

Uniforms, Pleats, and All I Love

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED
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*To my patient parents, Adewale and Keji
My brothers, Damilare, Ite and Kitan
Love you all...*

To myself, because I actually took time to do this!

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My Naming Ceremony...

Lagos, Nigeria: where I was born. My family attended Celestial Church of Christ, it was required that 7 days after a baby is born it has to be taken to the church to get named and sanctified. So, apart from the names parents and family members had already given me, I was given more names; Deborah, Oluwafunmilayo, Oluwaseun, Temitope, Omolabake, Oluwatoyosi, Adejoke. As part of the ceremony, I was given honey, sugar, salt, and water. The garment I had on is called a Sutana; white gown with pleating's from the waist down, pleating's on the wrist also, zipper by the left, pocket by the right, and a pleated cap. All members wear this to church, there are different styles, but you get to a certain age before some changes are made to the garment. In the bottom picture, my mum was carrying me with my older brother standing beside her.

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I celebrated my first birthday along with my older brother who turned three the same year, May 1st, 1999. I was born on the 4th of January, but my parents had moved the date because my brother was born on the 29th of April and they wanted to throw the party on the same day.

My mum carrying me in the lemon green floral top and my grandma in the white blouse and yellow gele (headwrap). My mum always had my hair in those little puffs growing up. I was told I cried all day, I don't really believe anyone because there is no proof of me crying.

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My 3rd birthday celebration, at my house in Ikorodu, Lagos. I had changed my outfit twice, growing up I had an abundance of dresses, both ready-made and traditional dresses.

My mum; a fashion designer, and also owns a teaching school for dressmaking till date.

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*Goshen International School, Ikorodu, Lagos,
Nigeria.*

This day was my graduation from Nursery School, and I was moving up to Primary (grade) one. My Older brother, Damilare on the right and my younger brother, Ite on left. I was in the school choir, and I had presented that day.

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I attended a private school; Olumawu Nursery and Primary School, Wuse 11, Abuja, Nigeria. It was a forty-five-minute drive from where I lived, sometimes an hour, depending on the traffic that day.

I started out in this school from Primary (grade) three, right after moving from Lagos state to Abuja with my family. I stayed till I completed my high school education. I wore this style of uniform with white socks and black shoes till I got to Primary 6, Monday through Friday, except for days I had physical education (P.E.). I don't recall what exactly was happening this day, but it looks like I was praying, that was a pen in my pocket incase you were wondering.

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My Junior Secondary school (grade seven through nine), I wore the cutest pinafore (jumper), I was obsessed with pleating's on it, I always would iron it with spray starch and have the pleats stay strong the whole day. It was a little above my knee, I was so skinny growing up, I had to have a pinafore with elastic in the waist all the time. I wore a cream colored short sleeved shirt in it with a cross-tie, and long white socks with black shoes.

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Junior High School Shoes;

I had this black shoe from Grade seven through nine, I had gotten it when I had a summer break in New York, it was a flat American Eagle, size nine shoes. It had a crisscrossed elastic band at the top. I cherished it.

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This uniform I wore from my senior secondary class 1-3 (grade ten through twelve), a short-sleeved cream top, with a plaid tie and green plaid short skirt. On special occasions in school, I wore this uniform with a black blazer.

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I had an obsession for sweaters while growing up, even when I wasn't cold, I would wear the sweater. This particular one was a green, button-up, V-neck sweater for school,

I had my name printed and sewn on the inside of the sweater, my mum had made a name tag for my siblings and I, for our sweaters and blazers for school just in case we lost it.

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My Physical Education uniform was my favorite to wear to school, I was always so happy it was P.E. day. We had four colors for each house, and I got assigned the color green almost throughout my school years. I was into sports growing up, Soccer, Badminton, Volleyball, and I also ran track. In Grade 12, I was a candidate during the elections to be the sports prefect for the school and I won.

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This gown represents so much in my life, a high school experience with great friends, years of studying and learning, trips, and sports.

I wore a sash around my neck that I have till today, “Olumawu College” was printed in it. A regular white top inside, and I made the navy-blue skirt myself.

My parents with me in the first picture, and my mum and Grandma in the second.

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Growing up with a mother who designs and makes apparels, By the time I was 16, I picked up a skill or two, I don't make as much as I did back then, I do more of sketching/designing.

I made my prom outfit; it was a purple dress, the top half of it was a print material (DaViva) and I made the other half with a deep purple velvet material, I took a large piece of the print material, made covered buttons and sew it to the lower right side of the dress. I added a flower to the shoulder, because the top didn't have much going on. It took me weeks to finish this dress, with my mums help.

My grandma was standing beside me in the first picture, and my friends and classmate in the second.

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