



Text for **Section A**, an extract from *Jummy at the River School* by Sabine Adayinka

### Part 1

I woke up startled by the shriek of the cockerel<sup>1</sup> from the backyard.

Someone must have disturbed it. It was the laziest cockerel you could ever meet.

A tiny pebble hit one of the windowpanes.

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I dragged myself from my bed, my khaki uniform crumpled from my afternoon nap, and got to my bedroom window just in time to see Owolabi disappear from view. He must have disturbed the cockerel again because it shrieked more fearfully than before.

I rolled my eyes. Owolabi lived in the flat above mine and was the most annoying boy – no, scratch that – *person* I had ever met. I was sure Caro's cockerel agreed with me.

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Caro! That was when I remembered my problem. I needed to find my best friend fast. She would help me out of this trouble I was in.

I shuffled into my brown school shoes, stepping on the backs as usual, and peeped through the bead curtains that separated our bedrooms from the living room. Mummy was seated at the dining table, picking rice. First, she smoothed the rice over on the tray with the back of her hand, then she picked out the undesirable grains and put them in a tiny bowl. She was humming that tune that meant she was a million miles away.

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I crept past the dining room and into the kitchen. Made it!

'Hey, Jumoke!'

I jumped out of my skin.

'Why haven't you changed or eaten since you came back from school, why?'

Joy, Mummy's helper, was in the kitchen and was judging the ink marks on my uniform with her disapproving side-eye as she picked the beans that would go with the rice.

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### Part 2

'I cannot eat and I cannot even think about changing my clothes.' I held out my hands towards her. 'I am in hot soup!'

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'For someone so small, you get into a lot of trouble. What have you done this

time?’

‘Nothing!’ I snapped, and left our flat at top speed. The mosquito<sup>2</sup>-net door shook with just the right amount of gusto.

‘For someone so small, my foot! What does my size have to do with anything?’ I muttered angrily to myself. I had been going to tell Joy about my predicament<sup>3</sup>, but not anymore! I was so fed up of being treated like a small girl at home. When were they going to realize that I was eleven already and no longer a baby? Besides, Joy was not in my school: how would she know if other people got into trouble more than me? 35 40

I could not wait to get to boarding school<sup>4</sup>. I tried to picture myself in the River School, the best secondary school for girls in Southern Nigeria. I had taken the entry exams and everyone who knew us was waiting to see if I would make it in. Baba and Mummy would be so proud if I did. I had worked hard for the first time in my life but I wasn’t sure if I had done enough. 45

I could not wait to be rid of primary school with all its silly problems.

### Glossary

<sup>1</sup>cockerel: a young male chicken

<sup>2</sup>mosquito: a flying insect that bites people and animals

<sup>3</sup>predicament: problem

<sup>4</sup>boarding school: a school where students live and study

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