



# The Smile I Remember

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Under the heavy, gray downpour of Lagos, Daniel huddles beneath a cramped bus stop shelter while a girl in a blue hoodie sits calmly with a sketchbook. Amidst the splashing cars and rushing crowds, her soft, peaceful smile stands out against the chaotic storm. When Daniel asks why she is smiling, she simply tells him that the rain has a way of making people honest before she vanishes into the mist.



During a quiet lunch break at school, Daniel finds Amara sitting under a large tree, her sketchbook open to reveal beautiful, poignant drawings of everyday life. They share a profound moment of connection when Amara asks if he ever feels lonely despite being surrounded by people. Daniel realizes that for the first time in his life, someone truly understands the quiet isolation he carries in his heart as they bond over her art.



Returning to the bus stop on another rainy evening, Daniel sits beside a weary Amara and promises that she does not have to face her mother's illness or her father's absence alone. He reveals his own past struggles with loss, creating a bridge of trust that allows her to finally drop her guard. Under the rhythmic sound of the falling rain, Amara lets out a real, heartfelt laugh, marking the beginning of a true and honest friendship.