

The Lion and the Jewel Summary

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The play *The Lion and the Jewel* is mainly divided into three parts: morning, noon, and night. So, let's read this drama according to the summary section.

Morning

Sidi and Lakunle's Argument:

Sidi walks near the school in her village, Ilujinle. She carries a pail of water on her head. Lakunle, the young schoolteacher, comes outside and tries to help her. However, he spills the water on himself. They joke and tease each other. Lakunle tells Sidi that carrying loads on her head will harm her neck. He also says she should cover her shoulders. Sidi gets annoyed. Lakunle says women have smaller brains than men. It makes Sidi angry. Sidi argues that women work very hard. Lakunle dreams of changing the village. He also wants to marry Sidi without paying the bride price. Sidi refuses because she fears people will doubt her honor. Lakunle says the bride price is a foolish tradition. He refuses to pay it.

News About the Magazine: Some young villagers come running with big news. They tell Sidi that a stranger with a camera visited the village. The stranger also printed a magazine with pictures. Sidi's photo is on the cover. It was also in the center of the magazine. The villagers say she looks very beautiful, as if even the sun loves her. Baroka's photo is small and placed near the village latrines. Sidi becomes very happy. She says she is now more important than Baroka. Lakunle agrees with her.

Dance About the Stranger: Sidi and the villagers decide to act out the story of the stranger's visit. Sidi gives everyone a role. She forces Lakunle to play the stranger. Lakunle tries to run away. But the villagers pull him back. In the dance, Lakunle acts drunk and pretends to take pictures. The villagers act like trees, rivers, and animals around him. Everyone laughs and enjoys the show. Lakunle falls into an imaginary river. Then, the villagers pull him back into the center.

Baroka's Arrival: Baroka arrives while they are dancing. Everyone stops and greets him. Lakunle tries to sneak away again. But Baroka holds him back. Baroka jokes that Lakunle has stolen the village's pride. Baroka tells them to continue the dance. After the dance, Sidi teases Lakunle again. She leads the villagers to find the real stranger. She pulls Lakunle along with

her. Baroka stays behind. He looks at Sidi's photos in the magazine and admires her beauty. He thinks about making Sidi his next wife.

Noon

Sidi Refuses Baroka's Marriage Proposal:

Sidi walks along the road. She was looking at her pictures in a magazine at that time. Lakunle follows her, carrying firewood. Sidi is proud of her pictures. Suddenly, Sadiku, Baroka's first wife, appears. Sidi shows her the magazine happily. Sadiku smiles and says she has a secret message from Baroka. She tells Sidi that Baroka wants to marry her. Lakunle gets angry and calls Baroka greedy. He begs Sidi not to listen. Sidi pulls her hands away from him and says she is now too famous to marry Baroka. Sadiku says Sidi will have a comfortable life as Baroka's last and favorite wife. But Sidi refuses. She says Baroka only wants her now because of her beauty.

Sidi Criticizes Baroka and Sadiku's Efforts Fail: Sidi feels proud of her beauty. She says Baroka only sees her as a prize. Sadiku does not understand. She blames Lakunle for confusing Sidi. Lakunle runs away, calling Sadiku an old hag. Sidi tells Sadiku to go back and tell Baroka she refuses him. She looks at her pictures again. She feels happy about her smooth skin and beauty. Sidi mocks Baroka's old looks. She compares him to a wrinkled lion. Sadiku is shocked and prays to Sango, the Yoruba god. Before leaving, Sadiku says Baroka still invites Sidi for dinner. Sidi laughs and says she knows Baroka's tricks. She has heard that any woman who eats with him becomes his wife or concubine. Sadiku denies it. However, Sidi does not believe her.

Lakunle's Story About Baroka and the Railway: Lakunle calls Baroka a fox and a trickster. He tells how Baroka stopped a railway from being built through the village. Lakunle explains that prisoners came to clear the jungle and set the railway path. Baroka's wrestler informed him. Baroka gave the foreman gifts like money and food. After receiving many gifts, the foreman changed his mind. Then, they moved the railway away. Lakunle says Baroka did it because he loved his simple life. He didn't want modern changes. He also says Baroka wished to protect his wives, animals, and traditions. Lakunle wonders momentarily if he envies Baroka but decides he doesn't. Then he notices Sidi and Sadiku have left. He runs after them, carrying the firewood.

Baroka Learns About Sidi's Refusal: Meanwhile, Baroka is lying in his bedroom. His favorite wife plucks hairs from his armpit. He complains she is too gentle. She promises to do better. But Baroka says she will not have the chance because he plans to marry a new wife soon. She gets angry and pulls his hair hard. Sadiku comes in and bows. Baroka sends his favorite wife

away. Sadiku tells him that Sidi refused to marry him. Baroka is not surprised. He says women always refuse at first. But when Sadiku says Sidi thinks he is too old, Baroka gets angry. He lists all his brave deeds to prove himself still stronger. Sadiku tries to calm him down by tickling his feet.

Baroka's Secret and Sadiku's Shock: Baroka looks at Sidi's pictures, sighs, and throws the magazine away. He says maybe it is good that Sidi refused. Sadiku asks why. Baroka reveals a secret: he lost his manhood last week. He hoped marrying Sidi would bring back his strength. Sadiku is shocked and starts crying. Baroka tells her to keep it secret. He calls her his most loyal wife. Sadiku tickles his feet to comfort him. Baroka says he is only 62 years old. However, he feels he is aging too fast. He remembers how strong his father and grandfather were in their old age. Baroka praises Sadiku's hands. He calls her the queen of his wives. Then he falls asleep while Sadiku continues to tickle his feet.

Night

Sadiku's Secret Celebration:

At night, Sidi stands near the schoolhouse. She was looking at her pictures in the magazine. Meanwhile, Sadiku sneaks into the village center with a bundle. She takes out a small wooden statue of Baroka and laughs at it. Sadiku talks to the statue. She says that women have finally defeated men. She remembers how she defeated Baroka's father when she was younger. Laughing and dancing, Sadiku chants that women will always win. Sidi notices her and walks over. Sadiku says it's a victory for all women. Then Sidi asks her what she means. Sadiku tells her it's a secret and makes Sidi promise not to tell anyone. She whispers that Baroka's manhood is finished. Sidi is shocked but soon laughs loudly. Feeling proud, both Sidi and Sadiku dance happily together.

Sidi's Plan and Lakunle's Warnings: Lakunle comes by and sees them dancing. He calls them crazy because the moon isn't even full. Sadiku warns him to leave or be the sacrifice for their ritual. Lakunle mocks Sadiku and calls her an old hag. Sadiku jokes that Lakunle isn't a real man anymore. Lakunle realizes what she means and looks surprised. Sadiku tells Sidi to ignore Lakunle and keep dancing. But suddenly, Sidi stops. She plans to trick Baroka by pretending to agree to his marriage proposal. She wants to do it just to mock him. Sadiku supports the idea. But Lakunle tries to stop Sidi. He warns that Baroka might harm her. Sidi ignores him and happily goes to Baroka's house. After she leaves, Sadiku teases Lakunle about not paying Sidi's bride price. Lakunle talks about bringing modern changes to the village.

Sidi's Encounter with Baroka: In Baroka's bedroom, Baroka sits with his wrestler. Sidi's voice is heard from outside. Suddenly, she barges into the room without warning. Baroka looks

surprised but greets her. As they talk, Baroka becomes more friendly. Sidi tries to act confident and flirts. However, she gets nervous when Baroka talks sharply. She asks about his marriage proposal. But Baroka pretends not to know anything. Then he admits he did propose. He talks about how he always has to find new wrestlers and new wives. Sidi tries to insult him by describing an old, stingy man. Baroka guesses she is teasing him. But hides his feelings and keeps asking questions.

Baroka's Charm and Sidi's Defeat: While wrestling with his fighter, Baroka praises himself. However, Sidi turns his words into jokes. She says he probably buys fake animal skins. Finally, she insults him by saying he can't father children anymore. Baroka gets angry. He wins the wrestling match in frustration and sits on his bed. He accuses Sidi of gossiping with Sadiku. Sidi says she only heard about the dinner invitation. Baroka says Sadiku misunderstands his compliments. Then, Baroka shows Sidi a machine that makes stamps. He says he plans to use Sidi's image for the village stamps. He also explains he likes modern things, but not how they make everything boring. Sidi listens carefully and silently nods. Baroka pats her head and discusses how old and new ideas should mix. Sidi, now charmed by him, rests her head on his shoulder.

Sidi's Final Decision: Back at the village square, Lakunle and Sadiku wait for Sidi. Lakunle worries about her safety, but Sadiku is calm. Some dancers arrive and perform. Sadiku believes they came after hearing about Baroka's weakness. She takes money from Lakunle to pay them. The dancers act out a funny "dance of virility." It shows Baroka as strong at first, but then weak and silly. Sadiku joins the dance, laughing.

Suddenly, Sidi rushes back, crying loudly. She falls to the ground. Lakunle and Sadiku hurry to her. Sidi tells them not to touch her. Lakunle thinks Baroka has beaten her. So, he says he will take Baroka to court. But Sidi sobs and says that Baroka tricked them all. She reveals that Baroka took her virginity by fooling her. She cries about how he mocked her afterward.

Even though Sidi is no longer a virgin, Lakunle promises to marry her. He feels proud. He thinks he won't have to pay the bride price now. But when Sidi returns, she is dressed for her wedding. Lakunle is confused. Sidi hands him the magazine and says she couldn't destroy it. She invites him to her wedding. She says she would never marry someone weak like him. She calls Lakunle a "beardless boy" and leaves with Sadiku. Sadiku blesses Sidi for fertility, and a dancer teases Lakunle. Lakunle chases the dancer as the scene ends.