

WHEREVER YOU MAY BE, ALL WILL BE FINE IN THE END

A lot of music is connected to this journey. Music I listened to during my preparation, but also on the spot. Memories of moments, people, and feelings. And upon my return. At home in Rotterdam, while writing this book. I hope I can share with you the familiarity: the enthusiasm of the preparation, the sound of Lagos, the simplicity of friendship, the happiness in the little things, the bustle in the club, memories of meeting special people, the conversation of love, observing the streets, the unexpected, and the homesickness. But also that one song, which I'll keep to myself for the moment...

Follow the 'SAWA' playlist and experience Sawa musically via Spotify.  
From beginning to end, this is my journey.

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# SAWA

Pam Yimbilanuni Kidimbu

A short stories, non-fiction novel



## Preface

Sometimes, travel is just an excuse to find yourself. Or at least, that's what you hope when you decide to travel alone. In the Netherlands, my life had become a mosaic of loss and grief; beautiful in places, but cracked beyond repair. One morning, I woke up and realized I couldn't breathe under the weight of it anymore. So I packed my bags, stuffed my doubts between my clothes, and left with a head full of questions and a heart that wasn't sure it still knew how to feel. What followed wasn't just a journey through countries and cities. It was a collection of fleeting moments, strangers who became mirrors, and connections that burned bright enough to turn my world inside out.

And just when I thought I'd finally found balance, I fell. Hard.

A crash, a bruise, a sting that brought me back to myself. When I opened my eyes, there was quiet again. Love in all its shapes: soft, complicated, unreachable, and just a little bit crazy. I didn't know it then, but the chaos waiting for me in Nigeria would change everything.

## **Pam's travel dictionary**

**Migration officier** - A man who works at customs and arranges visas for money without anyone knowing. He's exempt from scamming you because... no one knows..

**Wahala** - Nigerian word for: problems.

**Yoruba** - One of the largest ethnic groups/tribes in Nigeria.

**Delusional** - When you're convinced of your own fairy tale and fantasy. Also called a dream world. Necessary for survival.

**All you need is love** - Dutch television program about foreign romances. Shown several times a year on Dutch television, but best viewed at Christmas.

**Robert ter Brink** - Host of "All You Need Is Love." It feels like he is the host for 100 years already. Always says the same things and has the same conversations with people on the show.

**Sukkel voor de liefde** - Song by 'The Opposites' (Dutch rap duo but now split up) Translation is: Loser for love.

**Yahooboy** - Slang for young Nigerian men who owe their wealth to internet fraud. Or who like to pretend they do. Often recognizable by expensive cars, designer clothes, and bottles of liquor in the nightclub. They are surrounded by women. They drive the Nigerian economy. Negative contact area (big red flag!) They are not exempt from scamming you.

**Shayo24NG** - A supermarket in Lagos, Nigeria.

**Ikoyi** - The most affluent neighborhood in Lagos, Nigeria. Nigerian designer shops are located here.

**Lekki Phase 1/2/3** - Residential area in Lagos, Nigeria. The lower the number, the more expensive the housing.

**Banana Island** - The most prestigious piece of land in Lagos, Nigeria. Million-dollar mansions and more G-wagons than people. There's nothing else to do besides watching big houses. Boring place to be.

**Generator** - A noisy machine that provides power during a power outage. It works hard and must constantly supply power to expensive houses, apartments, and hotels.

**J.Martins** - A Nigerian artist. Has no hits independently, but has with other artists like P-square and their hit song 'No Easy E.'

**Swallow** - Fufu (African food made from water and cornmeal)

**Stroopwafel** - Dutch cookie with caramel. Popular with people living outside the Netherlands.

**Bàtá mi á dún ko ko kà** - Traditional Nigerian children's song. ("Ko Ko Ka" imitates the sound of heels on the floor, which symbolizes prosperity and success)

**Na koya na Kenya na ya ko zwa yo** - Lyrics from the song 'Nakei Nairobi' by Mbilia Bel.

**Hearth** - Misspelling of the English word 'heart', written in a sort of romantic poem.

**Pidgin** - Nigerian English.





*Amid a world of chaos – I finally found my peace in you*