

THE PLIGHT OF ORPHANS

By Caudence

Welcome to the field of laughter and cries. I hope you all enjoy this and not just as my story but also as a reflection of what is happening in Africa and other parts of the world. It is my prayer that anyone who read's this article will come out with at least one of the following two things 1. He/she will use my story as inspiration to solve the problem or 2. My story will help him or her change negatives into positives.

Being an orphan is not the will of the child nor their parents. Some of these children wish to live forever with their parents. If we were given the opportunity to stay and to ask the spirits of these parents what would their wishes be. I think their answers would be "being alive again and being able to spend time with my children again".

Unfortunately, this cannot be. What a bitter thing for one to change from a life of taking heavy breakfast to a homeless life. Spending all day begging on the streets for that days bread. This becomes a normal thing for orphans. Here is a real story.

When my parents passed away, I was very young. I couldn't understand what was going on. If I can remember well, it was back in 1997 when I was only 6 years old. I had gone to school that morning, my mom was the only parent I knew since birth. She was not feeling well. She had gone to different hospitals, tried using different medicine but could not recover. She decided to move from Nairobi up to the country to try herbals.

Her health had hardly changed compared to when she left the hospital. I changed from an academy school to a public school where I paid less fees. I had no problem with this provided that my mother got well.

I was surprised that day, when I came home from school and there were many people outside our homestead. My imagination started to run wild as I tried to figure out what might be the cause of all these people gathering outside our compound.

There was an image in my head that I could not bear to face its reality. What if my mother dies? I quickly dismissed the thought and without a word I took a step into our house, that's when I heard the voice "don't enter that house" the neighbors called to me.

I don't understand why they are telling me not enter my house. Before I could ask any questions I heard the sound of my grandmother from the kitchen, cries spread everywhere in the compound again.

Some of the women came around me, telling me how sorry they were losing such a person. I was mixed with confusion and fear. I was not ready to understand what they told me. It wasn't until I heard my grandmother mention my mothers name in the midst of her chanting that I realised I no longer had a mother.

In the midst of this confusion and fear I dashed to my mother's bedroom "mommy mommy mommy!!"



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I called as tears rolled down my cheeks while I shook the immobile and lifeless body of my mother who was laying in the bed as innocent as she was when she was alive.

Outside, there were mourners of chanting. Some used songs and others just words, women beat their breasts as a sign of a curse to the obvious enemy, death. A group of women gathered together and started singing a song that even when I remember today, I get tears in my eyes.

“luueere miranga mana luueerree luueerree, lueerree luueere miranga mana luueerree lueere ? a makinde” (It’s over calling mommy it’s over. It’s over, it’s over, it’s over calling mommy, it’s over, it’s over and God preserve her.) These words hurt. Life was not the same again.

That same year my education process was interrupted due to changing schools. My aunt who was the first person to claim my custody, was unable to give me the care they wanted. Not that I needed extra care, but just finding normal care was the problem. She could close me outside the house from morning until evening. What about the meals? Breakfast as usual was not counted, lunch she could leave me to make flour and for me to create fire outside, borough cookers and make for myself a cup of porridge for my lunch.

Life became unbearable. Due to this, I became weak and sick. In addition I was not allowed to communicate to any of my relatives and tell them of the trouble I was going through.

When my elder aunt who was living with my elder sister and brother heard of my condition, she came to my rescue. Thus, once again I was with my sister and brother.

It was then 1998 when I was again separated from my siblings. My elder sister, Helen, was taken by one of my aunts and then my brother, by my uncle who was then living along the Maasai boundaries. I was really stressed to be parting with my brother and sister. I remember the way we talked that night. Helen who was our first born, talked first.

“Gideon”, she called my brother, and then she called me,

“Our aunts have decided to take us apart again. Since our mom died not long has passed but you can see the life we’ve accomplished in that short while.” Helen paused and wiped her eyes using her bare hands.

“This is a reflection that our futures are not that smooth we will have to struggle for us to survive.” She again wiped her eyes. By then Gideon who was attentively watching his sister started sobbing terribly without control. We clung to each other’s shoulders and cried for more than 15 minutes.

When we loosened our hands, everyone was strong as if something had given us hope. We prayed and then parted to our rooms to sleep.

The morning that we were waiting for came. What a sorrowful day for the three destitutes, who had no right nor might. Ohh! Poor us. We were really sorrowful to bid our brother goodbye. It remains my last day to set my eyes on my brother’s face. Since then I’ve never heard of him.

The next victim was my sister. “What a cruel universe!” I thought. The time came that my sister went away. I was left alone in a new environment. The only person I knew was my aunt.



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We spend a long time learning a person's character. My aunt was a really good mother, as good as one can ever have, but what about her husband? He was the most cruel person I have ever seen or heard on the planet.

He could chase you outside if you don't know the whereabouts of the chicks that were hatched yesterday. When one of his children wronged, though I was the youngest among the children, I could be the one responsible for the sin.

Sometimes, if my aunt was not present, I could miss food not that they would deny me directly, but indirectly when the food was ready he could send me away to do a task in the kitchen that would take many minutes. So that when I would return, the meal could be finished. And that became my new life. Due to this life, I was sometimes forced to go around to the villagers, begging for my meal.

My sister finished school, that is primary education in year 2012, by then I was in class five. She came to where I was for the holy day.

The people who were in her past said they could no longer cater for her secondary education. When my uncle heard that he was very angry and could not even give us any food. He even went to the extent of sending us from his house at night not once or twice but numerous times, I've slept outside in the bushes with my sister. The only advice he gave us on where we could go was "Helen is big enough, she can go search for a husband and you go find somewhere and start working as a house girl."

"God! Where are you?" I said the words and the tears rolled uncontrollably. My sister stood still cleaning up the door, she cried quietly and then suddenly loudly. They say God never delays nor hurries, he comes at the right time.

We went back to the bushes, and when the night came, we decided to move to grandma's house. The home was 20km from where we were. Walking in the night, meeting a wild animal and bad people was normal. We reached grandma's home, she cried, cursed the day my mother died but all in all thanked God for everything.

In no less than three weeks, when a nearby neighbor came from Nairobi containment to grandma's house to greet her. When the neighbor found us there she was interested in our stories and asked who we were. She was really moved. She told grandma about the children's home that she knew where what we can learn and be taken care of and that's how our lives were rescued. Now I live at By Grace Disabled and Orphaned Center. Really this place might not be the best, but it has protected and prevented us from many bruises from the world. It was a God-given opportunity for people like me.

Though I have never seen my brother again, I hope one day we shall meet. When all of us are prosperous, and then life we will enjoy.

This life experience always teaches me and should be a lesson to all people that God's delay is not his denial.