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I COULDN'T FIND A
**SILVER
SPOON**

... A SHORT STORY ON HOW PURPOSE GAVE ME A BETTER LIFE

I Couldn't Find A Silver Spoon

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JUST BEFORE WE BEGIN...

Never mind, let's begin...

HOW DOES A MOTHER'S LOVE FEEL LIKE?

I had scars all over my body, and a big swollen part on my head. They were injuries from the torment of my step-mother. She tortured I and my sister for breaking the water tap.

I was 9 years old; just a year older than my sister. We fought over "who got to the tap first" until we eventually broke the tap. My step-mother used the broken pipe and iron-head to beat us. Trust me, if you had seen us that afternoon, you'd think it was a criminal case.

My dad didn't know what to say anymore, because maltreating us was a regular routine for her. He'd probably not talk to her for a while, and afterwards, he would forgive her. After all, they say marriage is "for better for worse". Except that "the worse" was totally to our disadvantage.

She tortured us every time, even when we didn't do anything wrong. She had reporters; people who enjoyed the pleasure whenever she tortured us. They'd tell her things we did and things we didn't do; and the next thing she'd do is grab her cane, wires, heater, or anything she finds, and commence the torture. You won't even get the chance to explain anything to her; she was "madam no explanation". Her reporters were always right, even if they were actually wrong.

We lived in fear for many years, until we finally broke loose. One day, she got a report as usual, and began to call my name with so much rage. I was in my senior year (SSS2) that time, and I had enough wisdom to know that I couldn't live in deceit anymore. I went to meet her, and for the first time, I held back her cane when she tried to hit me. We fought, I shouted at her with every strength I could gather. I practically told her that she had been maltreating us for no reason.

I ran away from home that day, and I didn't come back until my dad returned from his trip. I was really hoping he'd support me; but no, he didn't. He even beat me for insulting his wife and leaving the house for days.

But that was the beginning of a new era for me. My step-mother feared me from that day, but continued her menace on my sister until I gathered enough courage to free her too.

STEP-MUM? BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR REAL MOTHER?

Nothing, except that she and my dad separated when I was just 2 years old. She remarried after a while, and my dad also remarried after 6 years. I and my sister lived with my dad's elder brother until my dad remarried too.

I do not blame my parents for what happened; perhaps things would have been different if they had the knowledge we have today. I relate with my mum and dad's family

just as my family. I even spend my holidays in my mum's place.

WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM FOR YOUR FUTURE?

None! I had no dream. I didn't know what I'd like to become in the future. You can't possibly have a dream for the future when you constantly live in fear of what may happen next. If I ever had a dream, then it would be to escape the torment of my step-mum.

Things became really tough; my dad wasn't doing well in his job, which he eventually lost. My step-mum worked as a cleaner in a Polytechnic; she'd often take me along to clean the school with her. She also sold snacks and drinks during school hours; and of course, I assisted her.

She stopped working for the Polytechnic after a while, and started a food business. She'd cook all night so that she could meet up the morning demands. Breakfast has to reach her selling location before 7:30am; and of course, I always did the delivery. And after school, I'd go to the market to assist her till she closes for the day. It wasn't long before I started hawking sachet water in the same market. After all, that's how my step-mum painted it, *"are those not your mates selling pure water and making profits for their parents"*.

It wasn't the kind of life I bargained for. Life in my uncle's place was rosy, we had almost everything we needed. My school mates who saw me hawking sachet water greeted me on the way, but mocked me in school. I was in a class, but I had no class. I remember how one

of my classmates told me that *"I was no match for him"*.

LABOUR BECAME WORSE...

One day, I passed the night in an uncompleted building, because I was reckless about the proceeds I made from selling sachet water that day. And I couldn't go home for fear of what my step-mum would do to me.

Asides hawking sachet water, I worked as a labourer for a building project, carrying bricks from one location to another. My parents didn't know about it, I only did it because it fetched me more profit than selling sachet water for the whole day. However, the after effect was totally unbearable; the whole of my body broke down. You can't blame me; I was only 15 years old.

COMMITMENT TO KNOWLEDGE COMMENCED A CHANGE...

I passed the night outside once again; and this time, the experience was terrifying. My parents couldn't sleep; they searched for me all-night, until they found me in the market - roaming the streets.

Let me take a moment to tell you how I felt:

Lost! I was bitter, I felt betrayed, maltreated, lonely, broken, actually I felt dead. If they didn't find me that morning, I would have taken Marijuana, and probably smoked my life away from this world. But thank God they found me.

I was hungry, it was written all over my face. No one could say a word, not even my step-mum. I suspected they had a fight all through the night. I took a shower when we reached home, and they gave me food to eat. I expected the torture that will end my life that day; but surprisingly, nobody said a word to me.

Then the verdict came; *"You won't sell that pure water again!"*. My dad finally became the man of the house. He hired a teacher for me for extra lessons. I went from one tuition centre to another, just to learn. At this time, I was already in the first term of the final year in secondary school (SSS 3).

I liked the knowledge I was getting, because it gave me an edge in school. Me that was a mockery in school suddenly became a major

player. Remember that guy that told me that I was no match for him? What he said was eventually true; we were no match for each other. And that's because I started moving with the top students in school.

I started seeing a future. I liked being a playmaker, just to save the day. I often imagined myself doing things like; playing football with great skills, becoming a superhero, being a medical doctor, singing to a great audience, and so on. I'd sit on those imaginations for hours, just enjoying myself.

After secondary school in the year 2006, I started a teaching job. And I was paid N100 (one hundred Naira) per hour. My first salary was N2000, because I taught for 20 hours in that month.

After a while, I got a scholarship from NIIT to do a computer program. I was asked to pay N175,000 for a course that worth N285,000. I didn't go home early that day because I had deposited a non-refundable fee of N5,000 to the company; I thought my dad would kill me for letting that money go. *Where is he going to get N170,000 from?* Taking the offer was not even an option.

But surprisingly, my dad said the money was not too much. After some weeks, he paid the first installment, and I commenced the one year Microsoft Certified System Engineering Course (MCSE). But maybe I should have done a lesser course, because I didn't even know how to identify a computer icon, or to even move a mouse. We did nine exams in the cause of the program, and guess what? I failed all. And yes, my course mates mocked me for this.

When I discovered that I wasn't flowing with the level of teaching, I quickly met with the school's senior engineer. I told him to take me as his protégé, and that I'd be willing to join him to execute any live project for free. He agreed; and the more I did practical projects, the better I became in class. Though I had issues with the theories, but I understood what was being taught. I became sound in the practical aspect; and once again, me that was a mockery, became a playmaker. Knowledge has a way of changing everything. *(If you're having issues in understanding certain subjects, I'd recommend that you read my e-book titled "Academic Drive").*

After the program, I was retained to do my Industrial Training in the same school, even though I had failed all my exams. At the long

run, it's not who passed exams that gets the job done, it's he who actually does the job. I was getting an allowance of N5000, which was an obvious step-up from my first salary. I extended my IT till 2008 when I finally got my first real ICT job. At this time, I was already 19 years old, and my salary was N30000.

The new job gave me an opportunity to be free from my step-mum, because it was "closer" to my uncle's place. At least, that was the reason I gave to my parents for relocating. But I confided in one person, a neighbour. I told her I needed to get away from all the troubles. She didn't even hesitate to reply saying *"If you're leaving your parents because of the problems, would you also leave your uncle's place when problems arise?"*. Honestly, it was more like she saw the future, because I faced more emotional

challenges than I ever did in my father's house.

I RETURNED TO MY UNCLE'S PLACE...

On arrival to my uncle's place, the whole family was excited to see me. And yes, I was the youngest of all. I enjoyed free roses for a few weeks, and then I had to buy a rose to have my peace.

What do you expect? I was earning a salary, so it's natural that I dropped something in the house when needs arose. It was easy initially, but it became almost impossible when I started saving for school. And this was a major issue in the house. They said I was stingy, because I bought clothes and other things for myself without making any financial contribution in the house. I tried many times to explain to them that I was in a tight

constraint; but the fact that I bought things for myself despised all my efforts.

They despised me so much that none of them cared about how I went to school or what I did in school. They didn't even know I had finished until I showed them my result. It was that bad.

On a second thought, I didn't blame them for what happened; shouldn't a husband provide for his home at all cost? But then again, I was not the husband; actually, I was the youngest among 7 children.

DID YOU SAY YOU WENT TO SCHOOL?

Yes! I got admission to do Computer Science the same year I got the new job and relocated

to my uncle's place. However, I lost that job before that year ended, only because they insisted that I worked on weekends - which was my class days.

Things became tough for me; but I managed to regain my position back at NIIT. And as God would have it, my allowance was increased to N15,000. I guess I preferred to take a low salary than to remain an undergraduate.

But with that salary, paying school fees wasn't easy. There was a time I almost missed an exam because I had not completed my fees. As at that time, my uncle just received his pension fund - which ran into millions of Naira. I thought I wouldn't do any harm to ask my uncle to assist me with N10,000, so I could clear my debts and do my exams. But unfortunately, I was wrong; he didn't give me

the money because according to him *"I was working"*.

But God saved me! On the exam day, a woman gave me N15,000. And that was more than sufficient for me.

In 2012, I got another job that paid me N50,000 monthly; except that the pay was not consistent. The pay was high, but my living condition was low. Sometimes I had to manage the salary of one month for over 3 months. And of course, it really affected my relationship with my uncle and his family. At a point they even told me to leave their house and go back to my father's house.

BUT I HAD ALREADY GIVEN MY LIFE TO CHRIST BEFORE THEN...

I understood faith, love, joy and peace. Though they hurt me a lot, but I saw all that as a training process. I read more books, prayed the more, and lived a Christian life.

My life became a brand new one. It wasn't like I was a bad person before I gave my life to Christ, but accepting challenges became a joyful thing to me, unlike the sorrow that it used to bring. I changed so much that even my cousins that abused me started reading the same books I read. They said "if Emeka read these books and changed, then I must read them too". Funny, right? But that's the miracle of salvation; it puts away the old you, and creates a brand new person.

YOU HAD GIVEN YOUR LIFE TO CHRIST?

It was few seconds to midnight on the 31st of December 2009, when I felt a touch that woke me from the bed, the sick bed.

While other people were in the church, making their new year resolution, I was at home lying on a sick bed.

Though I didn't know who touched me, but I heard a voice that told me to check the time. And behold, when I did, it was 12:00 midnight.

The voice asked "what is your new year resolution?". "I want to be closer to God in the new year" was my response. After all, what else could a young boy who had experienced sickness all through the year 2009 ask for?

To be honest, if anybody had told me back in 2009 that I'd become an inspirational writer, I would have denied it. Maybe the person would have even become my worst enemy. But see what the Lord has done.

I didn't know much about God. I was a Christian, but not a practicing one. In February 2010, I found myself in Living Faith Church Worldwide, where I also responded to the call of salvation after a teaching by the pastor. I got baptized in the Holy Ghost in the cause of the teaching, but because I didn't know what it was, I tried to control it until I was officially baptized in the month of March.

Since then, I've consistently developed zeal to be a blessing to humanity. Being a blessing has been the only thing that keeps me happy,

because I only feel blessed when I've poured out the blessings that God deposits inside of me.

JESUS GAVE ME A BETTER SPOON...

I continued following God until I discovered God's purpose for my life in April 2013. I may not have been born with a silver spoon, but purpose gave me a more precious spoon.

It became urgent on me to find my purpose in the year 2012; I kept asking God "why this, why that, why, why, and why?".

I knew I am gifted; otherwise, how would you explain the fact that most people I counselled or reached out to often wept anytime I am opportune to speak to them? Their tears

were more like a sign that the things I said were effective.

As much as I liked the idea, I was not comfortable, I needed to know why they happened. Finally, after over a thousand "why", God told me that the reason why they cried is because they wish they had known the things I said to them before that moment.

After that encounter, I told God that I was tired of trials and errors, I wanted to get things right this time. I quit my job in March 2013 to attend a bible school. And the only prayer point I had was "Lord, show me your plan for my life".

On the 7th of April 2013, God unveiled His plan for my life. I humorously say that "I may

have lived for many years, but I have only lived for 4 years with purpose". Purpose is the beginning of life".

Purpose gave me everything, including my own apartment. Purpose has a way of wiping shame away from one's eyes. Purpose gave me a more comfortable job, personal businesses, books, and many other priceless things.

Let me conclude with this; if you were not born with a silver spoon, take out time to find your purpose. Humorously, even those who were born with a silver spoon now require my services. All hope is not lost; because no matter what has happened, as long as you have life then you have hope. *"At least there is hope for a tree: If it is cut down, it will sprout again, and its new shoots will not fail.*

Its roots may grow old in the ground and its stump die in the soil, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth shoots like a plant." - Job 14:8-10

If you've not already discovered your purpose, please do not hesitate to order for my e-book titled "Learn How to Find Your Purpose". Have a wonderful life, in Jesus precious name!

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EMEKA ANSLEM



I am Emeka Anslem, the privileged writer of Timely Notes Daily Devotional, Founder of In-spirited Writers Training School, and President of The Solutionists. I received a divine call to be a teacher in April 2013, with an assignment to "Add value to lives by bringing knowledge to the people". By His grace, I've committed my life to this assignment, and I'm always willing to add value to lives.

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