



# Plot

## Initiating incident

The initiating incident is not completely clear because the conflict (the riot) has already begun when the story starts. However, one could argue that the initiating incident is when the woman stops Chika from running in a certain direction and leads her into the store, because that is what started the whole interaction between the two women.

## Rising Action

Due to the fact that the majority of the story is simply back and forth conversation between Chika and the woman, practically any part of the story before Chika leaves the store could be considered the rising action.

1. Chika and the woman greet each other and set themselves up to sit there, expecting the riot to go on for a while. They begin to tell each other some background information about themselves.
2. Chika helps the woman with her limited knowledge from medical school.
3. The woman prays and Chika listens.

## Climax

Chika leaves the store and exits to the outside. This could be thought of as the climax because both the readers and the characters have been anticipating whatever happens when they leave the store.

## Falling Action

Chika walks outside and sees the results of the riot, including a burned body. She feels a pain in her leg and goes back to the store. The readers learn that later, she will see more dead bodies and hear a generalized report of the conflict on the radio.

## Conclusion

The woman helps Chika with her wound, and they say goodbye kindly to each other. The readers learn that Nnedi, Chika's sister, dies in the riot.



# Literary Devices

## Irony

1. Situational Irony: Two women help each other and what is ironic is that the thing that they need help with derives from a conflict between groups that each of them came from.
2. Dramatic Irony: The woman tells Chika to greet her sister, and neither of them know that her sister is dead.

## Foreshadowing

When Chika holds a photo of her and Nnedi, the narrator tells the readers that she will never find her sister, which leads us to believe that she is dead or will die in the riots.



## Symbolism

1. The Riot can be a symbol of any conflict over which some people do not have control.
2. Anything with which the two women helped each other could be seen as a symbol for peace or truce. The scarf that the woman gives Chika at the end of the story is an example of that.

## In Media Res

The author uses this technique by beginning the story in the middle of the riot with no exposition or introduction. The reader is thrown into the action in the first sentence when the two women frantically climb through the store window.

## Flash Forward

The timeline in this book is very unusual as it skips forward and back in time on multiple occasions. One time that the author used the flash forward technique was when Chika is walking outside in the present, and the readers learn that later (in the future), she and her aunt will be driving outside and hearing about the conflict on the radio.

# Setting

## Emotional Setting

One word to describe the emotional setting is "chaotic" because the whole story is based on a violent riot which neither of the women know a lot about. Another word is "suspenseful" because both women are fairly constantly on edge, wondering if something bad will happen to them. Contrarily, "friendly" could be another word to describe the setting because although there is chaos around them, the two women help each other both physically and emotionally.



## Physical Setting

The physical setting is in Nigeria in the middle of a riot, and more specifically, in a small, random store on the street. There is no given date in the story, but when the book was written, the Igbo-Hausa conflict had been going on for nearly 50 years, so one can infer that the story takes place sometime from the 1960's to 2009, the year it was written.



# Characterization

## Chika: Protagonist

Both Chika and the woman could be protagonists, but because the readers hear more about Chika's thoughts, she is considered the real main character. She is round because the readers see many sides to her character, such as that fact that she studies medicine, she is Igbo Christian, she has connections in America, she does not have a lot of political knowledge, and more. It is difficult to know whether she is static or dynamic because it is not clear what she thought at the beginning of the story. However, it is possible that she had preconceived ideas about Hausa Muslims because of the conflict, and that she changed her mindset after having been helped by the woman. One instance that the author used direct characterization for Chika was when she was described as having a light complexion. The author used indirect characterization it said that Chika had a Burberry bag, which led the readers to infer that Chika was fairly wealthy or had connections with wealthy people.



## The Rioters: Antagonist

Although the rioters themselves do not appear often throughout the book, they are the antagonist, because they are what cause the principal conflict in the story and are certainly the force against the protagonist. They are both static and flat because they do not change throughout the story and readers do not see enough of them to know of multiple sides. However, one could assume that because this "character" includes multiple people, there is a variety of types of personalities involved. Because the author does not spend a lot of time bringing the readers' attention to the rioters themselves, there is not much direct characterization, but an example of indirect characterization is when someone says "They have killed a man" because it gives the information that at least some of the rioters are extremely violent without explicitly stating it.

# Literary Lens

## Biographical Lens

The biographical lens is the most appropriate stance through which one can view this short story. Any story with characters and a timeline can be put into the psychological lens, so that could also be an option, but the biographical lens in this case is more interesting than that of other stories. Firstly, not only did Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the author of this story, grow up in Nigeria, but she was also raised in an Igbo family, which could have given her insight into or experience with the conflicts that arose. She has also expressed her views on them, stating that she thinks Muslim and Christian leaders should preach messages of peace, rather than continuing the tension. She also married a Nigerian doctor, which could have had something to do with the fact that Chika is a Nigerian medical student, but that could be a stretch. Whether or not it is true, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's life certainly influenced the book, which makes the biographical lens important.



# Others

## Type of Ending

The type of ending is expository sad, principally because it is found out that Nnedi is dead. It could be happy because the riot is over and the two women had a generally pleasant end to their interaction, or unresolved because readers do not know any details about what happens to either of the women, but expository sad has the most support.

## Theme

The theme of the story is that Despite all the conflicts and differences in the world, everyone is the same in that everyone is human.

## Point of View

The point of view is third person limited omniscient because readers are explicitly informed of most of Chikas thoughts, but not many of her feelings.

