

IF NA ME eh?! (If I were Jesus)

My dear Sisters,

It is the first day of Spring Break for the Students in my School District but it is a Teacher Workday for me so here I am at work with my Grades all turned in, my lessons all planned and no students to teach! What a wonderful state of affairs for someone whose favorite pastimes are Listening to music, Reading and Writing! Well I have my iHome playing Praise and Worship music from my iPod, so that takes care of the music part. (Ah no be fast de whole lent season so let me at least try a Méringué-less Good Friday!) As far as the reading part's concerned, I have just finished re-reading the Holy Thursday (Last Supper & Garden of Gethsemane) and Good Friday (Pontius Pilate & Golgotha) parts of the Bible I keep here in my classroom. By the way, the Bible is in French so I am able to tell all who question its presence in a PUBLIC SCHOOL that it is a "Content-Related Teaching Resource"! Eh oui! Passé Composé, Imparfait, and Subjonctif dem flop inside!!! Why do I even bring this up? Because I think the French narrative somehow does a better job bringing out the incredible unfairness, blatant injustice and cruelty with which Jesus was treated and that is a good thing since it has sparked some fresh indignation in me, and caused me to consider what I would have done had I been in Jesus' shoes!

First of all, y'all would have had to join the Orthodox Jews who are still waiting for their own Messiah to land because, this me so, even if ah be 'gree for cam down for dis grong from Heaven, once Mary borned me and I "heard" the stench of that stable in Bethlehem, I would have walkie-talkied God right from the Manger and said "MISSION ABORTED"!! "EGBE OUT!!" Yep! The Ascension would have occurred there and then, instead of 33 years later. Poor Joe and Mary dem for tanap for dey spellbound, mop open, and stupefied, as they watched me take off, (as in levitate), still wrapped in my swaddling clothes!

Well, maybe I would have tied heart and made it to the Last Supper, but let me just tell you that Leonardo Da Vinci's painting of that event would have been missing one character, namely JUDAS! Why? I know they did not sell chain-saws back then but there were surely "liquidation" cutlasses there in Bethany Market that I could have used, if not to finish him off (and save him the trouble of later hanging himself), at least to prevent him from even setting foot in that Upper Room. Letting someone you know has sold you for 30 pieces of silver anywhere near you is already incredible! To let him dip his hand in the same pan sesse planti with you is a whole other matter oh!!!!

But let's say I made it to Gethsemane; If I took my three "inties" (Peter, James & John) aside and said "ah beg wuna pray oh; na die dis dey cam" and I came back and found them sleeping THE FIRST TIME, the arrest would have happened sooner and there would have been no second and third awakening recorded anywhere because de halla wey ah for halla dem would have kept them awake by force oh!

Then, when the guards finally arrived for the arrest, I wouldn't have waited for Peter to ask if he could use his sword! I myself would have "cha-ed position" like a true Ninja Warrior and bellowed out one of those piercing martial arts cries that would have completely confused that Judas and made those guards "piss for trossis"! The movie of the whole incident would still have been playing in a movie theater near you to this day!!

Now, let's talk about Malchus, the soldier whose ear Peter sliced off like smoked turkey at the Deli. He is the just the lad I would have loved to have on my team back in my Primary School "Dodging" days! Don't be fooled, y'all! Forward Peter was clearly aiming for his neck when he lunged at "Malchie". (Who gets a whole sword and then targets just his adversary's EAR - of all places??!!) I am convinced that the reason Malchus lost only his ear is because he "dodged"! (Between him and George W. Bush who ducked when that Iranian journalist's shoe came flying at him, ah no know who pass e friend for "dodging"!)

Let me get back on track here! Even if things turned out the way they did and ah be see Malchus e ear for ground; why ah go pick'am, gum'am back instead of just saying "EE SWEET oh! Ah SUGAR NGONGOLI!"?!

As for all that spitting, slapping, flogging, "crown-of-thorns-ing", there would have been none of that y'all! Carry a 200 pound cross up a steep hill to be crucified say weti??! Ah neva finish recover (as in scarred for life) from carrying a mere iron bucket up Likomba hill, na Calvary ah go cam tackle because weti?! Puh-lease!!!

And if I still wound up on that cross, the narrative would have been so-oo-oo different, I can assure you, because 3 of the 7 utterances JESUS made on that cross would have been conspicuously absent. Here they are:

- **"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"**: NO way José! For me, it would have been more like: "Papa show dem pepper; no leff no one"!!
- **"Truly I say to you; today you will be with me in Paradise"**: Remember, Jesus said this in response to the thief hanging by his side who repented and said: "Remember me when you come into your kingdom". Now, if I go by Mark's gospel which seems to indicate that BOTH "tiff men" insulted Jesus at first before one of them repented, then of course my response would have been: "Nah now you know me? No be you be first dey cosh me"? And if I go by the other accounts, then the direct response would have been: "NICE TRY BUDDY! Think you could spend your whole life "tiffing" and then repent now for lass minute?! Ah beg, Satan! Cam carry e go!
- **"Woman behold thy son; son behold thy mother"**: Please don't get me wrong! I love my mother, and this is something I might have said if I was just dying away peacefully and gracefully on a hospital bed in an air conditioned room in CEDARS-SINAI Medical Center or JOHNS HOPKINS Hospital; NOT nailed to a cross out in the scorching sun for hours, barely able to breathe, with the people I healed and fed mocking me! As I said before, I love my mother but I can assure you that when I lay squirming and wincing in pain in CHU and LAQUINTINIE (just for "common" borning oh!), I really did not care if she had a waist slip to wear or if she had had pap to drink that morning!! Lie no sweet!

I would definitely have said **"I THIRST"**, and ah for surely cry me hungry too yaah! The difference is that my "I thirst" would have been a complaint, not an expression of the discomfort and agony that the human side of Jesus was struggling to manage. I also would not have just stayed quiet and watched those soldiers gamble over my clothes wey ah never even cover eye finish without at least saying: "Wuna go see am"! COME ON NOW! And if I had been taunted to "Come down from the cross" when, as was the case with Jesus, I was

perfectly capable of doing so, I would have FLOWN off that stick and delivered a few kung-fu kicks in the faces of those who had been jeering in the process.

PRAISE GOD it wasn't me – or you on that cross because, even if we had put up with all the torment and torture, our death would NEVER have been a SATISFACTORY RANSOM for the sins of Mankind, given that we are CERTAINLY NOT WITHOUT BLEMISH!
It took the SACRIFICE of the SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD to PAY OUR DEBT IN FULL, and that is why I am grateful to Him this **GOOD FRIDAY!**

THANK YOU JESUS!

Egbe Mbiwan Monjimbo