

From: Egbe Monjimbo [mailto:emonjimbo@msn.com]
Sent: Friday, May 07, 2010 8:20 PM
To: 'exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com'
Cc: 'exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com'
Subject: HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

Now, that's a question whose answer CANNOT be 0 or even 1; not even if you are a test tube baby! With every Mothers Day, I am becoming more and more aware and convicted that this "Mammy" business really does not have that much to do with a fertilized egg, spitting in a "ngongong", no "kongo" for 9 months, and screaming to the attending midwives at the Middle Farms Hospital labor room as you birth the 3rd of your (eventual) 8 kids how "Wuna no go see me for dis place ahgain oh! Na mah lass time dis, ah shuweh" (swear)!!! Before I left for work this morning, I had the chance to read Aza Teh's update on her nephew and I know I am not the only one who spotted the following line:

"I don't even know if he realized I was there, but I held his hand as he slept and knew he would be fine."

Please explain to me how this act of hers is any different from the "who sat and watched my infant head ... and wept for fear that I should die" that the famous poem attributes to a MOTHER? The "mu-mu" that I am fails to see the difference! Instead, the teacher that I am sees hundreds of BIRTH mothers who do "nweng" (as in zero) for their children – and I am not referring to those who can't because they have not! I am talking about big time "achakasaras" who care not! I guess their role models in the Bible would be the 2 mammies featured in that 2 KINGS 6 narrative that never fails to shock the dandruff right out of my scalp no matter how many times I read it! Remember this?

Then he (the King) asked her, "What's the matter?"

She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son so we may eat him today, and tomorrow we'll eat my son.'²⁹ So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son so we may eat him,' but she had hidden him."

There is also the even more alarming category who have plenty pass King Midas in terms of "gold", but who are completely OUT OF TOUCH with what is going on in their child's life – as was the case with the affluent parents of the Colombine kids who somehow failed to notice the metamorphosis that their boys underwent from "cherubs" to "tido-eyed", black trench coat-wearing, swastika-drawing, and finally gun-toting assassins! It is one thing for us to be out of touch because we dey work de 5 jobs (including 3 graveyard shifts) which are necessary to keep shoes on our kids' feet, food in their bellies and a roof over their heads; but it is most definitely a whole other ridiculous hot mess to NEVER be there for them because we need to maintain an Olympic-size swimming pool/5 hummers/15 bedroom mansion kind of lifestyle, all the while trying to convince ourselves that our kids *NEED* to have ALL the latest toys and gadgets thrown at them when they cannot remember the last time we personally tucked them into bed, read them a bedtime story, enquired about how their day went AND actually LISTENED to what they had to say! Talk about molongo-deserving, MISPLACED or REVERSED VALUES & PRIORITIES!!!

This is why my MOTHERS DAY DEDICATION this year goes to all the **STAND-IN-THE-GAP WOMEN** who have done and continue to do all sorts of things for a child who is not theirs biologically, just like Pharaoh's daughter did for Moses, the BASKET case, - no pun intended! I SALUTE YOU for:

- Not letting some little girl's "koocha mbanga" hair prevent you from plaiting the best "hand" or "bakala" or "pass-pass" on their head, and then adding as many ribbons as the poor child's neck could support!
- Patiently blowing on some little boy's bruised knee as he cried out because the iodine stung and then putting a cute little "plaster" on his wound.
- "Baba-ing" a restless baby on your back and then exhausting your entire repertoire of lullabies and choruses, - even inventing one or two of your own, to get them to sleep.
- Teaching an "Infants 1" child to read, write do his "sums" and memorize his lines for a school or church performance, as well as to say "please", "thank you" and "excuse me".
- Re-assuring a pimple-faced teen that their "zits" are just a passing phase, that they will recover from that first romantic heartbreak and explaining to them that it is not really "the stork" that delivers babies.
- Being present at every milestone in these children's lives – especially graduations and weddings.
- Paying their fees (tuition) and covering other related educational expenses and even,
- For actually ADOPTING them (legally or not), and raising them, IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD, under your roof like they were your very own – which they really are!

Without a doctorate in Theology, chances are that I may be misinterpreting the implication of that particular "Woman, behold thy son! ... Son, behold thy Mother!" sentence that was pronounced at the foot of the cross that dreadful Good Friday; but when I read the statement that follows:

"And from that hour, that disciple took her unto his own home",

I cannot help seeing what I believe is practically the best existing blueprint or defense for the concept of **ADOPTION**, - no lawyers, legal fees, law suits, kidnappings and T.V. statements involved! Jesus clearly had siblings (one Mammy, different Papa of course), one of whom was JAMES but He chose to leave the care of His Beloved MAMA to someone He must have known would do the best job. James be wake'up "summons" John for Nazareth Court of Appeals for "Mother-Jacking" or "Mom-napping"? No oh! No man no post no "MARY ALERT" on top tree or some man e roof describing dear Maria, requesting her safe return and offering I-don't-know-how-many shekels to anyone with information on her whereabouts!

Having mentioned this story, I think it would only be fitting for me to also SALUTE those who have "adopted" a woman who is NOT their birth mother and treat her the same way they treat – or would have treated their own mother. I cannot help remembering Aunty Jackie in this instance who, when she appealed for funds to help send her "Sister-Friend" (Ms Helen Azah) home for burial, made it clear she was making the effort so that the bereaved mother could have some closure. I bet that poor lady will always be grateful for that wonderful act of kindness.

Tragic accidents and diseases such as AIDS and Cancer have left many children without their parents and many parents without the children they had hoped would bury them which is why I think my opening question is quite relevant so let me ask it ahgain:

HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

My take: I am inclined to believe that it really isn't about "how many pikin dem you born"; nor is it really about "how many mammy dem born you"!

I am well aware that this particular Mothers' Day is going to be tough for quite a few amongst us for whom this will be the first Mother's Day since their Mom or Child went home to be with The Lord. For others, it's been a while now since their Mom or Child transitioned but it seems like it happened just yesterday and Mother's Day may not be a one hundred percent joyful experience. We also have amongst us, those who by design or by God's Divine Will do not (yet) have children of their own, and then there are those who do have them but are having a really difficult time raising them due to daunting "strong head" or complex health issues. Whatever our particular situation may be, I hope we will all be able to (eventually) find it in our hearts to "mother" and "daughter" someone who could really use our warmth and care.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO ALL!!

Egbe Mbiwan Monjimbo

(Picking up my handbag and reaching for my car keys to go check on 2 Precious little Angels whose MOM left us on this day last year. (GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN, Miss P!) Thank God, they have a FANTASTIC Dad whose ability to learn all there is to know about the Tooth Fairy, packing lunch bags and "judging cases" is UNPARALLELED!

From: exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com [mailto:exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com] **On Behalf Of** Judith Foyabo
Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2010 12:39 AM
To: exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com
Cc: exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com
Subject: RE: [exsa_usa] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

Big Sis,

You hit the highest note in this one-of-a-kind Mother's day tribute - A song to the unsung heroes/heroines...simply an unforgettable classic! I will surely pass this on to the many I know deserve this tribute.

I love you 'muchly'...

Remain richly blessed and a happy Mother's day to you and yours.

MJ

From: Alice Namwene [mailto:alicenamwe@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2010 2:11 AM
To: Egbe Monjimbo
Subject: Happy Mother's Day

My Dear Sis,

Thank you for this "upteenth" masterpiece, I am archiving them and one of these days, ah go pay you taxi so you go reach for "hiere" make ah wash ya foot anoint am like those TSA shift officers and supervisors for JFK be do for me and ya pikin dem for Thanksgiving Day last year before escorting the kids and the red carpet style escort unto our flight to San Francisco. Please send me Bakume's telephone number when you get a breather, she called me and did not leave a number, I know she is in Canada....Greetings to my little Munchkins, tell them Ma Paulina is watching them, and thanking you for the good work...see I always was miserable during the month of May (MOM died on the 12th in 1990) but guess what? I am too tired organizing a Holy Communion party and thinking of Maloke, Uncle Zac, Mary Azah's brother, Sis Justine's Mom in Law, the Engo's, Nokuri wake keeping and Pauline Lyonga Forlemu....so take heart and keep fighting the good fight.

Happy Mother's day (checking on the kiesh, fruit salad and setting up for tomorrow..wish you were here)

Kata

From: exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com [mailto:exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com] **On Behalf Of** Marie Takusi Njowo

Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2010 7:27 AM

To: exsa_usa@yahoogroups.com

Subject: Re: [exsa_usa] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

My "boh" Etonde,

Dis one na an all time home-run...in short, you write am well Mamie and we thank you!!!!

I salute you too for always having just the right words to soothe a sister's day or night.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO YOU TOO MY DEAR !!!!!

Your "boh" Marie in Houston

(Happily realising that... yes di pikin dem and mammy dem wey ah get plenty pass all my fingers and toes put together...and that is indeed a blessing !!!)

From: exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com [mailto:exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com] **On Behalf Of** Agnes Bongang

Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2010 7:37 AM

To: ExSSA-MAL

Subject: Re: [exssa_mal] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

My pikin and mammy Egbe,

Tears well up in my eyes as I finished reading this piece. They are tears of gratitude not sorrow.

Inasmuch as I am one of those grieving the passing of our mothers, I am blessed to have been someone's pikin for so long even as I struggled (and still do) with being a mammy. My mammy wey I born me don do for Papa God but my mammy them wey raise me plenty; the "mbambas" in Church St, Victoria (now Limbe), Cassala farms, Mile 1, Gardens, Bota.....to the dulongs in our Saker days who let me have their piece of meat, washed my clothes yet gave me additional punishment to the Housemother's for having an oil stain on my uniform. Thank you Sis Arah Etta Sis Fatima Issa Gurin!

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

From: exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com [mailto:exssa_mal@yahoogroups.com] **On Behalf Of** Agnes Bongang
Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2010 11:59 AM
To: ExSSA-MAL
Subject: Re: [exssa_mal] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

Hey ladies,

Ah neva tell'am finish! I just realized I must have hit the send button!

Well, just to add to the list all my mothers through medical school and all my adult life to date. I salute them all!

A big thank you to all my "pikin them" from all my siblings, petites (Ntoh Ebako, Nkiru, Christy Shodunke, Mercy Dasi, Mercy Atangcho and all the grandpetites of the "Teens" family and beyond who have blessed me in many ways.

I am blessed to belong to this great sisterhood/motherhood of Sakerettes!

Once again, Egbe, thank you for a wonderful tribute to ALL Mothers. I have not read anything as powerful and inspiring in my half-century+ here below (did I just give away my age?) Whatever, God is good!

Stay blessed.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY.

Agnes Fomukong Bongang, MD
Teens Supremes
Class of '74.

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

From: Annette Ayukegba Aksdal [mailto:annetteebangha@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, May 09, 2010 1:32 PM
To: emonjimbo@msn.com
Subject: Re: Fw: [exsa_usa] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??

Dear Sis Egbe,

happy mother's day. I will like to ask your permission to include this write up of yours on my blog without any editing.

my blog is

[www.mondayschild1@wordpress.com](http://www.mondayschild1.wordpress.com)

thanks
Annette

*The probability that we may fail in struggle ought not to deter us from the support
of a cause we believe to be just.* **Abraham Lincoln**
To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing. **Elbert Hubbard**

--- On **Fri, 5/7/10**, **akotsbaby@yahoo.com** <akotsbaby@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: akotsbaby@yahoo.com <akotsbaby@yahoo.com>
Subject: Fw: [exsa_usa] HOW MANY PIKIN AND MAMMY DEM YOU GET??
To: "Annette Ayukegba" <annetteebangha@yahoo.com>
Date: Friday, May 7, 2010, 8:30 PM