SAVINGS OR CURRENT

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ABUJA CITY GATE - NIGHT

Aerial shot of Abuja City Gate as we move slowly into the city through the gate pillars.

Flash words on screen:

Abuja, Nigeria.

The words flip swiftly and turn into random futuristic symbols.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - NIGHT

The camera starts at the end of a street facing a young man, **DAMMMY,** who's standing with his back leaning on a street light. We push forward slowly towards him.

As the camera reaches him, Dammy checks his watch and looks to his side. He sighs and smiles as he sees a pretty lady walking towards him. She's **MORA_DERA,** dreamy-looking with an effervescent personality. She smiles as she approaches him.

He stretches his hand for a shake.

MORA_DERA
(Shaking him)
Hey Dammy.

DAMMY
Mora. I was starting to think you were no longer coming.

MORA_DERA
Why's that? You know I'm only a call away.

She smiles cutely. Dammy winces, lets go of her hand.

DAMMY
Hmm.

MORA_DERA
So, what's the plan for the night?

DAMMY
Let's see where it takes us.

Mora smiles and nods.

Dammy leads the way and they begin to walk.

Dammy looks around, observes.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Damn, why's everywhere so empty? What's going on in this city tonight?

MORA_DERA
Oh, it's the Manuel Cole concert. It sold out. That's actually why I was late. The roads are blocked.

DAMMY
Oh, right, cool. Not my piece of cake though.

Mora stops walking and faces him.

MORA_DERA
You don't like Manuel Cole?

DAMMY
I mean... He makes good music and all. But it's just not for me. I'm more of an Afrometa kind of guy.

She shakes her head.

MORA_DERA
Well, he's my favourite.

DAMMY
Hmm.

Awkward silence.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Well uh, there's this spot around the corner. Wanna check it out?

MORA_DERA
Sure.

He takes a corner. She follows.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

They both walk into frame from around a corner.

A man approaches them and hands two pamphlets over to them.

RANDOM MAN
Hello my brother and sister. Calvary greetings to you. You're invited to our Meta Crusade ministering Pastor Solomon Atte. It will be power driven with lots of miracles.

Dammy scoffs while Mora stares, smiling at the man.

DAMMY
Pastor Solomon? Has he attained for his sins offline? How the fuck can you patronize a brothel one minute and then preach to people the next minute.

RANDOM MAN
It's not so my brother.

MORA_DERA
Yeah, Dammy. We shouldn't judge others. We all have our vices.

She smiles at the man and puts the pamphlet in her bag.

Dammy shakes his head.

DAMMY
(Sarcastically)
Well, I guess we're all humans after all.

Another awkward silence.

RANDOM MAN
(Smiling)
Thank you for your time my brother and sister.

MORA_DERA
You're welcome.

Dammy idly waves the man off. Mora shakes him goodbye and keeps staring at him smiling until he's out of sight.

She turns and faces Dammy.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
You didn't have to be so mean.

He squeezes the pamphlet and throws it away like a basketball.

DAMMY
I wasn't.

She gives him a look.

They continue walking.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
So, earlier on you said we all have vices.

Mora laughs.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Mmmhmm. What are yours?

MORA_DERA
Well...

DAMMY
Well?

Mora laughs.

MORA_DERA
Well... I don't know if it's a vice, but I tend to trust people easily.

DAMMY
(Stares at her handbag)
Hmm.

He keeps staring at her bag.

MORA_DERA
(Defensively)
Oh, please!

DAMMY
I'm just saying.

She shies away from him, laughing.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
I'm mean, you literally just met the man and you accepted his invitation.

MORA_DERA
That's different.

DAMMY
Yeah right.

They laugh.

Mora stops walking and makes a sad puppy face.

MORA_DERA
I'm wungry.

Dammy holds her hand.

DAMMY
Oh. There sell some shit down the street. Let me take you there.

MORA_DERA
Okay.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Mora and Dammy approach a street pastry stand and proceed to buy something.

DAMMY
What do you wanna eat?

MORA_DERA
(To the seller)
I'll have a meatpie, please.

DAMMY
(Gives her a look)
You sure you want a meatpie?

MORA_DERA
Yeah, why not? They're my favourite.

Dammy chuckles awkwardly.

DAMMY
Never mind.
(To the seller)
One meatpie and one Doughnut, thank you.

The seller does his thing.

Mora catches Dammy staring. He smiles and looks away.

The seller signals them and hands their order over.

SELLER
That'd be 2000 Naira Tokens.

Dammy nods.

He hands over a card.

SELLER (CONT'D)
Savings or current?

A beat.

Mora stares at him puzzled. The seller stares at him puzzled.

DAMMY
Uh... Savings.

Seller does the transaction and he collects his card back.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Let’s find where to sit.

Mora smiles.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Dammy approaches a park bench as Mora follows him. He sits facing one side while Mora sits facing the opposite. Their face is side by side.

They eat in silence.

Dammy puts his snack aside.

DAMMY
So Mora...

She finishes a bite.

MORA_DERA
(Mouthful of pie)
Yeah?

Dammy looks into her eyes.

DAMMY
Can I ask a question?

She puts her pie down and looks into his eyes.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Would you uh,... I want you to be my uh...

MORA_DERA
What?

Suddenly we start hearing noise off screen - someone has forced himself inside a room and is yelling.

Dammy begins to look around nervously.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
Yeah?

He mutters to himself “shit.”

DAMMY
Look Mora, I uh...

MORA_DERA
You what, Dammy?

DAMMY
Would you like to be my-

And all of a sudden the screen freezes in a glitch and changes into a game-like interface.

On one edge of the screen is written: “**GOYD: MORA_DERA,**” on the opposite edge, “**USER: DAMMY715.**”

“**GAME OVER**” is boldly spread across the screen. Beneath it blinks: “**Purchase new Metaverse lives to try again.**”

A whoosh transition takes us into-

INT. MINISTRY OF METAVERSE - DAY

A sitting man wearing a VR headset jumps into consciousness. Another man, a guard forces the headset off from his head. This is where the noise we just heard was coming from.

The headset comes off and its Dammy, wearing a totally different cloth. He starts begging the guard immediately.

DAMMY
Please, please, I beg you! Let me back in! Please!

Without saying a word, the guard grabs him by the collar and drags him out of the room-

EXT. MINISTRY OF METAVERSE - CONTINUOUS

The guard walks outside and throws Dammy away. Behind them, the room they just walked out of has a signage on top of the door labelled “SAVINGS.” Another door parallel to that door is labelled “CURRENT.”

A lager signage rests by the corner labelled “**MINISTRY OF METAVERSE, MAITAMA (MMM).**”

Two guards stand outside each door wearing the same uniform.

Dammy gets up and immediately starts pleading with both of them. He runs back and forth between the two guards.

DAMMY
Please I beg you! I need to go back inside. I was very close to getting her. Please!

SAVINGS GUARD
You know the rules. Now go away before you get arrested!

But dammy persists.

He goes to the current guard.

DAMMY
Sir, please. Just one more minute, please.

The man ignores him.

As Dammy begs them, a man shows up carrying some files. He’s **MR. BAYO**, an MMM staff. He wears an eye glass. He and Dammy recognizes themselves immediately.

Dammy runs over to him.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Oh thank god. Mr. Bayo.

MR. BAYO
Damola?

DAMMY
Sir please I need your help.

He eyes Dammy from up to down.

MR. BAYO
What’s the matter?

DAMMY
I just got kicked offline. I was this close to finishing the game. I beg you. I need to go back inside please.

Mr. Bayo sighs.

MR. BAYO
What game were you playing?

DAMMY
Girl Of Your Dreams.

MR. BAYO
How many lives do you have left?

Dammy sighs. He brings out his phone and shows Mr. Bayo.

Only one bar is left on his Life Meter. Mr. Bayo sighs and takes off his glasses.

MR. BAYO (CONT'D)
Look Dammy, you know the rules. You need at least two lives to be sent online for anything.
(He looks around)
I really can't do anything.

Dammy moves closer to him and begins to whisper.

DAMMY
But... I've heard of Outliers.

Mr. Bayo gives him a cautious look, shaking his head.

MR. BAYO
You don't want a part in any of that, trust me.

DAMMY
What do you mean? I'm ready to do anything Mr. Bayo.
(A beat)
I need to find her.

Mr. Bayo looks at him with pity. He sighs and scratches his head.

He pulls Dammy even closer.

MR. BAYO
Look. There's only one way I can help you.

Dammy stares at him in anticipation.

MR. BAYO (CONT'D)
I know a man from my End SARS days. He sells Metaverse lives in the black market. But they're terms and conditions.

DAMMY
Yeah? What?

MR. BAYO
(Shaking his head)
He'd have to tell you himself.

DAMMY
Well? Who is he?

MR. BAYO
He calls himself "Jaja of Apo."

CUT TO:

EXT. JAJA OF APO HOUSE - DAY

Dammy approaches an apartment with Mr. Bayo beside him. Mr. Bayo goes ahead and knocks twice on the door. No response.

He knocks again. And again. As he's about to knock once more, the door opens abruptly and man comes out.

He's **JAJA OF APO**, late 30s, eccentric, with a pipe in his mouth and a walking stick. He stands triumphantly by the door and takes a puff. Dammy and Mr. Bayo smell the Mary J and give each other a look.

Jaja blows his smoke. He looks at Dammy, then at Mr. Bayo, then at Dammy again. He fixes his gaze on Dammy.

JAJA OF APO
(Pointing at Mr. Bayo)
You, I remember.
(Points at Dammy)
But you, I don't.

He takes another puff from his pipe. Dammy and Mr. Bayo just stare at him.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
(Still looking at Dammy)
When I started cultivating digital herbs, the ministry accused me of trying to delude the masses. They wiped off a fraction of my memory up until that time.

He moves even closer to Dammy. Takes another puff and blows it in Dammy's face. Dammy gets irritated and pushes Jaja but Mr. Bayo interrupts and steps in between the two.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
What is Bayonle? Have you come to arrest me? Huh?

MR. BAYO
Listen, Jaja, that's not why I'm here-

Jaja keeps staring at Dammy.

JAJA OF APO
What is this Bayo? Huh? Were you sent by the ministry?

MR. BAYO
No Jaja. Look-

JAJA OF APO
You think this little child can defeat me? Huh Bayo?

MR. BAYO
No Jaja! Shit. Relax!

Jaja sways his head at Dammy, staring past Mr. Bayo, trying to look menacing.

MR. BAYO (CONT'D)
This is Damola. He was my student when I was a youth corper.
(Reduces his voice)
He wants to be an Outlier.

Jaja shoves Bayo out of the way dramatically and steps to Dammy. His gaze is unflinching. Bayo rolls his eyes.

JAJA OF APO
How old are you, young man?

DAMMY
I'm 28.

JAJA OF APO
No. How *old* are you?

Dammy looks at Bayo. Bayo nods at him.

DAMMY
I first logged in 2024.

Jaja chuckles.

JAJA OF APO
You're basically an infant.

DAMMY
Look, are you gonna help me or not?

Jaja takes another puff.

MR. BAYO
Jaja, we don't have time.

Without saying a word, Jaja turns and walks into the house.

JAJA OF APO (O.S.)
Shut the door behind you.

Dammy and Bayo look at each other and walk in.

INT. JAJA OF APO HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jaja's room is as eccentric as he is. A large chair with a VR headset rests in an illuminated corner of the room.

Jaja ushers them to sit. He walks around back and forth aimlessly looking for something. He finds and retrieves a tablet from a box and begins to swipe until he finds something.

JAJA OF APO
(Gesturing)
Over here, come.

Bayo and Dammy get up and meet him at the illuminated area. They stare at him eagerly as he uses the device.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
What were you on?

MR. BAYO
G.O.Y.D.

Jaja chuckles.

JAJA OF APO
Kids.

Dammy shoots Bayo an irritated look. Mr. Bayo shakes his disapproval at Dammy.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
What is your unique ID?

DAMMY
/DMLA715

Jaja taps the screen and a second later-

JAJA OF APO
I’m in.

DAMMY
What the...

Mr. Bayo walks over to view the screen. We see a HUD interface of Dammy’s profile with all his Metaverse details.

JAJA OF APO
Have a seat, young man.

Dammy sits on the VR chair.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
I’m going to log you in through a backlinked channel. No other person online will recognize your avatar so you should be safe.

Jaja swipes the tablet.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
Is he aware of the conditions?

It takes a second for bayo to realize the question is his.

MR. BAYO
Um, yeah. No. He’s not.

Jaja drops the tablet to his side and takes a step, directly facing dammy.

Dammy swallows.

JAJA OF APO
I’m not charging you for anything. Money is practically useless these days. The only thing it’ll cost you is your remaining meta lives. I’m sending you back through a one-way network protocol. The only way to guarantee your return is to win the game. You have to win the game. Do you understand what I’m saying, young man?

Dammy shakes his head.

Jaja raises his eye brow, walks to a table and carries his pipe. He takes a deep tote and breathes the smoke out with a smile.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
Sativa is truly a medicine of the soul-

MR. BAYO
-Jaja.

Jaja raises a finger.

JAJA OF APO
I digress.
(Walks back to Dammy)
When you win the game, two extra lives are added to your profile and you're logged offline safely.

DAMMY
And what if lose?

A beat.

Jaja takes a deep breath.

JAJA OF APO
If you lose the game, you lose your reality. Your consciousness will be stuck in the metaverse while your physical body eventually dies offline.

Angle on Dammy and Mr. Bayo; we see the dread on their faces.

DAMMY
And what will happen to my consciousness?

JAJA OF APO
It'll become an NFT. Most likely auctioned to these yahoo boys as fake identities.

They all process the information.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
You don't have to do this, young man. It's a lot of fish in the ocean.

Dammy tries to make up his mind. He scratches his head and sighs deeply. He looks at Mr. Bayo who's face is blank.

He then looks at Jaja and nods.

DAMMY
Let’s do it.

Jaja smiles.

He presses a couple of things on the tablet. He looks at Dammy and nods. Dammy looks at Mr. Bayo who nods at him.

Dammy begins to wear the VR headset.

JAJA OF APO
But wait-

They look at him.

JAJA OF APO (CONT'D)
Savings or Current?

MR. BAYO
Does it really matter?

JAJA OF APO
You ask me.

They both look at Dammy.

DAMMY
Current.

Jaja nods and presses a button on the tab. Dammy wears the headset.

JAJA OF APO
And in the eternal words of my northern brothers... Sai Anjima.

He tabs the screen again and a whoosh transition takes us to-

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - DAY

Dammy jumps into frame and starts looking around. He’s a man on a mission. He checks his watch and turns to his side and sees Mora walking towards him.

He relaxes himself and gathers his swagger back.

He stretches his hand for a shake.

MORA_DERA
(Shaking him)
Hey Dammy.

DAMMY
Mora. I was starting to think you were no longer coming.

MORA_DERA
Why's that? You know I'm only a call away.

She smiles cutely. Dammy smiles and pecks her hand.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
So, what's the plan for the night?

DAMMY
Let's see where it takes us.

Mora smiles and nods.

Dammy leads the way and they begin to walk.

Dammy looks around, observes.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Damn, why's everywhere so empty? What's going on in this city tonight?

MORA_DERA
Oh, it's the Manuel Cole concert. It sold out. That's actually why I was late. The roads are blocked.

DAMMY
Oh, right! Manual Cole. I love his music.

Mora stops walking and faces him.

MORA_DERA
Oh yeah?

DAMMY
Of course!
(starts rapping)
"Take one puff, two puffs and pass..."

Mora laughs.

MORA_DERA
Oh my god, that's my favourite song!

DAMMY
Mine too!

They share a laugh.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Well uh, there's this spot around the corner. Wanna check it out?

MORA_DERA
Sure.

He takes a corner. She follows.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

They both walk into frame from around a corner.

A man approaches them and hands two pamphlets over to them.

RANDOM MAN
Hello my brother and sister. Calvary greetings to you. You're invited to our Meta Crusade ministering Pastor Solomon Atte. It will be power driven with lots of miracles.

Dammy and Mora stares and smiles at the man.

DAMMY
(Recollecting his thoughts)
Pastor Solomon, Pastor Solomon. Right! He's that great man of god that saves people.

RANDOM MAN
Yeah!

DAMMY
Well tell you what? If I'm chanced, I'll be there.

RANDOM MAN
Awesome, brother!

Mora smiles at the man and puts the pamphlet in her bag.

Dammy gives the man a thumbs up.

RANDOM MAN (CONT'D)
(Smiling)
Thank you for your time my brother and sister.

MORA_DERA
You're welcome.

DAMMY
You're welcome.

Dammy waves the man off. Mora shakes him goodbye and keeps staring at him smiling until he's out of sight.

She turns and faces Dammy.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
(Teasingly)
Someone's in a good mood.

DAMMY
Naa, I'm just happy to see you.

Mora smiles.

They continue walking. He folds his arm and she locks hers into his.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
So, tell me something.

MORA_DERA
What do you wanna know?

DAMMY
Anything. Tell me something I don't know.

Mora chuckles.

MORA_DERA
Okay. Did you know that De Javu is-

Mora glitches. Dammy looks around uncomfortably.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
Did you know that De Javu is-

She glitches again.

DAMMY
(Mutters to himself)
Dammit, Jaja.

Mora smiles innocently at Dammy.

MORA_DERA
Sorry, were you saying something?

Dammy shakes his head.

Mora stops walking and makes a sad puppy face.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
I’m wungry.

Dammy holds her hand.

DAMMY
Oh. There sell some shit down the street. Let me take you there.

MORA_DERA
Okay.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Mora and Dammy approach a street pastry stand and proceed to buy something.

DAMMY
What do you wanna eat?

MORA_DERA
(To the seller)
I’ll have a meatpie, please.

DAMMY
Yeah me too.

MORA_DERA
You like pies?

DAMMY
Yep. They’re my favourite.

Mora smiles.

The seller does his thing.

Mora catches Dammy staring. He smiles and holds his gaze.

The seller signals them and hands their order over.

SELLER
That’d be 2000 Naira Tokens.

Dammy nods.

He hands over a card.

SELLER (CONT'D)
Savings or current?

A beat.

Mora stares at him puzzled. The seller stares at him puzzled.

DAMMY
Current.

Seller does the transaction and he collects his card back.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Let’s find where to sit.

Mora smiles.

EXT. ABUJA CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Dammy approaches a park bench as Mora follows him. He sits facing one side while Mora sits facing the opposite. Their face is side by side.

They eat in silence.

Dammy puts his snack aside.

DAMMY
So Mora...

She finishes a bite.

MORA_DERA
(Mouthful of pie)
Yeah?

Dammy looks into her eyes.

DAMMY
I want to ask you a question.

She puts her pie down and looks into his eyes.

DAMMY (CONT'D)
Would you uh,... I want you to be my uh...

MORA_DERA
What?

Dammy relaxes and smiles. He’s got this.

DAMMY
I want you to be my girlfriend.

Mora blushes.

MORA_DERA
Wow.

Dammy chuckles nervously.

DAMMY
Well?

Mora keeps blushing.

MORA_DERA
I’m glad you asked.

She turns and faces him properly.

She looks deep into his eyes.

She goes in for a kiss. Dammy closes his eyes in anticipation and opens his mouth slightly.

But just before she plants the kiss,... Boom. She shoots him a peck on his cheek.

Dammy is bewildered.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
Look, Dammy... I really like you as friend and I wish to keep it that way...

Dammy is speechless.

Mora keeps smiling cutely. She stretches her hand for a shake.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
Friends?

Dammy looks at her stretched hand and traces it till his eyes meets her face.

He tries to speak, but before he can say anything, he glitches and freezes.

Mora begins tapping him, trying to wake him up but no response.

MORA_DERA (CONT'D)
(Tapping)
Dammy, Dammy, Dammy, Dammy.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. JAJA OF APO HOUSE - DAY

As they last were.

Mr. Bayo and Jaja keep tapping Dammy but his body is still.

Tap tap tap tap, Dammmy.

Tap tap tap tap, Dammmy.

Dammy's body slumps to the side with the headset still covering his head.

CUT TO BLACK.

The last thing we hear is Mora, Mr. Bayo and Jaja trying to wake Dammy up.

The end.