

## SWEET SIXTEEN NOVEL DETAILS

- **Author: Bolaji Abdullahi**
- **Genre: Prose-fiction**
- **Number of Pages: 157**
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## SWEET SIXTEEN SUMMARY BY BOLAJI ABDULLAHI

Firstly, the author, Bolaji Abdullahi focuses on the challenging world of teenagers and young adults.

The book, sweet sixteen by Bolaji Abdullahi introduces a 16-year-old girl called **Aliya** as the protagonist. Her father, **Mr Bello** in adoration refers to her as **My First Lady**. Aliya his daughter is always fond of asking him very weird questions, which sometimes sweeps him off his feet. In a particular scene, she said: “Daddy, what do HAK and KOTL mean?” Her father, being an elderly man not familiar with such acronyms, expresses his ignorance. Aliya answered and made her father know that **HAK means Hugs and Kisses while KOTL stands for Kiss On The Lips**.

Her father, who still sees her as his little angel is shocked when she opens up to him that some students in her school were caught having S#X in the basketball court. Mr Bello is still shocked at his innocent angel but she simply replies “Come on Daddy, everyone knows these things”.

**This book is split into seven sections, namely:**

1. The Letter
2. Drive
3. Work
4. Gandhi Test
5. Dating
6. The Stereotype

The novel focuses on a number of conversations between Aliya the 16-year-old girl and Mr. Bello her father on the facts of life. The book editor **Molara Wood** refers to these topics as **everything a teenage girl ever wanted to know but was afraid to ask**. The book also depicts a **parenting manual and a book guide for teenagers**. It shows reasons why information like sex education should be exposed to young adults, rather than being hidden from them.

In the UK for example, most parents do not think sex education should be taught to children in school. They are more comfortable with it being a parent’s choice. Just like the case of Aliya, most teenagers are fully aware of these things being hidden from them. Subsequently, an expert

stated that giving sex education to children doesn't encourage them to engage in sex but teaches them that abstinence is the best way to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Bolaji Abdullahi was a former minister of Youths and Sports, and this knowledge in the field must have given him a foresight on these young adults topics like dating, beauty, bullying, sex education, etc. He communicates his ideas by using Aliya as an ally, an inquisitive teenager and Mr Bello a loving father who is ready to teach his daughter on such sensitive topics rather than shy away. In addition, Aliya must be lucky to have a father who doesn't leave her to wallow in the struggles of the teenagehood.

- [40 HOT Likely Exam Questions from Sweet Sixteen by Bolaji Abdullahi](#)

## 1. Sweet Sixteen (16) Chapter 1 - "THE LETTER" Summary

Aliya is a young girl of 16 years old who before reaching this age has always wanted to be an adult and referred to as one. She is an only child who has a father who is a nurse. She has a close relationship with her father, compared to her mother and she tells him everything. This helps her father to guide her smoothly in the affairs of her life. One of the things she tells him is her first encounter with a boy who claims he likes her.

The boy, Bobo, declares his likeness for her and also gives her a gift to show these feelings. Being the first time she is at the receiving end of such gestures she doesn't know what to feel and her dad is quick to put her through.

The readers can identify with Aliya in this instance as everyone has a first when it comes to a relationship with the opposite sex. Aliya's father's advice to her is also applicable to young adults.

He advises that a recipient of a gift should not feel obliged to do anything because they feel indebted.

Also, gifts don't mean the giver really loves the other person and relationships shouldn't be based on material benefits.

On Aliya's birthdays, since she is 12, she receives birthday cards from her father and on the occasion of her **16th birthday**, he gives her a birthday card, a digital camera and a **16-page letter** detailing her life journey, each page for each year.

## 2. Sweet Sixteen Novel Chapter 2 - "THE DRIVE" Summary

This chapter is a flashback as contained in the 16-page letter. Aliya is 12 years old and just returned home from the boarding house when she goes on a drive with her father.

During the drive, Aliya sees some girls hawking and she envies their freedom. She feels they are

free to go around, meet people and have fun but her father cautions her, explaining that things don't always seem like how they look. Though Aliya is born into a comfortable home, she isn't allowed the freedom of going wherever she likes.

This situation explains the irony of life as no one has it all. Though Aliya is born with a silver spoon, she is not afforded the luxury of going wherever she wants or meet other people randomly. She lives in a high fenced house and also goes to a boarding school.

On the other hand, the girls hawking on the streets may seem free and maybe having fun, in [Mr Bello](#)'s words 'they would not mind trading places' with Aliya in an air-conditioned car. Then, another disparity that exists between rich and poor children is the fact that rich children are naturally expected to do better in life because they have all the comfort in the world.

However, the zeal, willingness, determination and desire to become great which propels some poor children is usually enough to make them eventually great.

During this drive, Mr. Bello seizes the opportunity of the informal atmosphere to give his daughter sex education. A few days earlier, Aliya has seen her menstrual period for the first time and her father deems it fit she needs to learn about this important aspect of a woman's life.

He teaches that menstruation is the body's way of telling a girl that she is biological ready to be a mother, which means if she has unprotected sexual intercourse with a guy she could become pregnant.

It is obvious that this is the first time Mr. Bello is having a discussion about sex with his daughter but surprisingly she already knows so much about the subject. This is an indication that in the present age and century we live in, sex is no longer a hidden issue that is only discussed in hush tones, but it is everywhere. Aliya already learns about sex from the TV, friends, magazines, books and movies.

Aliya already has the basic knowledge of what sex is all about so her father gives her guides concerning sex and other things he refers to as fifth, which can corrupt the beautiful room which is her mind.

He advises her not to watch movies scenes that depict sex and also be watchful about the company she keeps.

### **3. Sweet Sixteen Novel Chapter 3 - "WORK" Summary**

Aliya loves her father and will do anything to please him. She attempts severally to make his tea but she doesn't get it right until her mother puts her through. In this chapter she learns to make his tea perfectly and while he has his tea on a Saturday morning, she has a discussion with him concerning future ambition and other things.

Aliya informs her father she doesn't want to be a doctor anymore but a lawyer. In previous years,

Aliya has wanted to be a pilot, then a musician, a songwriter and afterwards a fashion designer. Now she wants to be a lawyer. This depicts the indecision that comes with choosing a career at a young age. As a child grows, he must have has a lot of ambitions that probably changes every year but according to Mr Bello, it doesn't matter what the choice of career is, what matters is having love and passion for what one does and only then can one be successful.

This leads to a discussion about parents choosing their children's career. This is not always a good idea as such child is only pursuing his parents' dream and not his dream. This, in the end, will only spell doom for both parties and lead to a waste of everyone's time if the child decides to follow his dreams afterwards. Mr Bello is of the opinion that children are educated in order to be able to think for themselves and parents must learn to listen to them.

Afterwards, Mr Bello laments about the negative effects of technology on the young generation. Technology has the most effects on reading habits as most young people prefer visiting social media and surfing the internet than reading books. This has reduced their thinking capability, spelling and language skills.

#### **4. Sweet Sixteen (16) Chapter 4 - "THE GANDHI TEST" Summary**

The Gandhi Test is gotten from the words of Mahatma Gandhi, an Indian who fights for the independence of his country from Great Britain.

The test is that *"you can tell that what you are doing is good or bad if you want other people to know about it or not"*. This statement explains how a person can make morally right decisions.

If a person is doing something and he wouldn't mind if other people know about it then what the person is doing is right but if such person doesn't want other people to know about what he is doing, then such action is most likely wrong.

However, this doesn't apply to some people who Mr. Bello refers to as animals. This kind of people do not have a sense of shame as they do anything, whether right or wrong, without minding what others would think about them.

Mr. Bello further explains to his daughter that before she makes decisions she should always be mindful that people are watching.

#### **5. Sweet Sixteen (16) Chapter 5 - "DATING"**

Aliya, now 16 years old, considers herself old enough to be in a relationship with a guy. She broaches the issue with her dad.

Her father gives her a step by step explanation about what having a boyfriend entails. He explains that what most young people have towards the opposite sex is not love but infatuation which is often short-lived.

Also, matters of the heart is challenging even adults, thus young adults should tread softly when it comes to relationships because it may end up distracting them from their studies and also affect other areas of their lives. Aliya then reflects on the likeness she has for Bobo, how bad she feels when he leaves for Ireland and how horribly jealous she feels when she sees him with another girl.

This makes her understand all her father is talking about considering how a wrong relationship can derail a person's life.

Mr. Bello further counsels his child that it is best to wait for the right time before taking some steps in life. For most of the good things in life and luxuries, the price one is required to pay is the time one has to wait and in the end, it is always worth the wait. Aliya then tells her father about two students caught having sex in school who are caught by the school security.

They are suspended indefinitely from school and Aliya explains how she feels embarrassed for the girl.

### **6. Sweet Sixteen (16) Chapter 6 - "STEREOTYPE" Summary**

Boko Haram, the terrorist sect has just bombed a local market and the Bello family watches this news on the TV. Everyone expresses displeasure for the evil act of these terrorists and condemns them.

During this, Aliya asks her dad if it is true that all Muslims will go to hell, because Muslims do not believe in Jesus and they like to kill people.

Mr. Bello calmly answers his daughter by explaining that it is wrong to judge or criticize other people's belief or faith because everyone is entitled to his or her faith. He also explains the beauty of the world because of the diversity in religion, people, religion, culture, tribe and colour. However, a set of ideas that people have about what someone or something is, especially an idea that is wrong, is known as stereotype.

A stereotype is a constant activity in our society, as Aliya, herself, is also stereotypical not long after, in this chapter. It is wrong to have misconceptions or discriminating towards people, especially in instances where people are generally condemned for the misdeeds of few people.

Also, stereoscopic people are not usually bad persons but are victims of bad thinking and circumstances. Thus, they shouldn't be condemned because of their attitude but, rather corrected.

### **7. Sweet Sixteen (16) Chapter 7 - "BEAUTY"**

After listening to a story about a man who nursed his torturer back to health instead of leaving him to die, Aliya wonders how she can ever forgive those who have wronged her.

She talks to her dad about how she has been feeling ugly and not have enough self-esteem

concerning her shape and physique after one of her teachers and another student, Bunmi who continuously call her FAT and picks on her. This is known as body shaming, as they make negative comments about her weight or size.

Her father condemns this act but explains to her how to develop enough self-esteem such that people's words don't hurt her and nobody can hurt her without permission.

He teaches her that what she feels about herself is more important than how other people make her feel and she should have confidence in how she looks.

Moreover, beauty is neither fat or slim but however one looks is beautiful, one just has to be confident about it.

Beauty is also never enough but having a good character is best. Mr Bello ends the conversation with a story which teaches that he has bestowed his intelligence and guidance to his daughter, and it is her responsibility to do the same for her children too.

### **THE END OF SWEET SIXTEEN NOVEL SUMMARY PDF!!!**

In conclusion, a connection is drawn between fact and fiction making it possible for lessons to be learnt from the book Sweet Sixteen.

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