

The Lion and the Jewel Quotes

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"You are as stubborn / As an illiterate goat."

Perspective:

Lakunle's view reflects his frustration with Sidi's resistance to his modern ideas. Although he claims to believe in equality, this insult shows his belief in women's inferiority.

Reason: Lakunle feels superior because of his Western education, and when Sidi refuses to follow his ideals, he lashes out with insults. This exposes his hypocritical nature—while he wants modernization, he holds on to sexist attitudes.

"Will you make me / A laughing-stock?"

Perspective:

Sidi values her reputation in the village and aligns with traditional expectations. She refuses to marry Lakunle without a bride-price because it would imply she's not a virgin.

Reason: Sidi doesn't want to be seen as shameful or dishonorable in the eyes of the villagers. For her, tradition is not just a custom but a way to maintain her dignity and status.

"Be a modern wife, look me in the eye / And give me a little kiss."

Perspective:

Lakunle's demand for a "modern wife" reflects his shallow understanding of modernization. He wants Sidi to behave according to his ideals, regardless of her feelings.

Reason: Lakunle's insistence on kissing shows that he doesn't truly respect Sidi's autonomy. He equates modernization with romantic gestures but disregards Sidi's personal and cultural boundaries.

"I am greater than ... the living god among men."

Perspective:

Sidi's pride comes from seeing her beauty celebrated in the magazine. She views herself as superior because her beauty gives her power over others, including Baroka.

Reason: Sidi's newfound confidence is tied to her physical appearance. The magazine symbolizes validation from the outside world, making her feel important and influential.

"It is five full months since last / I took a wife."

Perspective:

Baroka reveals his desire to marry Sidi as part of his pattern of collecting young, beautiful wives. This reflects his traditional belief in polygamy and male dominance.

Reason: For Baroka, taking wives is a way to affirm his masculinity and power as the Bale. Marrying Sidi would be another victory for him, reinforcing his authority in the village.

"The greedy dog! Insatiate camel of a foolish, doting race."

Perspective:

Lakunle's anger at Baroka reflects his disdain for traditional practices like polygamy. However, his jealousy over Baroka's proposal to Sidi is evident.

Reason: Lakunle's frustration stems from his inability to compete with Baroka's power and influence. He criticizes polygamy as "barbaric," but his true feelings reveal his insecurity and envy.

"It is a rich life, Sidi."

Perspective:

Sadiku tries to convince Sidi to marry Baroka by emphasizing the benefits of being his wife, such as wealth and status.

Reason: Sadiku represents traditional values and sees marriage as a woman's ultimate purpose. She tries to make Sidi believe that marrying Baroka will secure her future.

"He's a die-hard rogue / Sworn against our progress."

Perspective:

Lakunle views Baroka as a barrier to modernization. He believes Baroka's resistance to change keeps the village stuck in outdated traditions.

Reason: Lakunle doesn't recognize that Baroka allows modernization only when it serves his own interests. Lakunle's criticism stems from his frustration with Baroka's control over the village.

"I am withered and unsapped."

Perspective:

Baroka lies about losing his "manhood" to manipulate Sidi into underestimating him.

Reason: This statement is part of Baroka's cunning plan to lure Sidi into trusting him. It reflects how women are objectified, as Baroka views Sidi as a way to restore his masculinity.

"Race of mighty lions, we always consume you."

Perspective:

Sadiku secretly celebrates Baroka's supposed impotence, interpreting it as proof that women are more powerful than men.

Reason: Sadiku's joy comes from years of living under Baroka's dominance. Her reaction highlights the resentment that traditional marriage customs create in women.

"Goad him my child, torment him until he weeps for shame."

Perspective:

Sadiku encourages Sidi to mock Baroka, showing her hidden anger toward him despite being his loyal wife.

Reason: Sadiku's encouragement reveals her dissatisfaction with her position as a wife. She wants Sidi to humiliate Baroka, possibly as revenge for the power imbalance in their marriage.

"Everything you say, Bale, / Seems wise to me."

Perspective:

Sidi's words show her naivety and how easily she is manipulated by Baroka's charm.

Reason: Sidi's lack of education and experience makes her vulnerable to Baroka's eloquence. She trusts him despite his manipulative intentions, which leads to her downfall.

"Would I choose a watered-down, / A beardless version of unripened man?"

Perspective

: Sidi chooses Baroka over Lakunle, rejecting the weaker man who cannot meet her expectations of strength and power.

Reason: Both Baroka and Lakunle try to control Sidi, but Baroka's dominance and cunning make him more appealing. Sidi's choice reflects how power dynamics influence relationships in the play.

LX Notes