



In Africa's Honor: Dick Tiger versus Gene Fullmer III-A Blast from Nigeria's Glorious Past

Justina Ihetu

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In the era of the American Civil Rights Movement, and barely three years after Africa's most populous nation celebrated her independence from colonial rule, the Nigerian government brought her full weight to bear in a world championship title bout-the first ever in Black Africa. The Dick Tiger vs. Gene Fullmer III fight, held in Liberty Stadium in Ibadan, Nigeria, on August 10, 1963, was a forerunner for all the big fights in the African continent. Westerners didn't believe that a newly independent African nation could dare muster the audacity, or financial backbone, to stage a world championship event. In Africa's Honor chronicles this groundbreaking fight while narrating the details of Richard (Dick Tiger) Ihetu's life in and out of the boxing ring. Presented as a play by Justina Ihetu, Dick Tiger's daughter, and complete with archival photos, this drama showcases the patriotism and heroism of a boxer who had an inauspicious beginning. Ihetu provides insight into the wheeling and dealing behind the match, and she humanizes the principle players-laying bare their innermost thoughts and anxieties to help form a deeper understanding of the character, and circumstances that reveal Africa's promise, of unity, dignity, and honor.

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