

Short Summary of *The Lekki Headmaster*

The Lekki Headmaster is a compelling novel that follows the life and experiences of Adebepo Adewale (Bepo), a dedicated principal at Stardom Schools in Lagos. The story captures his challenges, triumphs, and moral dilemmas as he navigates the complex world of school administration, student affairs, and personal aspirations. Throughout the novel, Bepo encounters workplace politics, conflicts among students and parents, ethical battles, and cultural reflections on education and societal values. His tenure at Stardom Schools is marked by strict discipline, humorous encounters, and deep emotional connections with both students and staff. However, despite his unwavering commitment, he ultimately decides to relocate to the UK, setting off a series of farewells and reflections on his legacy. The novel also explores themes of migration (Japa), corruption, education reforms, and personal integrity, making it a thought-provoking read for students preparing for the JAMB examination.

Summary of *The Lekki Headmaster* (Chapter by Chapter)

Chapter One:

The chapter opens with an unusual scene at Stardom Schools, a prestigious institution in Lekki. The principal, Mr. Bepo Adewale, behaves strangely during the morning assembly. Typically known for his energy and inspiring presence, he appears withdrawn and visibly shaken. As he takes the microphone, he is unable to speak and soon breaks down into tears in front of the entire school. His emotional outburst leaves both students and staff bewildered.

The Vice Principal, Mrs. Grace Apeh, steps in to manage the situation, instructing the school nurse and other staff members to escort Mr. Bepo to his office while the assembly is concluded. Inside his office, Mr. Bepo continues to sob uncontrollably, unable to explain his distress. More staff members arrive to comfort him, but he remains inconsolable. His unusual behavior quickly becomes the subject of speculation among students, staff, and even concerned parents. Rumors spread that the principal is either experiencing a personal crisis or has been spiritually afflicted.

The Vice Principal, recognizing the severity of the situation, contacts the school's Managing Director (MD), Mrs. Ibidun Gloss, who rushes to the school. The chapter also provides background on Stardom Schools. The institution recently implemented a strategy to boost enrollment in its boarding house by reducing fees, which resulted in improved punctuality among students. The school prides itself on its academic excellence, with a strict policy against failure in external exams. Teachers who produce poor results risk termination, as demonstrated by past incidents.

As the MD tries to get answers from Mr. Bepo, he remains tight-lipped, only muttering that he will be fine. Frustrated and increasingly worried, the MD enlists the help of Mr. Ope Wande, a Physics teacher and pastor, hoping he might counsel the principal. However, even Wande's intervention proves futile. Realizing that something serious is troubling Bepo, the MD decides to

contact his wife, only to discover that she now resides in London. Unable to reach her, the MD instructs Pastor Wande to accompany Mr. Bepo home and possibly seek medical help for him.

The chapter closes with the MD's concern about the school's reputation. She understands that allowing the principal's distress to linger in the school environment could damage Stardom's image. Although she acknowledges the principal's importance, she remains focused on maintaining order and avoiding unnecessary distractions. This opening chapter sets the stage for a deep mystery surrounding Mr. Bepo's breakdown, leaving the reader eager to uncover the cause of his distress.

Chapter Two:

After days of silence and emotional turmoil, Mr. Bepo finally reveals the reason for his distress—he is leaving Nigeria for the United Kingdom. His decision is driven by pressure from his wife, Seri, who has already relocated with their two children, Nike and Kike. Though he deeply loves Stardom Schools and is passionate about his students' growth, he can no longer resist the pull of his family. His reluctance to leave is not just emotional but ideological; he feels uneasy about abandoning Nigeria's struggling educational system to contribute to an already developed country. However, with his family on one side and a new teaching job secured in the UK, the decision is no longer his to debate. Bepo's attachment to Stardom Schools is deeply rooted in his long tenure, particularly his years as Headmaster at Stardom Kiddies. His empathetic nature and ability to resolve conflicts earned him the nickname "The Lekki Headmaster," a title that followed him even after he became the principal of the secondary school. His colleagues, however, struggle to understand his hesitation. They see his UK job offer as a golden opportunity, with his wife rumored to earn a staggering £10,000 a month as a nurse, while he himself would make £3,600—far more than his ₦400,000 salary in Nigeria. To them, his reluctance seems irrational, even laughable, and one teacher, Mr. Audu, jokingly claims he is heading straight to the airport to replace Bepo as Seri's husband.

Beyond the salary comparisons, Bepo's personal aspirations also make his decision difficult. He had always planned to retire at 55 and had been attending entrepreneurship seminars to prepare for life after teaching. His dream was to start his own business—perhaps a school, a farm, or a commercial transport venture. He admired the financial independence that business owners enjoyed and wanted to create jobs, contributing to his country's development. However, past experiences, like the failure of a neighborhood school he co-founded after NYSC, made him cautious about certain ventures. He also recognized the risks in transportation, where dishonest drivers often exploited vehicle owners. Despite these uncertainties, he kept the idea alive, knowing that successful transport companies like ABC and God is Good Motors had found ways to navigate challenges.

Ultimately, though, his dreams of entrepreneurship take a back seat to the reality before him. He is set to leave for the UK, where a new chapter in his teaching career awaits. While he acknowledges that no place is perfect, he remains aware of the cultural and professional

differences he will face. He recalls stories of Nigerian teachers struggling to adjust in foreign schools, including an incident where a student insulted a new teacher on his first day. Yet, he reassures himself that such experiences are rare and believes he can navigate the challenges ahead with diplomacy and resilience.

This chapter deepens the reader's understanding of Bepo's inner conflict—his love for his students, his ambition, and his deep-seated patriotism clash with the realities of family obligations and financial security. His dilemma reflects the broader struggle many professionals face when deciding whether to stay and build their homeland or seek better opportunities abroad.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Three

Now that Mr. Bepo has finally decided to relocate to the United Kingdom, he begins to pay close attention to the various stories and realities of life abroad. He reflects on the wage structure in developed countries, where earnings can be hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly, unlike Nigeria's fixed salary system. The idea of hourly wages fascinates him, as it allows for flexibility and more job opportunities. He learns from a friend in the United States that one can earn between \$150 and \$250 per day, depending on the job and location. The possibility of earning over \$2,400 per month makes relocation seem even more appealing, especially when converted to Nigerian naira. However, he acknowledges that while salaries may be high, the cost of living in dollars and pounds is equally significant.

Bepo also learns that skilled laborers—such as barbers, carpenters, and maintenance workers—earn more than those in retail or domestic jobs. He is particularly intrigued by the story of a Nigerian who switched from driving cabs to maintenance work and now earns \$500 daily. This realization reinforces the advice many people give to prospective migrants: learn a skill before leaving Nigeria. Recognizing this, Bepo had recently acquired some knowledge in painting, thinking it might be useful.

The chapter delves into the growing trend of migration, particularly among Nigerian professionals. Many nurses, doctors, and other health workers have been leaving the country at an alarming rate, a reality even the government acknowledges. The increasing ease of securing student visas, which allow applicants to travel with their families, has fueled the desperation to relocate. Many Nigerians sell their properties—houses, cars, and land—or take loans just to finance their migration. Some even resort to fraudulent means, selling what does not belong to them or fleeing without repaying debts.

Bepo recalls the case of Mr. Nku, a teacher at Stardom Schools, who took a ₦2 million loan from the school's cooperative before disappearing. There was also the school driver who attempted to steal a bus to finance his son's education abroad.

Bepo gets further insight into life in the UK from Sola, A former Home Economics teacher at Stardom who recently relocated, Sola, assures Bepo that his transition will be smoother than most, as his wife is already settled and working as a nurse. Unlike many migrants who struggle to pay school fees for their spouses studying abroad, Bepo's wife is financially stable, and he has already secured a teaching job.

Sola shares her own struggles, revealing that she and her husband sold everything they owned and still had to borrow ₦4 million before moving. Despite the initial challenges, she has changed jobs multiple times and now earns £200 daily. She also discusses the high cost of rent in London, which forced her and her husband to settle in Manchester, where they pay £650 monthly for a modest apartment.

Bepo further contemplates two major reasons why Nigerians persist in migrating—quality infrastructure and free education for children. He acknowledges that his own children, Nike and Kike, have benefited from the UK's free primary and secondary education. Unlike parents at Stardom who struggle to pay school fees, he does not have to worry about such expenses until his children reach university level.

Sola also shares her positive experience with the UK healthcare system. She recalls how her three-year-old daughter, Betty, had a medical emergency, and within minutes, two ambulances and a support vehicle arrived. The care Betty received was so overwhelming that Sola was moved to tears, especially when the hospital staff celebrated her daughter's birthday with gifts.

However, despite the many success stories, Bepo realizes that not everyone thrives abroad. Some migrants become stranded, unable to secure jobs or cope with financial pressures. He hears of a Nigerian banker who was reduced to caring for elderly couples in London and cried at the reality of his situation. Marriages have also collapsed due to migration, as seen in Hope's case—an accountant who moved to study in the UK while his wife worked to support him. Just a few months into their relocation, she refused to continue funding his education, leaving him in financial distress.

Bepo reflects on the unpredictability of life abroad, comparing it to how rain nurtures both sweet sugarcane and bitter leaves differently. Some migrants, like Riike, quickly accumulate wealth, buying houses in Nigeria within a few years. Others, like an academic who spent 20 years in the US, returned to Nigeria empty-handed after losing everything in a divorce.

Akindele, another Nigerian in the US, shares his struggles as a 55-year-old migrant working in freight loading and correctional services. He describes how even retired Nigerian professionals end up as casual laborers in America, doing backbreaking jobs for minimal pay. Akindele refuses to invite his children to join him, choosing to first establish a solid financial base.

The chapter highlights the complex realities of migration—while many leave in search of better opportunities, not all succeed. It underscores the sacrifices, risks, and unexpected challenges that come with seeking a new life in a foreign country. For Bepo, however, his path seems more secure than most, as he prepares to join his family and navigate his new life in the UK.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Four

As Mr. Bepo prepares to say his night prayers in his Lagos apartment, his phone rings. He hesitates but eventually picks up, only to find it is Mrs. Ignatius, a parent he feels has

overstepped professional boundaries. She frequently calls him at odd hours to discuss personal matters, including her troubled marriage.

Frustrated, Bepo listens as she laments about her husband, Mr. Ibe, who has still not come home. Though reluctant, he engages in the conversation. The Ignatius family had been planning to relocate to the UK, with Mr. Ibe determined to secure a better future for his children. He believed that Nigerian youths who studied abroad would dominate leadership positions in the future, and he did not want his children left behind.

Like many others, the family saw migration as an economic lifeline, where earning and saving in foreign currency would transform their lives. To prepare, Mrs. Ignatius had learned tailoring and hairdressing, as skilled labor was highly valued abroad.

However, their plans unraveled when a DNA test, conducted as part of their visa process, revealed that Mr. Ibe was not the biological father of one of their children, Favour. Devastated and betrayed, Mr. Ibe's attitude toward his wife and Favour changed drastically. He wanted them out of his life.

As Mrs. Ignatius speaks, she expresses fear that her husband may never return home. Worse, she worries that their son, Iyi, has started asking questions about why their visa was denied.

She suspects he may have figured out the real reason. Bepo, though sympathetic, has no answers for her. He is also preparing to leave for the UK and sees this as one more burden he will soon be free from.

Reflecting on his experiences at Stardom Schools, Bepo acknowledges the challenges of running an elite institution. Parents have different personalities—some are considerate and humble, while others are entitled and demanding. He hopes the lessons he has learned will be useful in his next job abroad. He also dreams of documenting his experiences in a book, particularly incidents like the dismissal of Mr. Ayesoro, a Government teacher.

The narrative then shifts to another family, the Ladeles. At home in Lagos, Mrs. Ladele relaxes with a Nollywood movie, unaware that her youngest daughter, Bibi, is about to have a traumatic experience. Suddenly, Bibi screams in terror, waking her siblings. She tells her mother that she had a nightmare featuring her Government teacher, Mr. Ayesoro, whom she refers to as “Mr. Wala” because of his prominent tribal marks.

At school, Bibi had been terrified of Mr. Ayesoro, especially after encountering him at the basketball court during inter-house sports practice. Her fear was so intense that she had to be reassigned to a different house. When Mrs. Ladele takes up the matter with Stardom's management, they recognize the risk of losing Bibi and her siblings as students. To avoid any trouble, they transfer Mr. Ayesoro to Stardom Hub, a different arm of the institution.

This chapter explores the complexities of relationships—both familial and professional. Bepo finds himself entangled in the personal struggles of a parent, even as he prepares to leave for a new life abroad. The Ignatius family’s crisis highlights the unexpected hurdles of migration, while the Ladeles’ experience demonstrates how personal fears and biases can shape school management decisions. The chapter adds depth to the novel’s themes of migration, societal expectations, and the unpredictability of life’s outcomes.

Summary of *Lekki Headmaster* – Chapter Five

During the long break at Stardom Schools, the campus is filled with the joyful chatter of students. While most are busy playing, Principal Bepo and the teachers on duty ensure safety, knowing that past incidents have led to broken arms. Meanwhile, Mrs. Ibidun Gloss, the school’s Managing Director (MD), retreats to a hidden room in her office for rest—an escape very few are aware of.

She suffers from a long-term medical condition that causes discomfort when she sits for extended periods, a pain she has endured for over 30 years despite seeking medical, spiritual, and traditional remedies. On this particular day, the MD instinctively decides to inspect a piece of land the school purchased two years earlier, located five minutes from the back gate.

Upon arrival, she is shocked to find the property being used as a parking lot filled with various cars—some bearing Stardom Schools stickers. Confused and suspicious, she asks the security guard, Jombo, who explains that the vehicles belong to staff members. This revelation astonishes her, as she thought she knew which of her employees owned cars. The sight of expensive brands—Toyota Muscle, Hyundai, Venza, and even buses—alarms the MD.

She immediately suspects financial misconduct, wondering how teachers, storekeepers, and gardeners could afford such luxury. She fears the school’s finances might be leaking. Without hesitation, she summons the principal and the school accountant for an urgent meeting.

When the accountant arrives, the MD demands an explanation, expressing deep concerns about the school’s financial safety. She questions where the money for such expensive purchases is coming from. The accountant and Principal Bepo attempt to calm her, explaining that many staff members acquired their cars through various means, including loans from the school’s cooperative society. They assure her that the school’s finances remain intact and that the loans are being deducted from salaries at the source.

Despite this clarification, the MD remains uneasy. She wonders how the cooperative accumulated such wealth, allowing even low-ranking staff members to buy vehicles. In frustration, she blurts out a derogatory remark, calling them “fools” for acquiring such luxury. Her words sting the accountant and the principal, though they remain silent to avoid confrontation. Determined to address the issue, the MD calls an emergency board meeting the following day.

The board consists entirely of her family members: her mother, Chief Mrs. Solape Bayo (the Chairman), her brother, Martins Bayo (a non-executive director), and her youngest sibling, Oye Bayo (the board's secretary).

They request a detailed report on the cooperative's financial status. The findings reveal that the cooperative has ₦95 million in its account, with over ₦50 million already loaned out. Chief Bayo immediately raises concerns, comparing the situation to "hanging a snake in the roof and going to bed."

She warns that if left unchecked, the staff might one day unite, establish their own school, and replicate Stardom's brand, ultimately becoming a competition. This fear leads to a swift and unanimous decision by the board:

- No staff member will be allowed to borrow more than ₦250,000.
- All loan requests must receive the MD's approval.
- The management must be informed about all cooperative elections to maintain oversight.

With these new restrictions in place, the MD hopes to regain control over staff financial activities and prevent any potential rebellion. This chapter highlights the growing tension between the school's leadership and its employees, as well as the MD's increasing paranoia about financial security and loyalty within the institution.

Summary of *Lekki Headmaster* – Chapter Six

At Stardom Schools, Open Days are highly significant, providing a platform for parents to engage with teachers and assess their children's academic progress. While the event is an opportunity for appreciation—where some teachers receive gifts from grateful parents—it is also a day of scrutiny.

Teachers often dread it, as some parents arrive armed with grievances. Principal Bepo recalls a past incident where a teacher, Mr. Fafore, was nearly fired due to a parent's complaint about his English grammar.

The tension begins when the Managing Director (MD), Mrs. Ibidun Gloss, calls Bepo into her office, already fuming. She asks about Mr. Fafore, the English teacher, and instructs Bepo to issue him a dismissal letter immediately.

Bepo is stunned by the abruptness of the decision, and as much as he dislikes issuing sack letters, he knows that at Stardom, management often dismisses staff over the slightest issues. He recalls past cases where teachers were fired for incompetence, child abuse (whether proven or not), and even conspiracy.

Determined to understand what led to this drastic measure, Bepo summons Fafore to his office and questions him about any possible infractions—lateness, misconduct, or arguments with parents—but finds nothing. The English teacher insists he has done nothing wrong. However, he

recalls that a parent, Mr. Guta, had visited his child's class, checked notebooks, and left abruptly, seemingly upset.

The truth emerges during an emergency staff meeting convened by the MD. She declares that the school will no longer tolerate incompetent teachers, citing Fafore as an example. She then reveals the supposed offense—a sentence in a student's notebook that read:

“Ade as well as Jide comes early.”

The MD claims that the correct sentence should be:

“Ade as well as Jide come early.”

Mr. Guta, the parent who saw this, had been so outraged by the error that he threatened to withdraw his children from the school. Convinced that Fafore was incompetent, the MD insists he must be dismissed immediately.

However, Principal Bepo surprises everyone by calmly refuting the MD's claim. He explains that “*Ade as well as Jide comes early*” is, in fact, grammatically correct. The phrase “*as well as*” does not function like “*and*”; rather, it requires a singular verb because it modifies the subject rather than joining it.

To settle the matter, the MD instructs everyone to check online for verification. To her embarrassment, they all find that Bepo is right and that she, along with Mr. Guta, was wrong. A heavy silence follows. The MD, having publicly shamed and nearly fired an innocent teacher, is humiliated. Some teachers sympathize with her, while others believe she should have handled the situation more carefully.

Just when the atmosphere becomes unbearably tense, Mr. Audu, known for his humorous nature, lightens the mood. He jokingly declares that both “*Mr. Fafore, as well as the principal, is correct*” and theatrically “pardons” the MD for her mistake. His playful remark causes the room to erupt in laughter, easing the tension.

The MD, relieved by the comic relief, jokingly threatens to fire Audu, telling Bepo to issue him a sack letter as soon as he collects one from Fafore.

The incidental sound underscores how a lack of proper verification can lead to unjust actions, reinforcing the importance of thorough assessment before making critical decisions.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Seven

Mr. Bepo joined Stardom Schools after a turbulent experience at Beesway Group of School. His troubles at Beesway began when he pointed out a grammatical error in the school's name, arguing that it should be “**Beesway Group of Schools**” instead of “**Group of School**” since “group of” implies multiple entities. His correction was dismissed by the school's director, Mr.

Egi Meko, who insisted that the name was divinely inspired and did not affect the quality of education.

When parents later raised the same issue at a Parent-Teacher Association meeting, Meko wrongly assumed that Bepo had instigated the complaint. He accused him of being a troublemaker and warned that he could either keep his job or stop criticizing the school's name.

Despite this tension, Bepo's decision to leave Beesway was not due to the name controversy but a far more disturbing incident.

One night, unable to sleep, he looked out of his window and noticed strange activity on the school grounds. The floodlights suddenly went off, and in the darkness, he saw several men moving suspiciously. As his eyes adjusted, he realized they were leading a live cow toward a pit. Moments later, two men emerged from the pit, and it became clear they were about to bury the animal alive.

Shocked, Bepo armed himself with a machete and went outside to confront them. To his astonishment, the school director, Mr. Meko, was among them. When Bepo protested the inhumane act, the men turned hostile. One of them struck him on the wrist with a club, causing him to drop his weapon. The director quickly intervened, preventing further harm, and escorted Bepo back to his room while the ritual continued.

As dawn approached, Bepo lay in bed, haunted by what he had witnessed. He questioned why they would bury a cow alive and wondered if he should report the incident to the authorities. He recalled stories of school owners engaging in occult rituals for prosperity, and his fears deepened.

This reminded him of an experience from his past—when he co-founded a school called **Fruitful Future** with a colleague. A parent, Mr. Ogo, once approached him, offering to perform a ritual by sprinkling grains of corn around the school to attract more students. Bepo and his colleague refused, believing in hard work rather than superstition. Shortly after, Mr. Ogo withdrew his child from the school.

Years later, Bepo saw a news report about a gruesome murder. A spiritualist had killed a woman who had paid him **₦9 million** to help her conceive but later demanded a refund. The murderer lured her to his house, drugged her, and buried her alive with the help of accomplices.

To Bepo's shock, the culprit was none other than Mr. Ogo—the same man who had once tried to convince him to perform a ritual at **Fruitful Future**.

Now, faced with a similar moral dilemma at Beesway, Bepo knew he had to leave. He considered reporting the school director to the authorities but hesitated, realizing the legal system might require bribes and financial backing he did not have. He also feared retaliation. Instead, he decided to quit quietly.

The next morning, before going to the director's office, Bepo packed all his belongings from both his room and the staff room. When he finally met Mr. Meko, the director apologized for the previous night's attack and dismissed the incident as a harmless "**special prayer**" for his late father, who had given him the land for the school.

Bepo said nothing.

With this final deception, Bepo walked away from Beesway, determined to never look back.

The chapter highlights the dark side of private school ownership, where some individuals resort to questionable and even occultic means for success. It also reinforces Bepo's strong moral compass—despite facing financial struggles, he refuses to compromise his values.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Eight

As Mr. Bepo prepared to leave Nigeria for the UK, he reflected on some unresolved issues at Stardom Schools, particularly a legal dispute between two families that had lingered for three years.

The conflict, which started as a minor rivalry between two students, **Banky and Tosh**, had escalated into a full-blown feud involving their parents—both of whom were politically influential figures.

The tension arose during the **prefect election process** at Stardom, which was designed to introduce students to democracy. Candidates had to purchase forms at varying costs, undergo a rigorous screening process, and deliver campaign speeches before the election.

On the crucial **Speech Day**, Banky, contesting for Social Prefect, made a disparaging remark about his rival, Tosh. He said:

"Instead of voting for the son of an ex-convict, cast your vote for me. You will never regret it."

This statement caused an uproar. While many students cheered, Principal Bepo was deeply disappointed. Tosh, visibly humiliated, stormed out of the hall despite efforts to stop him.

The rivalry between Banky and Tosh had a history. It had begun years earlier during a **school dance competition**, where they both competed fiercely in the hip-hop category.

The contest ended in a controversial decision favoring Banky, sparking dissatisfaction from Tosh's parents, who later threatened legal action, accusing the school of bias. The tension resurfaced again during a PTA election, where Banky's mother defeated Tosh's mother to become treasurer.

What worsened the situation was that Tosh's father, Chief Didi Ogba, was not actually an ex-convict, though he had been detained for 36 months during a corruption trial involving a ₦2.5 billion government contract. Although he was later cleared and his company was ordered to refund the money, the stigma remained. Chief Ogba demanded an apology from Banky and his parents, insisting that both should write official letters and have them published in the school magazine.

However, Banky's parents refused, arguing that their son never mentioned Ogba's name directly and that the demand amounted to victimization. The legal battle that followed was still unresolved as Bepo prepared to leave.

Aside from the legal conflict, Bepo also regretted leaving behind the Invention Club, particularly the Breath Project, a promising phone-making initiative using recycled panels and chips. Though not a scientist, he had been an active patron of the club and strongly believed that innovation was not limited to any field. The project had already attracted media attention and funding from an NGO, LifeGrid.

Bepo had hoped to witness the day when the students successfully manufactured a phone and announced it to the world. Now, he feared that his departure might derail the project. However, he vowed that if the project reached completion, he would fly back from London to be part of its launch.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Nine

As Mr. Bepo's departure from Nigeria drew closer, he became increasingly introspective, reflecting on the loose ends he would leave untied at Stardom Schools. Chief among these were unresolved disputes and unfinished projects that had defined his time at the institution.

One of the most pressing issues was a legal feud between two powerful families, the Ogbas and the Bankoles. The conflict had initially stemmed from a student prefect election, where a candidate, Banky, had publicly humiliated his opponent, Tosh, by calling his father an "ex-convict" in his campaign speech. While the remark had excited some students, it deeply wounded Tosh, who stormed out of the event in anger.

The bad blood between the two students mirrored the long-standing rivalry between their parents, which had begun during a dance competition years earlier. The tension worsened when Banky's mother defeated Tosh's mother in a PTA election, escalating the animosity between both families.

The situation was further complicated by Tosh's father, Chief Didi Ogba, who had been wrongfully implicated in a corruption case. Although he was later cleared, his 36-month

detention left a stain on his reputation. Following the incident at Stardom, Chief Ogba demanded an official apology, insisting that Banky and his parents publish letters of apology in the school magazine.

However, Banky's family refused, arguing that their son had never mentioned Ogba's name explicitly and that the demand was unfair and excessive. The disagreement led to a lawsuit, which remained unresolved as Bepo prepared to leave. Despite his attempts to mediate, the situation remained tense, and he regretted not being able to settle the matter before his departure.

Beyond the legal battle, Bepo also had concerns about the future of the Invention Club, particularly the Breath Project, an ambitious student-led initiative to develop a phone using recycled materials. As a strong advocate for innovation, he had worked closely with the students despite not being a scientist himself. The project had already gained significant recognition, attracting media coverage and funding from an NGO called LifeGrid.

Bepo had dreamed of seeing the students' invention come to life, making Stardom Schools one of the first Nigerian secondary schools to manufacture a phone. However, with his departure, he feared the project might lose momentum. Despite this uncertainty, he made a promise to himself—if the project reached completion, he would return from London to witness its launch and support the students who had worked tirelessly to make it happen.

This chapter captures Bepo's lingering regrets, his passion for student development, and the unfinished business that remained as he transitioned to a new phase of life. It highlights the weight of leadership, the challenges of conflict resolution, and the sacrifices of migration, as he left behind a legacy that was both impactful yet incomplete.

Summary of Lekki Headmaster – Chapter Ten

As Mr. Bepo prepared to relocate to the UK, he faced unexpected challenges in renewing his expired passport, a critical step in his travel plans. His lack of urgency in handling the renewal stemmed from the fact that he had not been enthusiastic about relocating. When his passport expired two years earlier, he ignored it, and then the COVID-19 pandemic further delayed his plans.

Even after the pandemic subsided, he continued to procrastinate due to fears of long queues, bureaucratic frustrations, and reports of passport booklets being unavailable. However, by early 2022, the pressure from his family to travel had become overwhelming, forcing him to act swiftly.

The **Japa** wave had caused an overwhelming surge in passport applications across Nigeria, making the renewal process highly stressful, especially in Lagos. Immigration offices in Ikoyi and Ikeja were flooded with applicants, with many people waiting endlessly or even camping overnight to secure a slot.

Bepo knew he could not afford to waste time in long queues, so he considered alternative ways to fast-track the process. He was advised to either bribe an immigration officer, work with an

agent, or travel to a less crowded state such as Ogun, Oyo, Osun, or Kwara for the renewal. He also considered using the online application portal but was warned that technical issues often forced applicants to abandon the process and visit the passport office in person.

After weighing his options, Bepo decided to travel to Ibadan, Oyo State, where he found an agent named Tai who could facilitate the process for an inflated fee. Tai asked him to pay **₦100,000** for a 10-year passport (instead of the official **₦70,000**), with an additional **₦20,000** to speed up collection.

While the Nigerian Immigration Service publicly condemned such illegal dealings, in reality, agents like Tai worked closely with immigration officers, making it nearly impossible to get a passport processed swiftly without paying extra.

To reach Ibadan, Bepo opted for public transport instead of driving, fearing security risks along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, where incidents of kidnapping and banditry had been reported. He boarded a commercial Toyota Sienna at Ojota, Lagos, and was surprised at how fast and smooth the journey was, thanks to the nearly completed road reconstruction. In less than an hour, he arrived in Ibadan—a stark contrast to his last trip on the same route ten years earlier, which had taken over two hours due to terrible road conditions.

As the vehicle sped along the expressway, Bepo observed significant changes. Religious organizations and private universities had increased in number, with institutions like **Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG)**, **Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry (MFM)**, **NASFAT**, and **Christ Embassy** occupying large stretches of land. He also noted the growth of business and industrial zones, particularly in Ogun State, with major companies such as **Mikano**, **Multi-Trex**, and **Lifemate Furniture** expanding their presence along the corridor.

As he approached Ibadan, he admired the city's famous **brown roofs**, reminiscing about **J.P. Clark's poem "Ibadan"**, which beautifully described the city's landscape.

Upon arriving in Ibadan, Bepo checked into a hotel and woke up early the next morning for his **7:00 AM** appointment at the passport office in Agodi. However, instead of meeting Tai inside the immigration office, he was directed to an open space opposite the premises, where Tai operated a business center.

Bepo realized that Tai was not an immigration officer but an agent working in collaboration with insiders at the passport office.

Despite the illegal nature of the transaction, the process was surprisingly swift. Tai collected Bepo's documents, confirmed his National Identity Number (NIN), and took him to an immigration officer who validated his details within fifteen minutes. The officer then informed him that he would need to return in three weeks for his biometric capturing.

Although Bepo was relieved that he avoided the chaotic queue inside the main office, he still had to visit the NIN office to complete a number validation process before his passport application could proceed. Unfortunately, the NIN office turned out to be a bureaucratic nightmare. Due to network failures and administrative delays, he had to wait another three weeks before his validation was completed. This pushed his passport renewal timeline dangerously close to his planned departure date, putting his entire relocation schedule at risk.

In this chapter, Bepo's struggles highlight the inefficiencies and corruption in Nigeria's passport renewal system, where applicants are often forced to rely on agents and bribes to bypass unnecessary delays. It also reflects his growing sense of urgency and frustration as he moves closer to leaving Nigeria, a decision he had previously resisted for years.

Summary of *Lekki Headmaster* – Chapter Eleven

As Mr. Bepo prepared to leave Stardom Schools, the institution honored him with a grand farewell ceremony to celebrate his 24 years of service. A large 3D banner decorated the school hall, with the inscription: *"FOR HE GAVE STARDOM HIS VERY BEST"*, revealing for the first time that "Bepo" was short for Adebepo. His departure, which had previously sparked confusion and debates, was now a settled matter. To accommodate the send-off, he rescheduled his Emirates flight, incurring a \$100 fine, which the school gladly paid.

The farewell events spanned three days, beginning with a novelty football match between the staff and students. The referee, Mr. Ibe, hilariously manipulated the game to favor the staff, leading them to a controversial 3-2 victory. Each time the students attempted to score, he cited imaginary fouls, and he even ordered five retakes of a penalty until the staff finally scored. Though unfair, the match was filled with fun, laughter, and celebration, ending with both teams dancing around Bepo.

The next day featured a debate in Bepo's honor, with the topic: *"The Arts Have Contributed More to Nigeria's Development Than the Sciences."* SS3 opposed the motion, citing advancements in health, energy, and technology, while SS2, led by Maryam, argued in favor, emphasizing Nigeria's cultural and entertainment impact, including Nollywood, Afrobeats, and Wole Soyinka's Nobel Prize win. Maryam's witty remark, *"long before our opponents were born,"* earned cheers from the audience. Though SS3 won, Bepo was proud of the students' eloquence and intellectual growth, feeling that his mentorship had paid off.

The final celebration took place on Friday, featuring music, drama, and dance performances. The drama club mimicked Bepo's speaking style, including his signature phrases like *"other things being equal,"* *"by the way,"* and *"if you think education is expensive, try... ignorance!"* The performance revealed his habits, such as placing his left hand in his pocket while speaking and his short temper when dealing with unpunctual teachers. The cultural performances showcased Nigeria's rich heritage, including the Bata, Atilogwu, Koroso, and Canoe dances.

The Canoe dance, inspired by the Badagry people, held deep emotional significance for Bepo. It reminded him of a trip to the National Theatre, where students had learned the choreography from a National Troupe dancer. As he watched, his mind drifted to the horrors of slavery,

imagining whips tearing into the flesh of captives. Lost in thought, he suddenly shouted “*Noooo!*” startling the audience. Realizing his mistake, he quickly improvised, praising the students: “*No school could have done the Canoe dance better. None at all!*” The moment passed, and the drumming resumed.

During her speech, Mrs. Ibidun Gloss, the school’s MD, expressed immense gratitude for Bepo’s contributions, describing him as an outstanding educator who had helped shape Stardom’s reputation. She recounted how her late father, Chief David Aje, had hired Bepo 24 years earlier, recognizing his exceptional qualities even before he officially started. Despite arriving eight days late, Chief Aje insisted on waiting for him, convinced that Bepo had the potential to be a great teacher. Over the years, his dedication proved him right.

To honor him, the school presented Bepo with a cheque, clarifying that it was neither a car nor an electronic gadget, as he was relocating abroad. When the audience demanded to know the amount, she revealed it was over \$10,000—the largest farewell gift ever given to a departing staff member.

When Bepo stepped up to speak, he was overcome with emotion. Attempting to express his gratitude, he broke down in tears, unable to continue. The entire hall stood in applause, and many wiped their eyes with handkerchiefs, moved by the emotional farewell.

This chapter captures the deep bond between Bepo and Stardom Schools, highlighting his impact, legacy, and the love and admiration he had earned. His departure marked the end of an era, but his influence would remain woven into the fabric of the school’s history.

Summary of *Lekki Headmaster* – Chapter Twelve

As Bepo prepared for his final departure to the UK, he ensured no mistakes would cost him his flight. He had learned a hard lesson six years earlier when he missed his British Airways flight due to an oversight in the departure time. Determined not to repeat history, he checked and rechecked his Emirates ticket multiple times. His wife, Seri, teased him about verifying the flight details, but he confidently assured her there would be no lateness or penalties this time.

Leaving his Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja home, Bepo recalled how Lagos’ chaotic traffic had once made commercial motorcycles (*Okada*) the saviors of urgent trips. However, with the *Okada* ban, he opted for an Uber ride—until his landlord, Mr. Ogunwale, and his family unexpectedly arrived. The landlord and landlady, along with their grandchildren, Jide and Kemi, had come to bid him farewell. Touched by their kindness, Bepo hesitated but gratefully accepted Mr. Ogunwale’s offer to drive him to the airport. As they prepared to leave, Jide excitedly asked to go with him to London, prompting laughter. However, Bepo felt a pang of guilt, knowing he was leaving the boy behind after spending weekends coaching him in elocution and African history.

Before setting off, Mr. Ogunwale said a prayer for Bepo, and the family embarked on the final journey together. At Ikeja Underbridge, Bepo met three colleagues from Stardom Schools—Vice Principal Mrs. Grace Apeh, Accountant Mr. Oyelana, and Mr. Audu. They had planned to accompany him to the airport, either from home or by meeting him there. With two cars now

forming a convoy, they headed toward the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MM2), navigating through mild traffic.

Upon arrival at 4:07 PM, the bold “Departures” sign struck Bepo with a wave of emotion—his journey was truly happening. Saying goodbye to his landlord and the kids was especially hard. He gave Jide and Kemi ₦5,000 each, asking them to greet their grandmother well. Jide, still hopeful, reminded Bepo to return next week to take him to London.

Inside the airport check-in hall, the Stardom staff reminisced about the farewell ceremony. Mr. Oyelana praised Bepo’s legacy at the school, joking that other staff (especially Audu) should learn from his dedication. Audu, as always, made everyone laugh with his playful responses, even joking about borrowing money from the cooperative and celebrating with seven cows if he ever got a visa—even if it were to Afghanistan.

At 5:30 PM, Bepo completed his check-in and security checks, securing Seat No. 56—window side, Gate 2A. It was time for his colleagues to leave, as most of them lived far from the airport. After farewells and warm wishes, they left Bepo to await boarding at 9:30 PM.

As he checked his phone, he realized he had missed multiple calls, including from his wife and the MD. He couldn’t return them immediately as passengers were undergoing final security clearance. Instead, he sent a quick text message to assure Seri that everything was going well. While waiting for the boarding call, Bepo dozed off and slipped into a haunting dream...

Summary of *Lekki Headmaster* (Chapters 1–12)

Lekki Headmaster follows the journey of Mr. Adebepo, an experienced and dedicated educator at Stardom Schools, as he navigates the challenges of the Nigerian education system while preparing for his relocation to the UK. The novel highlights his deep connection with his students, the impact of corruption on everyday life, and the emotional farewell he receives after 24 years of service.

Early Struggles and Challenges (Chapters 1–6)

Bepo's story begins with his role as a committed teacher and administrator at Stardom Schools, where he is both respected and loved by his students and colleagues. Despite his dedication, he faces numerous challenges, including the bureaucratic inefficiencies of the Nigerian system. His decision to relocate is met with mixed reactions—some celebrate his new opportunity, while others feel his departure is a great loss to the school.

One of the major hurdles he encounters is the frustrating process of renewing his passport. Forced to rely on agents and unofficial payments to expedite the process, he experiences firsthand the corruption embedded in Nigeria’s administrative system. Additionally, technical issues and endless delays at the National Identity Number (NIN) office push his timeline dangerously close to his flight date, increasing his stress.

The Grand Farewell (Chapters 7–11)

As Bepo prepares to leave, Stardom Schools organizes a grand farewell ceremony in his honor, spanning three days. The celebrations include a novelty football match, a lively debate on the importance of the arts versus sciences, and cultural performances that reflect Nigeria's rich heritage. These events showcase the love and respect the school community has for Bepo, highlighting his deep impact on the students and staff.

During the farewell ceremony, the school's MD, Mrs. Ibidun Gloss, delivers a heartfelt speech, recounting how her late father personally recruited Bepo 24 years earlier, recognizing his passion for teaching. The school presents him with a record-breaking farewell gift of over \$10,000 as a token of appreciation for his years of service. Overcome with emotion, Bepo struggles to deliver his final words, breaking into tears as the entire hall gives him a standing ovation.

Final Departure (Chapter 12)

With his flight date finally at hand, Bepo double-checks every detail to avoid any last-minute mistakes. As he prepares to leave his Lagos home, his landlord and family surprise him with a visit, offering to drive him to the airport. The journey is filled with emotional goodbyes, especially with Jide, a young boy he had mentored, who jokingly asks to be taken to London.

At the airport, Bepo meets a few colleagues from Stardom Schools who have come to see him off. They reminisce about his time at the school and share laughter, making his final moments in Nigeria bittersweet. After checking in and passing through security, he waits at Gate 2A for his 9:30 PM Emirates flight. Exhausted from the day's events, he dozes off, slipping into a haunting dream—one that foreshadows the uncertainties ahead.

Themes and Significance

Lekki Headmaster is a deeply reflective novel about service, legacy, and the struggles of migration. It paints a vivid picture of the Nigerian educational system, the inefficiencies of bureaucracy, and the emotional weight of leaving one's homeland. Through Bepo's experiences, the novel explores themes of resilience, integrity, and the sacrifices that come with seeking a better future.
