**Story Breakdown**

**MAIN PLOT**

**Hassan’s plot**

Hassan is a 28-year-old young successful fish trader at the main market, Kasuwan Talle in Garin Kiryah. His story is one of the amazing rags to riches trope, but it is also undeniable that he was resilient, extremely focused, hardworking, creative and brilliant, with character assets that also contributed to his success in his business.

Hassan was trafficked to the big city of Garin Kiryah from their high-brow suburb of Zinare when they were little. While scavenging the streets, he meets a certain philanthropist and businessman Alhaji Danladi, respected as a local fish and grains merchant who took in the 10-year-old street urchin, Hassan, along with some other orphans and abandoned children (Marayu) to look after. He has uplifted many children in the community over the years. He houses, educates, and feeds the young boys and puts them to learn a trade at any one of his enterprises after school according to their preferences. Hassan took to the fish breeding and sales business like a second skin and was immediately noticeable above his colleagues, thus winning the praise, trust, and love of his benefactor. He also took his schooling seriously, and in 11 years of living with Alhaji Danladi, he had completed primary and secondary schools even though he started late at the age of 10, unlike his other colleagues and the Danladi heir, Adamu, who seemed totally uninterested in schooling to his father’s disappointment.

Hassan, due to his diligence and honesty, had become more like a son to Alhaji Danladi, a poster boy for all things excellent, responsible, and trustworthy. The daily high praise and comparison to the detriment of everyone else led to jealousy amongst some of the other boys and resentment in the man’s real son, Adamu. The resentment got to its peak when Alhaji Danladi handed over to Hassan the keys to his safe in trust. He often gives the profits from his business to Hassan to keep in a safe. On a certain day, some of the boys conspired with Adamu to frame Hassan for fraud related to Alhaji Danladi’s business. They made a copy of the key to Alhaji Danladi’s safe and stole the money in it, causing Alhaji Danladi to have Hassan arrested and detained for a time in prison on an alleged stealing accusation. In the end, he relented and bailed Hassan, but his disappointment was so great that he sent him away, which also halted his education and vocational training at Alhaji’s fish farm and processing factory. Prior to this incident, Hassan had been doing so well and had great plans for his future. He had been so close to Alhaji that many mistook him for his heir, so much so that a wealthy businessman was happy to wed his daughter, Firdaus, to him, and they had gotten engaged under Alhaji’s sponsorship. Losing his place in Alhaji’s household and business, his good reputation, and his time spent in jail almost broke his spirit. This challenging period caused a downward spiral in his life, as he loses his home and even the love of his life, Firdaus, who abandoned him in jail and cut him off without giving him a chance to explain his side of things. What hurt him the most was that Firdaus decided he was not good enough or up to her standard after discovering that he was unrelated to Alhaji. He heard from his friend Nasir that she was engaged to be married to a senator based in Abuja and had left the community for Abuja.

After his release and subsequent eviction from Alhaji’s life, home and business, Hassan abandons his pursuit of higher education and instead began working in the market as a general handyman. Some of the fish wholesalers he had known from his years with Alhaji were wary of doing any business with him because of the rumours about the reason for his fallout with his principal, but others let him perform chores for them for a stipend. Soon enough, he was able to show people some of his good character and earn their trust and respect. He started selling broken dry fish—sweepings to the very poor in small packs and progressed to buying fresh fish to smoke and sell until soon he could afford to rent a shop in the market. So, from this setback and, through his hard work and enterprising nature, he has now become a successful fish seller in his own right. Due to his upbringing and regardless of how it ended, Hassan became passionate about helping orphaned children. As a result of his kindness, he is very well respected in his community. But despite his positive outlook, he is burdened by the loss of his paternal relationship with Alhaji Danladi and the loss of Firdaus. While Hassan is successful in business and philanthropy, he remains uninterested in relationships, whether for friendship or love.

The only person he trusts is a man called Nasir, who he knew from childhood as they were both struggling to survive on the street before they were adopted and taken off the street by Alhaji Danladi. Nasir, a few years older than Hassan, is someone who Hassan also considers a friend turned brother. This same friend was the one who sheltered Hassan when Alhaji Danladi threw him out of his house. While he was living with Nasir, he used to be entertained by Nasir’s squeamishness when it came to blood and guts. One day, Nasir shared a brainwave of cleaning and packaging fish for consumers’ easy use. This little idea turned out to be a goldmine, as it evolved into Hassan selling his packaged fish to customers across the country. As a result, Hassan loves and respects Nasir and treasures his advice on both personal and business matters.

Meanwhile, Firdaus who had been away for 5 years, moves back into town after her last relationship turned sour. The prospective groom had not taken it well and asked her to return all his gifts and money. She is not in a good place, financially or mentally. She finds out about Hassan’s change in means and the fact that he remains unmarried through an old friend, Lami, who happens to be a Kayanmata seller (Umar’s wife/purveyor of gossip). Firdaus concludes that Hassan must still be in love with her; otherwise, why has he remained unmarried? She intends to become Mrs. Hassan before the year runs out (the final settlement).

Meanwhile, Aisha, the new CHEW at the adjacent Primary Health Clinic, has arrived and lets everyone know she is serious about her job. When she meets Hassan at the market, fireworks explode, an experience they each feel is significant but, at first, misunderstand. Hassan immediately sees her as a threat, he also feels something he hadn’t felt in a long time: attraction, and he doesn’t mind her disability. Though he didn’t know this then, Aisha also felt the same way. They eventually become friends once Hassan realises that Aisha is not trying to destroy the market people's businesses and is only interested in ensuring they and their customers are healthy. His budding relationship with Aisha, however, has to contend with the antics of his jealous ex-lover, Firdausi.

While all this is going on, Hassan is talked into running for the office of the market leader. However, this angers his former mentor, Alhaji Danladi, who still believes that he is a thief and a fraud who used his stolen funds to set up his business and become rich and is now trying to become even more powerful. He entreats his son, Adamu, to run against Hassan.

A dirty political campaign follows. All manners of sabotage by various enemies ensue, and Hassan must find his resilient character to stand against those who plot to take him down a second time.

Eventually, it comes out that Hassan was framed. Alhaji Danladi and Hassan reconcile, and he goes on to support his political aspiration and denounce those who wickedly framed Hassan, including his own son, Adamu.

Also, Firdaus’ numerous antics to win Hassan over fails when the Boka she approached gave her a potion that worked against her, leaving Hassan and Aisha married at the end of it all.

**SUBPLOT 1**

**Aisha’s plot (Aisha’s family should be played in comedic form as much as possible. Her character won’t be portrayed as a victim but rather as a very witty and strong person. Tangled loyalties and family feuds often create tensions between Aisha and her stepmother and half-brother.**

Aisha is the new Community Health Extension Worker (CHEW) at the PHC clinic near the Kasuwan Talle market. She has worked very hard to get to this stage of her career and has overcome multiple obstacles in her journey.

Some of these obstacles include a physical disability caused by a polio infection as a toddler (she has a slight limp), something her stepmother Khadijah constantly uses to taunt her. Unlike her stepmother, Aminu Aisha’s father, who is a tailor in the community, is very fond of her and constantly teases her over how much she reminds him of her late mother, his first wife. This of course never goes down well with Khadijah, his second wife. Aminu had promised Aisha’s mother -who died when Aisha was barely a year old due to a food-borne disease that was only detected after it was too late - that he would do everything to make his daughter happy in life. He had to marry Khadijah to help in raising his daughter. Without really knowing the love of a mother, Aisha grew up to be a very intelligent young girl who excelled in her education. She wanted to be a doctor to help people in her community who couldn’t afford hospital bills.

Seeing how intelligent his daughter was, spurred Aminu to do all he could to support her in her quest to finish her schooling, though he struggled with the funds to see her through school. Against the constant tantrums from Khadijah to marry Aisha off to any man that shows interest in her rather than wasting the money he does not have on her education, Aminu did all he could to support Aisha through secondary school. As a result of Aisha’s intelligence, she won a scholarship which further helped her on her educational journey. She ended up with a diploma in Community Health Technology. She got a job in the Health Department, and was eventually promoted to the post of senior community health officer, and posted to Kasuwan Talle in Garin Kirya, where she focused her efforts on improving the hygiene and food standards in the market and the town generally.

Despite these achievements, she barely gets the support of her entire family. Only Her father Aminu and her younger brother’s wife Jamila show her any form of love or respect. Her stepmother Khadijah, half-brother Ibrahim and half-sister Zara constantly make her life miserable. Khadijah feels Aminu doesn’t support her children and only praises Aisha. She refuses to have anything to do with her and feels very entitled to Aisha’s money which she provides for the family's upkeep. She also refuses to address Aisha directly, referring to her as 'that girl.

Aisha is also plagued by her shiftless younger stepbrother Ibrahim, who would not take responsibility for his wife and 3 kids, and his inability to live within his means. In short, she only gets respect from him whenever he wants money. Ibrahim works as a truck pusher (Dandoko) in Kasuwan Talle, and he barely brings in any money but stories about how people do not use truck pushers anymore and that if only his father Aminu had invested all the money he spent on Aisha’s education on setting up a business for him, he would have been the richest man in the community. Since Ibrahim works in the market, he usually is the one responsible for purchasing the groceries for the family- something which he is also bad at. Ibrahim would wait till the evening and purchase poor quality food at cheap prices for the family just so he can save some money for himself due to his irresponsible nature towards money and, according to him, his pressing basic family needs. Aisha decides to stop taking him seriously and begins to teach him a few lessons in a humorous way.

On a positive note, she meets Hassan, a local fish magnate. At first, they don’t get along. She is forever questioning the sanitation or safety behaviours of vendors in the market. Hassan confronts her a lot over her supposed ‘high-handedness’ on behalf of his fellow market people. Over the course of their disagreements, they start to like each other and eventually start a relationship with a view to getting married.

Even then, things are not easy for Aisha. Her brother threatens this new relationship with his shifty behaviour. As if that was not bad enough, Hassan’s former love interest, Firdaus re-enters Hassan’s life, and she is determined to win the man she once rejected back by any means necessary. These efforts take a sinister and frightening turn and bring extra chaos to Aisha’s life. Firdaus sees Aisha as a love rival, even though the said rivalry is extremely one-sided. Despite this fact, Firdaus becomes unhinged and resorts to diabolical means ‘to get what Firdaus wants.’ These infernal methods lead to a sudden and mysterious illness for Aisha.

Aisha has overcome so many obstacles to get to where she is; is this where her luck runs out? Will evil overcome good?

**SUBPLOT 2**

**Umar and Adamu’s story**

Umar and Adamu have been friends for a long time. They grew up together in Alhaji’s house. Although Adamu has always been the dominant person in the friendship, he is rash and often comes to Umar for help and advice even though Umar is a few years younger. Their friendship always seemed like it was going to last forever because Umar’s personality was easygoing, and he is often patient in the face of Adamu’s sometimes irrational behaviour. They were each other’s confidants. Umar is a textile merchant and often goes to the big city to buy *Shedda.* Adamu, *on the other hand,* is a well-known meat seller in the market. Despite Adamu’s father, Alhaji Danladi, being a renowned fish seller, Adamu was adamant about charting his own path away from his father’s legacy. In reality, Adamu disliked his father’s philanthropy and harboured jealousy about the relationship his father had with some of his boys (Hassan). He has a superiority complex which makes him not want to engage in the same business as the *Marayu(orphans)*.

Adamu often makes spontaneous decisions compared to Umar’s more calm approach to nature. Adamu also complains about his younger wife, Halima, a lot. Halima, who is outspoken, confident, and enterprising, often tells Adamu exactly what she thinks, a reality that constantly rubs him off the wrong way. For instance, of his two wives, she is the only one always requesting to be allowed to go to the market to shop for groceries and constantly harangues him a lot about the quality of food he buys for the home. It is either she complains that he has been cheated or he picked the worst items on the market stalls because he loves to penny-pinch. He constantly compares her to his first wife, who he describes as more homely and representative of what a wife should be and often threatens to divorce her.

Halima tells Adamu that she wants to earn some money to support the family and will like to start a milling business at the market. She has heard that it is very profitable and has even found the ideal spot in the market where she can install the machine. He warns her not to because the women who sell in the market are single women or divorcees and widows, and she doesn’t fall under any of those categories. He also thinks it is not a respectable business for his wife due to his status in the market. Halima doesn’t listen and keeps bringing up the matter whenever she sees an opportunity. Adamu returns home one day, tired and upset about some market issues, and Halima again brings up the milling business issue again. She impresses on him to allow her to start the business because there was an available shop in a choice location. This angers Adamu so much that his threats of divorce stop being just threats, and in a fit of anger, he pronounces *na sake ki* three times and divorces her. In the cold light of morning, he realises that he made an error and goes to his friend, Umar, for help. Because the divorce is final, Adamu knows that Halima cannot return to his house without marrying another man and being divorced by him. In desperation, he asks Umar to marry her. Umar scolds him for his rashness but eventually reluctantly agrees to marry Halima as his second wife.

The wedding between Umar and Halima takes place without her being the wiser about their arrangement. Umar, having heard so many stories about Halima from Adamu, is prepared for the worst. To his surprise, the reality turns out to be the complete opposite. Her character attributes that Adamu found unbearable were seen as positive by him. Whereas Adamu thought she was too forward and rude, he found her forthrightness and business acumen helpful. She got him to start an online business page which increased his customer base and also got along well with his other wife, Lami, who regularly gets advice on business from Halima. He didn’t mind her going to shop as Lami often does the grocery shopping for the home, and he had no objections to it. In fact, there was an incident when he bought contaminated meat from the market one time when Adamu, his regular vendor, had sold out his meat. His entire family fell ill from eating contaminated food, which cost him a fortune in medical bills, not to mention the significant business loss during that period due to his inability to go to work. Lami had blamed their illness on the fact that he often shops late at night on his way from work, sends a Marayu to make the purchase or is often in too much of a hurry and so unable to properly examine what he buys at the market for their consumption. He had since learned to allow his wife to handle market purchases as she has more time on her hands to assess the quality of foodstuff she wants to buy at the market.

At the end of the agreed period between Adamu and Umar, Umar, who realised that she had been a valuable addition to his household, found that he was unwilling to divorce Halima. The tension between the two friends ramps up as Adamu reminds him of the agreement, which Umar always fails to uphold for some flaky reason or the other. Things eventually escalate into outright conflict and enmity that sees the two friends going to the most senior religious leader in the community, arguing the legitimacy of the divorce.

Can Kasuwan Talle survive the two former friends now turned enemies? Will the new love between Umar and Halima survive the truth that she was traded between the two friends?