
BENITA
SEASON 2
(A POWERFUL CHRISTIAN NOVEL SERIES)
WRITTEN BY
ANTHONY IJERE

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EPISODE ELEVEN

The Unknown Caller

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"They suspended your position in church, not your destiny."

Benita glanced at the screen. The number was not saved on her phone, and the display simply showed Unknown Number.

She allowed it to ring for a few more seconds, thinking the caller would eventually stop. However, something within her made her reach for it, and after staring at the screen one more time, she finally answered.

"Hello?"

There was no response.

Benita waited, wondering if the person on the other end could hear her.

"Hello? Who is this?"

For several seconds, there was only silence. She was about to end the call when a woman's voice finally came through.

"Benita."

The moment she heard her name, Benita sat upright and her expression changed.

"Who is this?"

"It is Clara."

Benita's heart jumped. For a moment she could not speak, because the name brought back memories she had tried very hard to leave behind.

"Clara?"

"Yes."

Benita's face hardened as she remembered everything that had happened in the past.

"Why are you calling me?"

"I just want to talk to you."

Benita shook her head even though Clara could not see her.

"I don't want to talk to you."

"Please, Benita."

"No. I have nothing to discuss with you."

She ended the call immediately and placed the phone beside her. For a few seconds she simply stared at the device, her heart beating faster than before. She had not expected to hear Clara's voice again. Of all the people she had expected to call her, Clara was the last person she wanted to hear from.

Benita picked up her phone again and checked the number. It was still not saved, and there was nothing on the screen that could tell her why Clara had decided to call after such a long time. She dropped the phone back on the bed.

Within seconds, it rang again. Benita looked at it. It was the same unknown number. She refused to answer, and the phone continued ringing until it finally stopped. Benita breathed out slowly, hoping that would be the end of it.

Then the phone rang again. She stared at the screen with growing irritation.

"Why is she not stopping?"

The ringing continued, and this time Benita picked up the phone angrily.

"Why are you disturbing me?"

Clara remained silent for a moment, and Benita's voice became firmer.

"I said I don't want to talk to you. Please don't call this number again. I am done with you. I am done with everything that has to do with you."

Her voice began to shake as she spoke. She had tried to sound strong, but the memories connected to Clara were still painful. She was about to end the call when she heard something that made her stop. Clara was crying.

Benita frowned.

"Why are you crying?"

Clara struggled to speak.

"Because I know I hurt you."

Benita said nothing.

"I know what I did to you was terrible. I know the kind of life I introduced you to. I know the things you suffered because of me."

Clara's voice broke as she tried to control her tears.

"Benita, I am sorry."

Benita's anger slowly began to disappear as she remained silent, listening to the woman she once knew.

Clara continued speaking.

"I met Jesus."

Benita became completely still.

"What?"

"I gave my life to Christ during a programme."

For several seconds, neither woman spoke. Benita looked down at the floor as she tried to understand what she had just heard.

"I am now born again," Clara continued. "I know you may find it difficult to believe me, especially because of my past, but I am serious. I want to follow Jesus. I want to learn how to live for Him. I want to grow spiritually and become a different person."

Benita lowered her head. Clara's words sounded strange coming from the woman she remembered. She had known Clara as someone who could confidently introduce people to things that had nearly destroyed their lives, but now she was talking about repentance and following Christ.

"I know I cannot erase what I did," Clara said. "I know saying sorry cannot change the past, but I am asking you to forgive me."

Benita closed her eyes, and the past began to pass through her mind. She remembered the confusion, the things Clara had exposed her to, and how far her life had gone before she encountered Christ.

But she also remembered the mercy of God. She remembered that Christ had not rejected her because of her past, and if God had forgiven her, she knew she could not continue holding Clara captive in her heart.

"Clara," she said quietly.

"Yes?"

"I forgive you."

Clara immediately began crying again.

"Thank you, Benita."

Benita wiped her eyes.

"If you really want to follow Christ, then follow Him sincerely."

"I will."

"Do not follow me. Follow Jesus."

Clara became quiet. After a moment, she asked, "Can I still talk to you sometimes?"

Benita hesitated before answering.

"Yes, but let everything be about Christ."

"Okay."

"If you really want to follow Christ, then follow Him sincerely. Do not follow me. Follow Jesus."

— BENITA

The conversation lasted much longer than Benita had expected. Clara told her about the programme where she had encountered Christ and explained how the message had exposed her life and made her realize that she could not continue living the way she had been living. She spoke about repentance, prayer, forgiveness, and her desire to learn the Word of God. She admitted that she did not understand everything yet, but she knew that something had changed inside her.

Benita listened carefully. There was something different about Clara. The Clara she remembered had always spoken confidently about worldly things, but this Clara was speaking about Scripture. She was no longer trying to convince Benita to follow her old ways; instead, she was asking questions about how to grow in Christ.

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JONATHAN IS DEAD

Before they ended the call, Clara asked if they could meet, and Benita agreed. However, Clara did not come to Benita's house. Benita did not want unnecessary attention or questions from anyone around her, so she went out to meet Clara instead. They chose a quiet place where they could sit and talk without being disturbed.

When Clara saw Benita approaching, she stood up.

"Benita."

Benita smiled.

"Clara."

They greeted each other, but for a moment neither of them knew what to say. So much had happened between them that an ordinary greeting did not seem enough to cover the distance between their past and their present.

Clara eventually laughed softly.

"You look different."

Benita smiled.

"You too."

They sat down. At first, their conversation was cautious. Clara spoke about her new life in Christ while Benita listened and occasionally asked questions. Clara told her about the programme, the message she heard, the decision she made, and the changes she was trying to make in her life. As they continued talking, Benita noticed that Clara was not pretending to know everything. She openly

admitted that she was still learning and that there were many things she did not understand, and that honesty made Benita believe her even more.

After some time, however, Benita remembered something that had been buried beneath the conversation.

"Clara."

"Yes?"

"I want to ask you something."

Clara looked at her.

"What?"

"Jonathan."

The smile disappeared from Clara's face.

"Jonathan?"

"Yes. Where is he?"

Clara looked away, and Benita immediately noticed the change in her expression.

"Why did you suddenly become quiet?"

Clara took a deep breath.

"Benita, Jonathan is dead."

Benita stared at her.

"What?"

"Jonathan is dead."

"No."

Her voice rose as disbelief filled her face.

"No, what do you mean he is dead?"

"He died."

Benita shook her head.

"How?"

Clara lowered her head.

"I was sent to kill him."

Benita froze as the words seemed to echo inside her mind.

"You were sent to kill Jonathan?"

"Yes."

"Who sent you? Your spiritual leader in the underworld?"

Clara looked at her for several seconds before shaking her head.

"Benita, but I didn't kill him."

"But you just told me you were sent to kill him."

"I know."

"Then tell me what happened."

Clara took another deep breath.

"When I got there, Jonathan was already dead."

Benita stared at her in disbelief.

"But I saw you that day."

Clara said nothing.

"You were laughing."

Clara looked away.

"You were laughing at the hospital when everything was happening. How can you tell me now that you didn't kill him?"

"I didn't"

Benita shook her head slowly.

"This does not make sense."

She tried to put the pieces together, but they did not fit. Then another memory came back to her.

"His father told us that he had been transferred to another hospital."

"He was not transferred."

Benita's face changed.

"What?"

"His father lied."

"Why would he lie?"

"I don't know."

Benita's eyes began to fill with tears.

"After that day, his father stopped taking our calls."

Clara looked at her.

"Really?"

"Yes."

"It's well."

Benita's voice became weak.

"Where is Jonathan's body?"

Clara looked down.

"I don't know."

Benita covered her face and her shoulders began to shake as she cried. She had spent so long wondering what had happened to Jonathan. There had been so many unanswered questions, and she had tried to convince herself that perhaps he was still alive somewhere. Now she had finally received an answer, but the answer had only created more questions.

Clara moved closer to her.

"Benita, don't cry."

"How can I not cry?"

Benita looked at her through her tears.

"I thought he was somewhere. I thought maybe one day I would see him again."

Clara held her hand.

"God knows where he is."

Benita looked at her, and Clara began speaking about the sovereignty of God and the fact that there were things human beings could never understand. She reminded Benita that God knew every hidden matter and that no secret could remain hidden from Him forever. She quoted Scripture and encouraged Benita not to allow the mystery surrounding Jonathan to destroy her faith.

Benita listened quietly. She did not have all the answers, but as Clara spoke, something began to change within her. For the first time, she truly began to believe that Clara's encounter with Christ might be genuine. The woman sitting beside her

was no longer speaking like the Clara she remembered; she was speaking like someone who had discovered a new way of life.

"God knew every hidden matter and that no secret could remain hidden from Him forever."

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A CALL TO BENJAMIN

When Benita eventually returned home that evening, her heart was heavy. She entered her room, closed the door, and sat on the edge of her bed. She looked at her phone and realized there was one person she needed to speak to.

She picked up the phone and dialed his number. It rang several times before he answered.

"Hello?"

"Benjamin."

There was a brief pause.

"Benita?"

"Yes."

"It has been a long time."

"Yes."

"How are you?"

Benita tried to answer, but her voice broke.

"Benjamin, I need your help."

His voice immediately became serious.

"What happened?"

Benita took a deep breath and began telling him about her suspension in church and the things that had happened since she stopped serving in the church. She wanted to tell him about Clara calling

her and revealing that she had now become a Christian. And also tell him of what Clara had said about Jonathan, but she couldn't just tell him at the moment.

Benjamin listened without interrupting. When Benita finished, there was silence on the phone.

Finally, he asked, "Benita, tell me the truth. Did you sleep with that man?"

"No!"

Her voice was firm.

"I did not."

"Are you sure?"

"Benjamin, I swear before God. I did not do it."

There was another brief silence.

"I believe you."

Benita began crying again.

"I don't understand why all these things are happening."

Benjamin sighed.

"When you decide to serve God, you should understand that oppositions will come. Not every problem means that God has abandoned you."

"So what should I do?"

"Stand firm."

Benita wiped her tears.

"You have to stand firm. Do not allow accusations to destroy your faith. Do not allow what people say about you to make you abandon your calling."

"But they have suspended me."

"They suspended your position in church, not your destiny."

Benita became quiet. The words touched something deep inside her.

Benjamin continued.

"You have gifts. You have ideas. You have written scripts. You have a burden for drama. Do not allow one difficult season to bury everything God has placed inside you."

Benita looked at the notebooks on her table.

"What should I do?"

"Start small."

"Start what?"

"Start a drama ministry."

Benita stared at her notebooks. She had written several scripts, but she had allowed the suspension and the accusations to make her doubt herself.

"But before you do that, go back to your pastor."

Benita sighed.

"Again?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Beg him to reconsider the suspension. You have nothing to lose by trying."

Benita remained silent.

"If he agrees, fine. If he refuses, you will know that you did your part."

She looked down at her hands.

"Okay."

"Promise me you will go."

"I promise."

"They suspended your position in church, not your destiny."

— BENJAMIN

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A RETURN TO THE OFFICE

The following Tuesday, Benita went to the church. She knew that the pastor usually came to the church on Tuesdays for counseling, so she decided to use the opportunity to speak with him. As she entered the compound, she slowed down. The church had once been a place where she felt completely at home. She had served there with joy and had believed that nothing could ever separate her from the ministry, but now the same place felt different.

She remembered standing on the altar. She remembered the applause. She remembered the dramas she had written and acted. She remembered people crying during their ministrations and telling her afterward that the messages had touched their lives. She remembered the pastor calling her name with pride. Now she was returning as someone under suspension.

Benita took a deep breath and walked inside. After waiting for some time, she eventually saw the pastor.

"Good afternoon, sir."

"Good afternoon."

"Sir, please, can I speak with you?"

He looked at her carefully.

"Go ahead."

"Sir, I came because of my suspension."

The pastor's expression became serious.

"I have already spoken about that."

"Sir, I know, but I am begging you to reconsider."

"Benita."

"Sir, please."

"You know what was presented to me."

"I know, sir."

"And you still maintain that you did not do it?"

"Yes, sir."

The pastor reached for his phone.

"Then look at this."

He opened his gallery and searched through the pictures. Benita watched him silently, and a few seconds later he turned the phone toward her.

"Look."

Benita looked at the screen and her face changed instantly. There was a photograph of her in a hotel room with a young man, and the photograph appeared to show her involved in an immoral act.

Benita's mouth opened, but no words came out. She stared at the screen as though looking at something impossible.

The pastor watched her reaction.

"That is the evidence that was presented to me."

Benita shook her head.

"No."

"Benita."

"No, sir."

She stepped backward.

"This is not me."

The pastor frowned.

"Are you saying the photograph is fake?"

"Exactly, sir."

Her voice trembled.

"But I know I was never there."

The pastor's expression hardened.

"Benita, I am not asking you whether you did it or not. I am asking you whether that is you in the picture."

Benita stared at him.

"Sir, I have answered you. That is not me."

"You expect me to believe that?"

"Yes, sir, because I am telling you the truth."

The pastor raised his voice.

"Then explain the picture."

"I cannot explain something I did not do."

"You were suspended because of this evidence, and you came here asking me to reconsider. Now you are standing in front of me telling me that the evidence does not exist."

"But sir, with all due respect sir. The person in that picture is not me."

The pastor stepped closer to his desk.

"Look at the picture properly."

"I have looked at it, sir."

"Look at it again."

Benita looked at the phone. The young woman in the picture looked frighteningly similar to her. Her face, her hair, and even the clothes looked familiar, but Benita knew where she had been on the day in question.

"I have looked at it, sir, and I am still telling you that I was never in that room."

The pastor's patience was beginning to disappear.

"Then where were you?"

"I was at home."

"Who was with you?"

"I was alone."

The pastor gave a bitter laugh.

"So you were alone, and now you expect me to take your word against a photograph."

Benita's eyes filled with tears.

"Sir, I have served in this church faithfully. You know me."

"I knew you before this matter came up."

"And you believe I would do this?"

"I do not know what to believe anymore."

Benita stepped closer.

"Sir, please listen to me... I know how this looks, but I did not do it. Somebody is trying to frame me."

"Who?"

"I don't know."

"Then you have no explanation."

"I have told you the truth."

"The truth without evidence is not enough when evidence has already been placed before me."

Benita's voice became desperate.

"Sir, please... You have known me. Have I ever behaved like this?"

The pastor looked away.

"That is not the issue."

"It is the issue, sir. You know my character. You know what I have been preaching. You know how serious I have been about serving God."

"I also know that people can change."

Benita stared at him as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Sir, you think I am lying?"

"I did not say that."

"But that is what you are saying."

"I am saying that I have evidence."

"Evidence that is false!"

The pastor suddenly slammed his hand on the table.

"Enough!"

Benita jumped and the room fell silent. The pastor pointed toward the door.

"I have listened to you enough."

"Sir..."

"Leave my office."

Benita stared at him in shock.

"Sir, please."

"I said leave my office!"

"But I am telling you the truth."

"And I am telling you that I cannot continue this conversation!"

"Sir, please don't do this. I came here because I believed you would at least listen to me."

"I have listened to you."

"Then believe me."

"I cannot simply believe you because you are crying."

Benita's face was covered with tears.

"I am crying because I am innocent."

The pastor shook his head.

"Go home and pray. If what you are saying is true, God will reveal it."

Benita stood there helplessly.

"Sir..."

"Leave."

She remained still for another moment, hoping that he would change his mind. The pastor pointed toward the door again.

"Benita, leave my office now."

Benita wiped her tears and slowly turned toward the door. Her heart was breaking. She had entered the office hoping to regain her place in the church, but she was leaving with something even heavier than the suspension.

As she reached the doorway, she stopped and turned around.

"Sir."

The pastor did not look at her.

"I did not do it."

There was no response.

"Go home and pray. If what you are saying is true, God will reveal it."

— THE PASTOR

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A CRACK IN THE EVIDENCE

Benita slowly walked out and closed the door behind her. She stood outside the office for several seconds, trying to hold herself together, and then the tears came again. She covered her face and whispered to herself, "Lord, You know I am innocent."

Inside the office, the pastor remained seated, staring at the photograph on his phone. For the first time, doubt began to enter his mind. He looked at the picture again, and something about it bothered him. He zoomed into the photograph and studied the face carefully. Then he noticed something he

had not paid attention to before. The image was perfect. But there was something about the face that did not look completely natural. The pastor frowned and zoomed in again. His expression slowly changed.

Outside the office, Benita walked away.

"The image was perfect. But there was something about the face that did not look completely natural."

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End of Episode Eleven

"The pastor frowned and zoomed in again. His expression slowly changed. Outside the office, Benita walked away."

WATCH OUT FOR THE NEXT EPISODE

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