
4. Be very handsome (Absolutely Important)
5. Have no moustache
6. Have no beard
7. Have pink lips (Absolutely Important)
8. Have one or two dimples
9. Have no gap teeth
10. Have a flat belly (Absolutely Important)
11. Have a flat bum (Absolutely Important)
12. Have no family history of baldness
13. Be exactly four years older (Absolutely Important)
14. Be a Christian (Absolutely Important)
15. Be God-fearing (Absolutely Important)
16. Be a worker in the church
17. Be very romantic
18. Have a clear and deep talking voice
19. Have an excellent sense of humour
20. Be a FULL Yoruba boy (Absolutely Important)
21. Be able to speak excellent English (Absolutely Important)
22. Have (or be studying) for a minimum of one University degree
23. Enjoy romantic movies
24. Be a good cook (Absolutely Important)
25. Have fantastic dress sense
26. Be a great conversationalist (Absolutely Important)
27. Be a good reader
28. Be a deliberate person in words and actions
29. Have a clear sense of life direction
30. Be emotionally mature

31. Possess excellent dancing skills
32. Be able to sing excellently in public

\*\* PS: Anything in the 'Absolutely Important' category is...well, absolutely important and MUST NOT be compromised.

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"Give it back! Now!" I screeched at Yemi.

In response, he tossed my journal to Tolu who read the contents and rolled his eyes in a perfect mixture of disbelief and disgust.

"The List has been upgraded, Yemi. I think she just added 'Be able to sing excellently in public'. Is this the effect of too much American Idol? Must you afflict 'Mr Already Too Perfect' some more? Apart from possessing excellent dancing skills, now he must also be able to sing publicly."

He threw the journal on my bed, laughing. Burning with humiliation, I picked it and kept it in my handbag.

"You guys should leave my room." I said, trying to keep the tremble out of my voice.

Still laughing, both guys ignored me.

"My dear, I've said it a thousand times, you can't find 'Mr Perfect', not to talk of 'Mr Already Too Perfect'. He doesn't exist, except in your own little fantasy. Free yourself and be kind to guys. Go and date Anselm. The guy likes you and he's in the church choir. At least that way, you know he can sing." Yemi could barely get the words out, he was laughing so hard. I had never felt so mad!

Tolu tried to stifle his laughter.

"Get out of my room! Now!"

Yemi spoke again. "Common, Sola. Don't take it personal. It was all a joke."

"It wasn't a joke o. The only joke is that funny list you have" Tolu quipped as he walked out of the room. "It's better for you to stop this childhood fantasy and realise that your 'Mr

Already Too Perfect' doesn't exist. Anyway, you're still 18, plenty of time for you to get it right."

Yemi tried to put his arm around my waist. I stiffened and stepped back in hurt.

"Leave my room. Some brother you are. Coming into my room to read my journal and then giving it to your friend. And both of you cackling like hyenas!"

"Common, girl, don't take it too personal. We were just having a laugh. I'm sorry, don't mind us. We'll back off".

I ignored him and pretended to be tidying my wardrobe.

Tears stung my eyes as he left. I'm not crying for just anything, really. These are tears of indignation. How dare these buffoons enter my room, read my journal and mock my personal list? I can't really blame them. They're just way too stupid to understand anything anyway. That's why I can never be with a guy like any one of them. And they are jealous, without any sense of boundaries. Imagine going into your younger sister's room and bringing your joker of a friend with you! I'll never understand why this Tolu guy is here all the time, anyway! And as if that wasn't bad enough, he treats me like a small girl that doesn't know anything. Anyway, Yemi himself is very insensible. It shouldn't come as a surprise that his best friend would be just like him.

Well, I'll show them. When I present my man, they'll all realise how foolish they have been. That's it. They are jealous because they know they are duds that can never meet a good lady's expectations. Well, I will not be like the weak girls that fall over themselves trying to get their attention. They are duds. And their girlfriends are even worse.

Just last night, Yemi's girlfriend, Shalewa, had called me, crying.

"Sola, please, I tried to call your brother but he just keeps rejecting and ignoring my calls. Please, can you help me to find out if something's wrong? Did I offend him?"

Well, nothing had been wrong except that Yemi had been too busy to pick his girlfriend's calls because he was watching Manchester United v Chelsea.

I'll never stand for such nonsense, I vowed inwardly as I reached for my journal. Better to include it in the list.

No. 33: NOT be an avid supporter of any football club.

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November 2004

Thelma was killing me with suspense.

"Weeeeell," I drew out the word. "Tell me about this Chika guy. Maybe I should go and check him out on Facebook. Is he tall? Is he handsome?"

Thelma nodded excitedly. "Oh, Sola, I think I'm in love!"

I rolled my eyes. "Of course, you're *not* in love. You're infatuated. Anyway, let's see how well he scores before you say 'yes' to him o. You can't get carried away and start dating him just like that." I got up and fished my journal out from the safety of my wardrobe. It's under lock and key now.

"You brought the list?" Thelma squirmed in her seat.

"Of course, I brought the list! We can't just accept this guy. We have to know his pass mark."

Thelma's voice faltered a little. "I didn't really ask him all those questions o. About his family history, if he can dance, if he likes romance movies and such. We just gisted and got along so well."

"My dear, it is not about getting along. The two of you must be perfectly compatible. And he must be the kind of guy you will love *all* the days of your life. If he doesn't like romance movies like you, both of you will be fighting a lot. What if he likes Fuji music or something else that you can't stand? You know that you're a gentle stay-at-home kind of person, what if he likes travelling? He won't be your type o. It's just safer to rate him on the list."

At Thelma's sigh, I relaxed a little.

"Okay, then. I can see you really like him. Don't worry; he doesn't have to be 34 over 34. As long as he doesn't lack the things in the 'Absolutely Important' category, 30 can be a good pass mark."

"What are the things in the 'Absolutely Important' category?" Thelma looked confused.

I was a little hurt. Thelma has been my friend since forever. She *knew* what was in the Absolutely Important category. She had to be faking ignorance because this Chika guy probably didn't meet up.

I obliged her.

“The ‘Absolutely Important’ category includes things like his complexion and stuff. Your complexions must complement each other. Since you’re very fair, he must be dark. In fact, he must be very dark. Let us score him, shall we? Just nod if he meets any of the requirements. And shake your head if he doesn’t.”

I started reading out loud.

“Tall. Slim. Dark. Very handsome. No moustache. No beard. Pink lips. One or two dimples...”  
I noticed that Thelma hesitated.

“Doesn’t he have at least one dimple?”

“I couldn’t really tell.” Thelma hedged. “I think he has a small deep line on one side of his face.”

I wasn’t impressed.

“A small deep line? That sounds like a wrinkle. Anyway, the dimple isn’t in the ‘Absolutely Important’ category so, maybe we should let him have that. But I hope this line isn’t a wrinkle.”

I continued.

“No gap teeth. No big belly. No big bum. No family history of baldness. Exactly four years older”.

“I’m not really sure of his age” Thelma ventured. “But I think he might be four years older. He looks like he’s around 23 years old.”

“You’ll have to find out. I can’t believe you didn’t even ask this Chika guy the really important questions and you are already thinking of going out with him.” I was genuinely repulsed at the thought.

“Christian. God-fearing. Must be a worker in the church. Must be very romantic. Must have a clear and deep talking voice. Must have an excellent sense of humour. Must be a full Yoruba boy.”

I paused.

“Actually, in your own case, he must be a full Igbo boy. I know he’s Igbo, but I hope both of his parents are Igbo. He must be a complete Igbo boy. You know how these things can be. If he’s just half Igbo, things may be complicated, especially with in-laws. Maybe I should even bring out a pen. We can start scoring him right now.” I rummaged in my bag.

“I don't think there is a need for us to use the list all the time.” Thelma was uncomfortable. “I mean, the guy can't be perfect.”

I explained gently. “No one said he has to be perfect. We're just saying that he must have certain very important qualities. Thelma, don't let your infatuation fool you. We have known since we were 14 that the men we end up with must have the right background, the right appearance and the right things.”

“I think maybe we have been influenced by all those romance novels that we use to read.” Thelma said quietly.

I was disgusted. “You sound just like Yemi and Tolu. Look, I'm just doing you a favour. Helping you to stay true to the decisions you made when infatuation had not blinded you. But now, because you met one guy on Facebook and started chatting with him last week, you have fallen for him without any kind of common sense!”

Thelma stood up. “Don't insult me o, Sola. I have common sense. Look, we're 19 now. We can't be looking for guys that don't exist. I like Chika and if he officially asks me out, I'm going to tell him 'yes'. That's how you discouraged me from going out with Jude last year because he scored 22 over 29.”

“Then, go ahead and date your precious Chika! I'll be there to say “I told you so” when the whole thing falls apart without the right foundation.” I said as I slammed the journal shut and locked it up.

Very soon, everyone will know that I'm right when my own man comes along.

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*September 2007*

“Just look at you. See how you're blushing.” Thelma teased.

“I can't help it, Thelma. This guy is so amazing!” I knew my voice was dreamy.

“So, did he apologise for not calling you yesterday? How could he forget that it was your birthday?”

“Oh, he apologised. Actually, he didn’t even know that yesterday was my birthday. He went for an interview at Mobil. This guy is awesome. I mean, he has such bright prospects. Big companies are already wooing him for great positions. Did I tell you that he finished with a First Class from Ife? As in, the guy is too much.”

“Okay o. Will he come and take us poor undergraduates out? You know, for your birthday?”

“Ha, I don’t know about ‘us’, but he said he’d make it up to me. You see, Thelma, this is what I always tell you about guys. I knew what I wanted. I was very patient, and now I have found someone that has met *every* requirement on my list of The One. As in, he’s a perfect 41 over 41. Maybe I should even make him a 42 sef, just because of his name. Adekunle Thomas. Engr. Adekunle Thomas. I like English surnames, and his first name rhymes with mine, too. I’ll be Adesola Thomas.” She grinned.

“Na wa o! You have already planned the wedding.” Thelma smiled.

“Oh, I know just how this thing will go. I’m 22 now. We’ll date for about 2 years, by which time I’ll finish school and service. Just after service, we’ll start planning for marriage. That will take about a year while I get a job and settle down. Then, we’ll marry when I’m about 25 years old, and he will be 29 years old. I’ve always wanted my husband to be four years older than I am. That’s Number Thirteen.”

Thelma sat up on the bed.

“What’s wrong with dating guys that are your age?” she asked.

“A lot, my dear. Remember your ex-boyfriend, Chika? He was your age mate. That’s one of the reasons why it didn’t work out.”

“But Leonard was older than me, and it didn’t work out with him, too.”

“That’s because Leonard was seven years older than you. That’s way too old. You see, both of you need to be on the same level, in a way. Also, he needs to be emotionally mature. And because it has been scientifically proven that, emotionally, women mature faster than guys, he must still be slightly older than you are. That’s why four is just the perfect number. Honestly, Thelma, it’s just better to think about these things and plan them when you are rational. That way, you’re safe because when any guy comes along, you already have a list to refer to.”

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*October 2007*

Yemi was surprised as I opened the front door.

“Hey, what’s up? I didn’t know you were coming home today. Didn’t think we’d see you till Friday.”

“Yeah, I know. Thelma and I went for a church friend’s party nearby. So, we decided we’d sleep at home this night. It’s even good, because I want my big banker brothers to come and raise me. Where’s Tolu?”

“He’s getting some of his stuff from the car. Hey, Thelma. What’s up?”

“I dey o.”

Tolu stepped into the house.

“Hello, ladies. How come you’re home today?”

“We wanted to come and look at your faces.” answered Thelma.

“Maybe Thelma wanted to see your faces. As for me, I want to befriend your wallets.” I said.

Tolu shook his head. “Sola, which guy are you frustrating these days? Have you met Mr. Already Too Perfect since the last time we saw you?”

“Hmmm.” Thelma sighed. “You guys have no idea. Let Sola come and tell you about her new beau.”

“Really?” Tolu was surprised. “You finally found ‘Mr. 39 over 39’?”

I was so grateful for the opportunity to gloat.

“As a matter of fact, he is a perfect 42 over 42!”

“You don’t mean it!” said Yemi.

“That’s impossible!” Tolu said, loosening his tie.

“It’s true, you guys. There’s a guy in her life now.” said Thelma.

“So, you mean to tell me that in the last two weeks that we saw you, you’ve met someone and known him well enough to know that he has all the qualities on your list?” asked Tolu.

“You’re always too blunt, Tolu. Sola, tell us about this guy.” said Yemi.

“Of course, I have. And if you were to meet him, too, even someone as doubtful as you would know that he’s an amazing person.”

“You mean to tell me that he can dance, sing, the perfect age, with dimples and everything?” asked Yemi.

“Of course, every little bit of my list, he has met.”

“I can’t say that I’m very surprised that you have found your perfect guy and have already sized him up in a mere two weeks. After all, most of the things on your list are superficial. Mostly physical things.” said Tolu.

I sneered at him. “You’re just upset because I finally found the perfect person even though you guys never believed that I would find him after all these years. And let me tell you. The reason I could tell very quickly that he had everything I wanted was because I already had a list of the right things to look out for. I knew the right overt and covert questions to ask.”

“Tell us about this phenomenal guy of yours. Who is he? How did you meet him? Where?” asked Yemi.

I could tell that I was blushing. “His name is Adekunle Thomas. He’s an engineer. He works at an engineering firm. He attends our fellowship and he’s a worker. I had seen him before, but we never really talked. Then, last month, Pastor said that our youth campus outreach had to have a meeting every week, and he made Kunle our supervisor. Then, we had to organise a ‘campus storm’ and I was put in charge of the programme. Last week, I had to stay back with Kunle after the meeting, and we ended up talking for over two hours after the meeting.”

Thelma cut in. “It was serious. As in. I had to leave Sola and go back to campus.”

I giggled. “Thelma was so upset. She kept calling me on my phone. After a while, I put the phone in my bag on the next chair so that I wouldn’t be distracted by it. Later, Kunle drove me to school and dropped me at my hostel. We talked about practically everything. He is the most amazing guy on Planet Earth, in fact in the whole Universe. And like I said before, he is a perfect 42 over 42.”

“Wow. That’s nice. Sounds like an interesting person. So, when do we get to meet this boyfriend of yours?” asked Yemi.

“Well, technically, he’s not my boyfriend yet. We spend hours on the phone and all, and we spend sooooo much time together, despite his busy work schedule. I’m sure he’ll soon make ‘us’ official.”

“Oh, he has not even asked you out yet?” Tolu asked.

"I just knew you'd say that. Look, I like the fact that he has not officially asked me out yet. It shows that he's the kind of guy that takes the time to think and pray before doing important things. I'm certain he wants to be deliberate when he does it. In fact, that's one of his wonderful attributes. And if you must know, 'He must be a deliberate person in words and actions' is Number Twenty-Eight on my list."

Tolu shrugged. "I'm going to take a shower. For your own sake, I just hope this guy of yours is truly as perfect as you say. Anyway, all the best with him."

I ignored his good wishes and turned to my brother.

"Abeg, Yemi, your girls need money, jare."

"Which money? Please, go and meet your Engr. Adekunle Thomas o. I think you said he works in an engineering company. Me, I'm just a poor banker." He answered even as he opened his wallet.

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*November 2007*

"I can't stop saying it o, Sola. You look so lovely." said Thelma. "What a lovely wrap dress! See the way it hugs your figure! In fact, I have noticed that all night throughout the fellowship, Engr. Thomas couldn't keep his eyes from this our direction. Didn't you notice, Abigail?"

"I did o! Hmmm. And we all know why." Abigail was quick to answer.

I couldn't keep the smile off my face.

"I think he'll officially ask you out tonight. I can feel it in my bones." said Thelma.

"I think so, too." said Abigail. "You two are so close. Talking all the time, hanging out all the time. I honestly think he would have asked you out earlier, but he probably wanted to let Pastor know first."

"That's the thing o. Pastor may not be very keen. But he's very close to him, so I don't think it will be an issue."

I felt my phone vibrate in my bag.

It was a message from Kunle.

“Girls! He just sent me a message. ‘You look terrific. Don’t go anywhere after the fellowship. I need to discuss something very important with you’.”

We had to keep from giggling out loud.

“I knew it!” Thelma whispered furiously. “This guy wants to make the bold declaration tonight. And it’s about time too, after over two months.”

Abigail beamed. “Congratulations, my dear. “

“Thank you, girls.” I was so happy.

With his double-dimpled smile, Kunle stopped by after the fellowship.

“Hello, ladies. You look lovely. Hope you enjoyed the fellowship?” he asked.

“Yes, of course.” said Abigail. “Well, I have to leave now. Thelma, are you coming?”

“Sure. Ok, then. I’ll see you later, Sola.” Thelma winked as she left with Abigail.

“Wow, Sola. You look so beautiful tonight.” Kunle whispered.

“Thank you. You don’t look so bad yourself.” I smiled.

“I need to talk to you. Can we go somewhere quiet and more private? Maybe we can get some snacks at the eatery across the road?”

“Sure”.

We chatted easily as we strolled to the eatery. Kunle got us some snacks and drinks and led me to a quiet table.

Taking his seat after me, he complimented me again.

“I really like your dress”. He touched one of my earrings. “And the earrings, too.”

“Thanks, thanks, thanks again.” I smiled.

He took a sip of his drink and looked at me solemnly.

“What I’m about to discuss with you is a little sensitive. I hope you’ll be able to make this easy for me.”

“Please, feel free with me. I’m not God, but I promise to do everything in my power to make anything easy for you.” I beamed.

“Like you know, we have been very good friends for a while now. And you know a lot about me. You know I’m not in a relationship with any lady, and tonight I want to tell you why.”

I nodded.

“A few weeks ago, I met a young lady that I really like. Even though I really liked her from the beginning, I decided to be more deliberate. You see, I like to be deliberate about the things I do.”

I smiled with happiness. “Yeah. I’ve noticed that about you. It’s one of your most attractive traits.”

Kunle smiled back at her. “Thank you. Well, I have been thinking about this issue for weeks, and praying about it, too. Last week, I sought the counsel of Pastor over the matter. You see, I’ve fallen so deeply in love, but I didn’t want my emotions to cloud my judgement and that’s why I decided to seek his counsel. He also prayed with me, and this evening, just before the fellowship, he gave me a go ahead. That’s why I knew that it was time to talk to you.” By now, Kunle’s voice was quite emotional.

I took a deep breath. This is it, my journey to becoming Mrs. Adesola Thomas is about to officially begin.

“I’m so deeply in love with your friend, Abigail.”

For a moment, I forgot to breathe.

“I think you’re closer to Thelma, but I know you’re also quite close to her. I was hoping you could make this easy on me by talking to her for me, you know talking me up, just before I officially ask her out. I’m so crazy about her.”

“Abigail?” My voice was a shaky low whisper. “You love... Abigail?”

“Yes, I do. So much. In fact, I have a feeling you ladies caught me staring at her so often tonight. I’m hoping you can help me to talk to her. I thought it might increase my chances with her if I had an ally in you.”

“Abigail?” I repeated, and my voice sounded like it came from a far planet. “So... it was Abigail you were staring at?”

“Yes. I mean, I saw all you ladies, of course. It’s just that it’s so hard to keep my eyes off her. Say you’ll help me talk to her before I do? Please?”

With a shaky hand, I took a sip of my drink and continued staring into space. It seemed like the world was spinning so fast.

Kunle continued.

“Well, you’ve been such a good friend. That’s why I feel so comfortable about telling you this and asking for your help. Sola? Sola? Are you listening to me?”

I felt waves of different emotions overtake me one after the other. Disbelief. Shame. Disgust with myself. And finally, anger.

“Oh, I’m listening to you. You selfish, wicked human being!”

Kunle was shocked. “What?!!”

“Oh, yes, you heard me! So, it was Abigail you wanted all along? Why did you keep calling me, night after night? Why did we keep hanging out? Why didn’t you call Abigail?! Why didn’t you spend time with her?!” I was screaming hysterically.

“I don’t understand.” Kunle shook his head in confusion. “Why are you so upset and angry? I was hanging out with you because I enjoyed your company. I didn’t hang out with you because of her. In fact, it was after we became friends that I noticed Abigail. I met her through you.”

“God will punish you! After leading me on for weeks, you’re there sitting calmly and telling me you’re deeply in love with my friend! How dare you!”

I burst into hot tears of anger and humiliation.

Kunle put his face in his palms as understanding dawned on him. After a minute, he looked up again.

“Leading you on? I’m ... I’m so sorry. I had no idea that I was doing that...I mean....I know...I know we have spent a lot of time together, but I don’t believe that I ever gave you any reason to believe that I liked you in that way.”

He sighed deeply and continued.

“I’m so sorry, Sola. You’re a great girl and you’ll make some guy very lucky. But I don’t like you that way. I don’t have that kind of love for you. I love you like you’re my younger sister, like a dear friend. I’m so sorry. Please, forgive me. I had no intention to lead you on. I’ll stop all the calls and everything as from now on. Hurting you is the last thing I want to do. Can I at least drop you at your hostel?”

I found my handkerchief and cleaned my face, taking a minute to compose myself. Then I got up and walked out of the eatery.

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*July 2012*

After a small knock on the door, my mother came into my room.

“How’s Thelma doing? And how’s her cute son?” She asked.

Smiling, I looked up from my book. “They are great. She just keeps saying how tired she is and worrying about becoming too fat.”

“Ha, every woman will be fat o, after childbirth. Or at the very least, she’ll add a little weight”.

“Never! Not me! I will always be slim. I have no intentions of being fat. I will do everything it takes to keep the fat away. I will diet, exercise, practice meditation, anything at all!”

Mum shook her head. “When you’re married with one or two kids, especially if you want to continue working, you will be on survival mode. You will not be thinking about all that. Besides you’ll need some extra fat and strength just to keep up with all you’ll have to do as a wife and mother.”

“Mum, I am determined. And you know how I can be when I’m determined.”

“Oh, I know how you can be when you’re determined. When you think you have it all figured out, I know how stubborn you can be.”

Whoa.

I looked up at the change of tone in Mum’s voice.

“Haba, Mum. Is something wrong? Are we still talking about the same thing?”

She sighed heavily.

“Hmmm. Sola, I want you to listen to me very carefully. I want to talk with you about your attitude to men.”

A little exasperated, I shook my head and closed my book.

“I’m listening.”

"I'm not going to pretend that I don't know how extremely picky you have been with men. I have watched you for a while, and your famous list has always been a joke around the house. I always thought you were being childish and that you would outgrow all these. But apparently, I had too much faith in you. I want you to know that I am disappointed in you and I am also disappointed in myself. I think I should have been taken you up on this matter for a long time instead of indulging you and thinking that you would outgrow your childishness.

"Sola, you are 27 years old. Your friends are married, and you have never even been in *any* relationship. Your best friend, Thelma, now has a baby. I know that many guys have crossed your path in the last few years. And I also know that you have brushed them away because they didn't meet up with the standards on your list. Nobody is saying you shouldn't have principles and standards, but you are expecting perfection in a man, and that is not possible. You are not perfect yourself.

"Look around you. Everyone around you is moving on. Yemi's wedding is coming up in a couple of weeks and you're way older than his fiancée. I'm sure Tolu too will be thinking of getting married as soon as he returns from his Master's programme next year, that's if he even returns. You're not getting any younger. If you plan to get married, you'll need to get down from your high horse and be realistic."

She sighed again. "Well, for now. I'll leave you to think of what I have said on this matter. We'll talk later, some other time."

I nodded quietly.

I was trying to wipe my tears when there was a knock on my door, and Tolu came in.

"Hey girl, what's up?"

He leaned in closer.

"Are you crying? Some prospective suitor didn't meet up with your expectations?" He tried to tease.

When I didn't respond, he became sober.

"Hey, Sola, are you okay?" He was genuinely concerned now.

"I'm fine. What do you want?"

"Common, tell me what's wrong."

"Don't worry, I'm fine."

“Really, I mean it. Talk to me. What’s the matter?”

“To be honest, you’re the last person I want to discuss the matter with, okay?”

Tolu smiled ruefully.

“Well, I’m sorry you feel that way. I know I have spent the many years we have lived together taking jabs at you, and I’m sorry, okay? You’re practically my sister, and I’d still like for you to be able to tell me anything.”

“Look, it’s no big deal. Mum was here reminding me that all my friends are getting married and having kids when I’m still single. That’s all.”

“Oh. I’m sorry about that.”

“Really? You are? You are not going to tell me that she’s right and all that?”

“Oh, don’t worry. I’m not going to give you a hard time. Not today. Since I’m travelling in right after the wedding, I’m trying to be nice to everyone. I even got you a parting gift.”

“Parting gift? Are you not going for a one-year programme? Are we parting?”

“Oh, I’ll be back, certainly. I don’t plan to live in Boston forever. Maybe I should call it a ‘going-away’ gift. Just to tell everyone I’m going to miss them.”

“I thought you were the one that should be receiving going-away gifts, not giving them.”

“Well, since no one gave me anything, I decided to do the giving. I thought, ‘if I give them something, they’d remember to give me something’. So, I thought I’d start with you.”

“You’re not serious.” I laughed. Then I sobered. “But, don’t worry. We’ll all really miss you, too.”

“Yeah. I’ll miss all of you. You have all been amazing and so good to me. When I met Yemi in boarding school, I never knew that the friendship we started at the dormitory would lead us to be practically brothers. It has been amazing to have this place as a home during and after my University days. Your parents have treated me like their son. Your family has been my family, maybe in a lot of ways more my family than my people back at Ilesha.”

I smiled. “We’ll really miss you. I have to say I’m a little relieved to know that there won’t be anyone bugging me about this whole guy matter anymore. Well, except for Mum. Oh, gosh, I hope she won’t turn this thing into a major everyday discussion.”

“You’ll handle it. I won’t be here anymore, but I’ll leave you in the hands of God, and of a wonderful woman called Tinukemi Olaoye. This is my parting gift to you.”

“Tinukemi Olaoye?” I asked as I collected the package from him. In it, there was a book titled “The Perfect Man For You” by a woman named Tinukemi Olaoye.

“Who is she? I’ve never heard of her before.”

“She’s a Christian author and speaker. I subscribe to posts from her blog. I heard about her a few months ago when she was called to share a few insights at a gathering I went for. She has another book, titled “The Perfect Woman For You”. I bought it a few weeks ago and read it. It was a revelation and a revolution. That’s why I bought this one for you. I’m sure you’ll enjoy her insights and writing. That is my going away gift to you.”

“Wow, Tolu.” I shook my head. “You really want to keep disturbing me over this matter, even all the way from Boston. So, you went and found a book to continue to do your dirty work for you in your absence.”

“Guilty.” He raised his right hand in a mock pledge.

I just shook my head.

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Alone, in my room that night, I brought out my journal. I didn’t even know that I was crying until a tear found its way onto Number 11 on my list.

“Why, God, why? All I wanted was to find a phenomenally great guy that would be compatible with me. Now, I’m all alone and everyone blames me for trying to be too careful. Why don’t You bring my own perfect guy my way? There is nothing that is too hard for You. 45 qualities in a man might be too much for human beings to handle or appreciate, but You are God. Nothing is too hard for You.”

I cried my heart out for a little while. And then, I came to a new resolution.

“I’m going to do something I have never done in all of my adult years. I will not have one single expectation of any guy. Well, everyone is saying I have too many expectations. Well, here and now, I reduce the qualities I want in a guy from 45 to 0. I don’t care who he is or what he does. I don’t care about his background or anything else. I just want a man in my life.”

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*August 2012*

Mum gave me a suspicious look. "Where did you meet this Chinedu guy?"

"He used to work at Kehinde's office"

"Kehinde, your brother's wife?"

"Yes. He was at the wedding. We started talking and everything."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"This is the first time a guy has ever come to the house to see you. Your friendship must be getting serious. Is he asking you out?"

"He has already asked me out, and I said yes. We're dating now. We started dating a few days ago."

"Dating?! How come you started dating someone and you didn't even tell me? We could have talked and prayed about it together."

"Personally, I didn't even have a lot of time to think about it. He asked me out like two days after the wedding. And I said 'yes' immediately."

"Ha, Adesola. You should have considered it properly."

"There's no need for all that, Mummy. All the guys that I considered well, nothing came out of it. I just thought I'd go for this guy. At least, I'm in a relationship now."

Mum was quiet for a while. "Well, you don't sound too excited to be in a relationship."

"Oh, I'm fine about it."

"For someone who has waited all these years to be in a relationship with the perfect guy, I find it strange that you would just go into a relationship without considering it properly. How well did he score on your list?"

"I have torn the list, Mum. I don't have a list anymore."

"Really?"

“Yes. Really. Isn’t that what all of you have been asking me to do? To let go of the list?”

“Yes, I know. But did you even ask Kehinde about this guy? To know what kind of person he is. Since they used to work together, she would know him well.”

“Mummy, could you be excited for me that I’m finally in a relationship? Chinedu is fine. Or do you have issues with the fact that he’s an Igbo guy?”

“It’s hard to be excited for you when you’re not really showing any excitement yourself. And, no, I don’t have issues with his ethnicity, as long as He’s a good Christian. What church does he go to?”

“Does it really matter?”

“Well, I think so. What church does he go to?”

“I don’t know. We haven’t really talked about it. But I know he’s a Christian.”

Mum put down the knife and the onion she had been slicing.

“Adesola, what is wrong with you? Before now, we told you that you had taken the conditions for a perfect guy to the extreme. Now, you seem to have no condition at all. It is almost as if you don’t really care who you end up with anymore. This is the other side of the extreme. What you need is balance. Anyway, when I met your Chinedu this afternoon, I didn’t really feel comfortable about him. I kept getting the impression that he was too sweet-tongued. Something felt ‘off’, but I couldn’t quite place my hand on it.”

“Look, Mummy. Chinedu is fine. You’ll see when you get to know him more. Maybe you don’t really like him because he didn’t prostrate or bend to greet you. He’s not accustomed to greeting people that way. But I’ll tell him to be more respectful.”

Mum shook her head and said nothing.

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*September 2012*

I was getting a little uncomfortable with Chinedu’s kisses. His strong arms held on tighter as I tried to pull away.

“Don’t be shy, Sweet Pea. Don’t be scared. I just want to make you feel so good. This will be the best birthday you ever had.”

I tried to free myself again. But he was too strong and he held on too tight. Discomfort gave way to terror.

I didn’t recognise my own voice as I practically pled with him, his unwanted kisses muffling my trembling voice.

“No, Chinedu. Please, Chinedu. I’m...not ready for this. We just started dating a few weeks ago. I’m not ready. I don’t want...This feels uncomfortable. Please, stop.”

He ignored me and turned me onto my back on the bed. Now, I was desperately pushing and squirming with all my strength.

“Common, Sweet Pea, relax. All this pushing is just driving me crazy with desire for you. I want to be gentle with you. Don’t make it more difficult.”

“Please, stop! No....please! Stop! I’m not ready... I don’t ...want...” I was screaming.

“Well, I’m ready, Sweet Pea. And by the time I’m done you will be more than ready, too. In fact, you’d be begging me for it. I can’t stop. You’re too beautiful, too desirable. I’ve lost all self-control.”

Pinning me down, he tried to lift up my shirt. Somehow, I pounded his chest with my fists and managed to push him off, jumping off the bed.

He screeched at me.

“What is it, you slut? Why are you shouting? How dare you push me? If you didn’t want it, why did you follow me home? When I said I wanted to give you a special birthday present, did you think that I was going to give you a cake?”

In fear, I grabbed my shoes and bag and fled to the door, praying he wouldn’t detain me or hit me. I had never seen a guy so furious.

He was still hurling insults at me as I struggled with the key to unlock the door to his self-contained apartment. He stormed to the door and unlocked it himself. He pushed me out violently, screaming.

“Get the bloody hell out of my house, you slut! You little tease! Do you think you’re cute or sexy? I have better girls waiting for me to call them and give it to them. Who do you think you are? Get out of here! And I never want to see you again!”

Trembling with fear, relief and disbelief, I fled the apartment and didn't stop running until I got a taxi. And I didn't stop shaking and looking back until I got home.

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I need to get a place of my own, I thought in frustration as the knock on my door persisted. I need some peace and quiet. I ignored the knock.

Mum came in anyway.

"Adesola, were you sleeping? I wasn't even sure if you were back home, you were not picking my calls. When did you get home?"

I roused from my bed. "About an hour ago."

"So where did Chinedu take you to celebrate your birthday?"

"Er...um, we didn't go anywhere, I told him I wanted to get home early. I didn't want to be stuck in traffic on my birthday. I wanted to get home early." I lied.

"Okay. By the way, Tolu called me twice, he said he has been trying to call you to say 'happy birthday'. He said he'd try again later."

"Oh, my phone has been on 'vibrate' all evening, and it's still in my bag."

Mum handed me my bag and looked at me closely. "Are you alright? You don't look so good.

"I'm fine, Mum. Just tired. I want to pray. Can I come and see you later?"

"You don't look okay to me. But if you want to pray, I'll come back later. I've made you pounded yam and efo riro. You can come and eat when you are done. That's if you still have any space left for more food. I'm sure you have eaten the whole of Lagos today."

I forced a smile. "Thank you."

Heaving a sigh of relief, I curled up like a baby as soon as Mum closed the door behind her. I don't want to see, hear or talk to anyone right now. I could have been raped tonight, and on my birthday, too. That would have been such a gift. The tears began afresh.

Where did I get it wrong? What have I done to deserve this? Everyone said 'throw away the list', I did. Is this what I deserve?

A few minutes later, my vibrating phone interrupted my grief. I tried to ignore it, but I gave in and checked the caller ID: Tolu (Boston).

“Hello, Tolu”.

“Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday, dear Sola, Happy birthday to you”, he sang cheerfully, a smile in his voice.

I wondered how anyone could sound so chirpy. The cheer in his voice only saddened me more.

“Thank you.” I managed.

“Hey, what’s up? Been trying to call you for almost two hours. Mum said you went out with your boyfriend. I didn’t know you had a boyfriend now. Hope you had a good time? Are you back home?”

“Well, yeah. It was okay.” I lied. “I’m back home now.”

There was a pause.

“Hey,” his voice was quiet. “Are you okay? You sound sad. Or are you just tired?”

I grabbed the lie, right from his mouth. “Yeah, I’m just so tired. I just want to pray and sleep.”

“Okay. But you can’t sleep just yet. There’s someone waiting at the door. I sent you a gift. Hope you’ll like it.”

“Really?” I tried in vain to muster up some excitement. “Thank you, Tolu. What did you send?”

“Well, you’ll have to go to the door to find out. You know what? Don’t go to the door just yet. Wait for couple of minutes, I’ll call you back now and tell you when to go. Gimme a minute.”

“Okay.” I said and hung up. I hope he doesn’t call back. And whoever is at the door can get lost, too. I don’t want to see or talk to anyone.

But Tolu was already calling back.

“Hello?”

“Yeah. Go on, now. My gift is waiting at the door. And don’t hang up. I want us to keep talking. I want to know if you’ll like it. Maybe you’ll squeal with real delight or fake excitement. I’ll know if you’re faking it.”

Resigned, I cleaned my face as I left the room.

“What is the gift?”

“Hey, you sound bored. That hurts. How tired can you be? At least try to show some excitement.”

“Sorry. What is the gift?”

“I won’t tell you and spoil the surprise. No way.”

“Tolu, it can’t be more than a cake waiting at the door. I just hope it’s fruit cake, at the very least.”

“Maybe it’s a cake. Or maybe it’s a car. Get to the door, first.”

“I’m at the door,” I said as I tried to peek through the hole.

“You better not be peeking through the hole.” He warned. “I knew I should have called done a video call.”

“Too late”, I replied as I opened the door and saw...

... a quartet!

Well, a Nigerian quartet, I amended in my mind as I took in the aso-oke attire of the musicians and the fact they carried local drums and instruments.

Immediately they saw me, they started playing and singing the famous ‘Happy Birthday’ song, in traditional juju style.

This is unbelievable. I thought as I started crying again.

“You can’t be crying. Oh, I know you can’t be crying. Should I call them to stop and quickly send you a fruit cake?” I could faintly hear Tolu’s voice, but I didn’t reply.

No sooner had the quartet finished the Happy Birthday song, when they started playing and singing Michael Bolton’s ‘Lean On Me’, again juju style.

By then, I was crying and laughing at the same time. I still couldn’t believe this.

All the drumming brought Mum to the living room.

“What is going on?”

“Tolu sent me a gift.” I managed to get out. When Mum still looked confused, I handed the phone to her and concentrated on the song, letting the words envelope me.

The quartet ended their song as we applauded them. They left as I bade them teary 'thank yous'.

Mum handed my phone to me as I walked back to my room.

"Hello, Tolu."

"Well?"

"Well, what?"

"Well, did you like it?"

"I thought you said you'd be able to tell. Isn't that why I didn't hang up? So that you could tell if I liked it or not?"

"Well, it's hard to say. You were crying all through. For a moment, I found myself looking for a Lagos cake shop with late night delivery."

I burst into laughter.

"Well, that's better." Tolu sounded pleased with himself.

"Thank you so much, Tolu. This is the best gift I've ever received. And I really needed something like this tonight. Thank you so much. This is so kind and sweet of you."

"It was my pleasure. You know, they had been camping on the street for almost two hours. I took the chance that you'd come home early. And when you sounded so sad, I quickly asked them to sing the Michael Bolton song, too."

"Wow, Tolu. It was incredible. 'Lean On Me' was just perfect. Thank you so much." I said, opening the door to my room.

"And I really mean it, too. You can lean on me. If there's anything you need to talk about, please, let me know. I know you have a list of friends you can always talk to, and I hope you can bump me up to the top of that list."

"Definitely." I smiled.

"So, what happened before? Why were you sounding so sad? I know it was more than tiredness. Were you having a case of the 'birthday blues'?"

For a split second, I wondered whether I should tell him about Chinedu. I decided not to.

"Nothing, really."

"Ooooookay." He drew out the word. "Anyway. Let me pray with you briefly."

“Okay.”

“In Jesus Name. Father in heaven, we thank you for Adesola. We thank you for your grace over her life, for how far you have brought her and the woman you have made her. We thank you for always watching over her and protecting her. We know that you will always continue to be a Father to her and bless her with Your love. We ask Father, that she will enjoy a good life and career, a good marriage and family and cause her to be a source of blessing to others. And we ask that you will fill her with joy and peace, especially tonight. In Jesus’ Name we have prayed. Amen.”

“Amen.”

“So, Sola, happy birthday, once again. I wish you long life and prosperity, happiness and fruitfulness.”

“Thanks a lot, Tolu.”

“Have a lovely night. Oh, what’s the name of your boyfriend?”

I hesitated for a second before answering. “Chinedu.”

“Really? He’s Igbo, then. That’s surprising.” He said with a smile in his voice. “Well, I’m sure he must be very amazing for you to overlook his tribe. Have you been reading that book I gave you? The Tinukemi Olaoye book.”

“No, I haven’t. I’ll get round to it sometime.”

“Okay. Get round to it sooner than later. Good night.”

“Good night. Thanks again.” I said.

“Wait!” I said just as he hung up.

Oh, just as well, I thought. There’s no point telling anyone what happened this evening. Especially not Tolu. Yes, he has been nice tonight, but he is also one of the people who have ridiculed me in the past on this matter of guys. Probably best not to let him know that I have failed again.

But then, he was calling back, I realised as my phone started vibrating.

“Hello?”

“Hey, Sola. You were about to say something just before I hung up, right?”

“Er... was I?” I hesitated.

“Oh, I thought I you said ‘wait’ or something like that?”

When I didn’t say anything, he continued “Alright then, have a lovely night. I’ll talk to you soon.”

“Chinedu almost raped me tonight.” I blurted out.

The line was quiet for a few seconds.

“What...?” His voice was a whisper

I started crying again. “He said he had a birthday gift for me, and then he tried to seduce me. When I refused, he got angry and almost raped me. But when I kept screaming and pushed him off, he got angry and threw me out of his house.”

The line was quiet again for a few seconds as I cried.

“Oh my goodness.” Tolu’s voice was one of controlled fury. “Adesola, I’m so sorry. I’ve never felt so helpless in my life. I really wish with all I have that I could be there with you right now to comfort you, to bash him up or something. I’m so sorry this happened. Did he hurt you or beat you?”

“No, he just shoved me out of his apartment.”

“I want to pummel his face into the ground and not stop till he passes out.” Tolu’s voice was passionate.

Strangely, that made me feel good. I almost smiled.

“And I want to hold you close to comfort you and protect you from all of this.”

I closed my eyes and strangely realised that I would love that, too. But I didn’t say anything.

“Please, tell me you are not going back to that loser.” He pleaded.

“No. I’m not. I wonder why I even agreed to be his girlfriend.”

“When did you start dating?”

“Just after Yemi’s wedding. I was just tired of all the expectations I had of men which were not getting me anywhere.”

“How do you mean?”

I told him everything- how I had destroyed my list and decided to have no expectations whatsoever, how I met Chinedu and started dating him.

“My darling Sola, I know some of us were all over you about your list. But it doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t have expectations. You must have expectations, as long as they are reasonable and godly. The key here is balance. You are an amazing woman and you’ll be a huge blessing to the man who eventually marries you. You just need to exercise wisdom and patience. Anyway, this isn’t the time to sermonise. All I want to do is comfort you. Is there anything I can do to make you feel better?”

“I already feel so much better. Thank you so much. Right now, though all I want to do is sleep. Although I think I have to try to eat the dinner Mum prepared for me first. Pounded yam.”

“Wow. Isn’t it a little too late for pounded yam? Anyway, I’ll let you go, then. I’ll call you tomorrow, okay?”

“Okay. Thank you, Tolu. Good night.”

“Good night, girl.”

I spent a few minutes wondering what Tolu meant by being here to hold me so close to comfort and protect me. That’s quite strange. Oh, well. He’s practically my big brother, so I guess he meant that in a brotherly kind of way. It’s the same kind of thing that Yemi would say.

Even more strange is my own reaction. I certainly feel like being held tonight. Maybe even by him.

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*June 2013*

I closed the Tinukemi Olaoye book I was reading and I bowed my head in deep, heartfelt prayer.

“Precious Father. I thank you for Your love and faithfulness towards me. I thank you for loving me, for taking care of me and instructing me.

Father, I thank you for the people you have brought my way to teach me things and share their wisdom with me. Concerning the various men in my life, real or imagined, I thank you. You have preserved and protected me all these years, gently showing me the true way.

Father, I'm sorry for the many times I've been stubborn and rebellious, all the times I've been wise in my own eyes. Please, forgive me and set me on the right path.

I thank You, Father, for the man you have created for me in Your love and wisdom, the man you have ordained to be my life partner. I thank you, because I know you have been grooming him for me, and grooming me for him. I thank You because ours will be a match that was truly made by You. I know that he will be perfect for me, because He was made by you for me, and everything that you do is good.

Please, Father, open my eyes to see him, direct my heart to love him and my mind to appreciate him. Father, open his own eyes to see me, direct his heart to love me and his mind to appreciate me. Connect us together, Lord, so that we may walk together to help each other and carry out Your purpose.

I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen."

My head was still bowed when my phone rang. Tolu. That's odd. Ever since my birthday last year, we have become closer and have spoken almost every day, but he has never called her in the middle of an afternoon.

"Hello, Tolu."

"Hey. How're you?"

"I'm fine. You?"

"I'm great. I just confirmed that I'll be able to make the trip down to Nigeria in about three weeks, after my summer break officially begins. Think I'll be able to spend a month or so before I return to complete my dissertation."

"Wow, that's cool! It would be so lovely to see you." I said honestly.

There was a smile in his voice. "It would be great to see you, too. I'll call Mum to tell her. And Yemi, too."

"Okay."

"We'll talk later in the evening. Okay?"

"Okay, then. Bye."

"Bye."

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*June 2013*

“I won’t hang up until you tell me his name.” Thelma insisted.

“I cannot tell you anything. I’m still praying about it. Until I’m sure he’s God’s will, I’m not telling you who the guy is.”

“Hmmm. But you did say that he has not asked you out. Are you sure you want to go down that road? The guy may not reciprocate your feelings o.”

“Well, I’m trusting God to handle everything if it’s His will. He’ll take care of me if it isn’t His will.”

Thelma sighed. “Okay. But on your old list, what would you score him?”

Sola laughed. “Well, actually, if I were using my old list, he wouldn’t score 50%. He’s so different from my expectations. However, he has the right values.”

“Oh, Sola. I hope this ends well for you. It’s way past time that you had a good man.”

“Yeah, Thelma. It’s way past time.”

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*July 2013*

I was deep in thought as I stepped out of the shower.

I wonder how it would be when Tolu comes home in three days. Things seemed to have changed between us, but maybe that’s only on my side.

I was still drying my face when my phone rang. Tolu.

“Hey, Tolu.”

“Hello, you. How’re you?”

“Good. What’s up?”

“Nothing much. I have a delivery waiting for you at the door.”

“Really?! Is it a quartet?”

“Oh, I thought you’d prefer a fruit cake this time. Anyway, please hurry to the door and don’t keep the poor delivery dude waiting. Let me know if you like the cake.”

“Okay. You don’t want to stay on the phone and decide if I like it?”

“Nah. I think I’ll just call you back or something.”

“Okay. I’m on my way to the door.”

I dressed up hurriedly and I went out, hurrying to the front door.

Throwing it open, there was a guy bearing a huge cake with an equally huge smile on his face.

Tolu.

Shocked, I went mute.

Tolu raised one eyebrow. “Well, you couldn’t have gone mute just now. You were still talking some twenty seconds ago.”

“I don’t believe it.” I whispered. Somehow, I managed to open the door wider to let him in. “But you just called me now...”

“The finer points of call roaming.”

“I thought you’d be here on Wednesday.”

He smiled and I briefly wondered why I had never noticed his smile before. Or his teeth, for that matter. They were perfect. He looked so perfect. Did America change his look?

“Well, I got in last night. Although, I could fly back to Boston and return in three days, if you’d like that.” He put the cake on a nearby stool. “I kept thinking I still owed you a fruit cake, so...” He gestured to the cake. “Well, do I get a hug?”

Suddenly shy, I gave him a quick, uncertain hug and we both sat down on the two-seater. We were both quiet for a minute before Tolu spoke.

“It’s like I’m looking at someone different.” He said softly.

I was feeling too shy to look at him.

“Hey.” He nudged me with his elbow.

I looked at him for a second before looking away.

He took my hand and, with his other palm, turned my face to his. His eyes held mine like a magnet and I couldn't look away. I didn't want to look away. My heart was beating so fast, you could set a salsa song to it.

"I don't know how it happened, Sola. And I don't know when it happened, but...I have fallen in love with you." His voice was soft and solemn all at once.

"Somehow, you don't seem like the teenager with the long list for a perfect guy. You don't even seem like the girl I practically grew up with. All I see now is a beautiful, intelligent, godly woman whom I want to spend my whole life loving and caring for."

I couldn't look away. I couldn't even blink.

"I want to marry you, Sola. And because of the nature of the relationship between us, because we practically grew up together, I want to make my intentions known to Mum, too. Still, I thought I'd better talk to you first. I love you and I want to know how you feel about me. My heart tells me you love me and I want to know if it's true."

Taking a deep breath, I nodded.

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### A Word from Tinukemi Olaoye

In writing Mr. Perfect, I borrowed a few experiences from my own personal life. Even though I didn't go overboard like Sola, I used to have a list too. All the same, as I matured and became wiser, especially as a Christian, I realised that while it is great to have desires and preferences, some things should not be compromised. I also saw that no one was perfect. Not me and certainly not the guy I would marry.

It ought to be like the Bible says: When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. (*1 Corinthians 13:11, NIV*)

Many women have grown up reading a lot of romantic fantasies and have created a lot of expectations for their life partners. Many of these expectations are superficial and unrealistic. Even when a lot of those expectations are good ones, they only form a really large shoe for the poor guys to fill. A man is a man and will always be a man. That means that he always will be subject to human imperfections.

On the other side of the pendulum is the ladies who do not have any expectations, like Sola became when she was frustrated. Again, this is a dangerous place to be. There are some godly expectations that a lady should have to help her decide if she should give herself to a man.

Like Tolu told Sola, a lady can have preferences, but the key is to balance all expectations and judge them by the Word of God.

By the way, the book Tolu gave Sola as a 'going-away' gift is a fictional one and it doesn't exist, even though I am the named author. But hey, you never know, in the future, I could write that book!

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#### About the Novella

Mr. Perfect is the story of Sola. From the age of 14, she decided that she would only date and marry The One. This wasn't a problem, except that she started a list of the attributes that The One had to have. As she grew older, the list grew longer, peaking at No. 45.

This is the story of her search for perfection in a man and how she finally met her 'The One'.

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#### About the Author

Tinukemi Olaoye is an Author and the first human at The Lifeaholic, a Christian platform where she shares ideas, inspiration and insights that she hopes will help you walk more closely with God, live more intentionally and make a good difference in the world.

She hopes you'll visit [www.thelifeaholic.com](http://www.thelifeaholic.com) to learn more about her and take advantage of the several resources on the platform – blogs, podcasts, books, workbooks, journals and devotionals (she created them for you with love!).