

Getting Marry

When my parents tell me that they was going to get marry, join in holy matrimony and have they relationship bless before God, I was worried because I could have swear that them was married every since.

When I ask Daddy to explain why them wasn't marry already, he cuff me round my ear and tell me to stop being rude, and when I ask Mummy, she laugh and send me outside to play. But I was determine to find out what them was hiding from me. What was it to be "marry" and in "holy matrimony"?

My Mummy and Daddy live in the same house, sleep in the same bed, and scream at each other several times a day bout bills and money. Daddy does lash Mummy cross she head with he belt when she give trouble, and the days when Mummy hit he back and them get blood all over the house, them would hug and cry and kiss after. I wanted to know what change when people get marry.

That day I run through the back door; and jump over the paling fence into my neighbour Miss Maynard yard. Kim, Miss Maynard daughter and one of my best friends, was stooping down buck naked, bathing with a hose. When she see me she shout, "Think fast, Jamar!" and douse me with water. I holler out and run all over the yard, pretending not to want to get wet, cause if Kim know I did enjoying it she would stop. Soon, I was buck naked too, and we run round playing and screaming until Miss Maynard push she head out the kitchen window and yell to shut the hell up and come inside.

We was inside drying when I turn to Kim. "Kim, when two people get marry, what does happen?"

She look at me and throw back she head and laugh. “How it is you don’t know what is married, you foolish boy? You does go in the church with all you family and friends, but that not important. The part that matter is later on when you cut the cake.”

“And what so special bout cutting a cake?”

Kim frown. “I ain’t know, you know; I think it is a special cake. Biiiiigggg, big, big! And it does got a little man and woman on it, and when you mummy and daddy eat the cake, them would be marry.”

I was not convinced. “How you know? My parents keep talking bout some ceremony and something call holy matrimony.”

“I hear my mother talking bout them and the wedding,” Kim insisted, “and she say the ceremony don’t change a thing, so it would got to be the cake!”

That make sense to me. Mummy and Daddy probably didn’t want me to know about this cake cause them know I would want piece.

I feel so betrayed that I plop down on Kim bed. “Them ain’t tell me nothing, you know. I keep asking and asking, but them ain’t say nothing bout no cake.”

“I hear my mother say them selfish so,” Kim said.

I pause and think. “I wonder what sort of cake it is, though.”

Kim put her fingers on her lips; and sit down next to me. “It is black pudding,” she whisper, “and Miss Clement making it.”

My mouth drop open. Miss Clement does make the best tasting cakes in the village, but I never get she cake too often because my parents say that she does charge nuff money. I shook my head in disbelief, but Kim keep nodding she

head. We sat in silence in the bedroom for a few minutes, looking at each other, and then an idea come to me. I jump up off the bed.

“Let we get piece of that cake and get marry before them!”

“You gine get we in trouble, Jamar!” Kim hiss at me, but she had that smile, and I know what that mean.

“How we gine get piece of it?” she asked.

I sit back down on the bed feeling real bad, because I didn’t know how I would get piece. Kim realise I was sad and put she arm around my shoulder.

“Don’t worry, Jamar, we will figure out something,” she said while rubbing my shoulder, and then she try to cheer me up.

She look through the window and point at something in my yard. “Come let we go put some cream on that cat over there.”

I smile. I glad I pick Kim to get marry to, cause she know how to make me feel better.

“Come long,” I said, “and after we will make a plan to get some of that black pudding.”

Kim and I hide and follow around my parents for the next couple days, and nothing was different. Daddy quarrelling bout how much money them spending on the wedding, and he can’t understand why she invite so much people, and half of them ain’t she friends. And Mummy screaming that them ain’t she friends, but she want them to see she get marry.

In the meantime, I was picturing marry life with Kim and was a little worried, cause when she give trouble I suppose to beat she, but she stronger than me so I wondering how I will win the fight. I was glad I didn't say nothing, though, cause Kim tell me that she find out she suppose to give me the most food and the biggest piece of meat that cook when we marry.

Then she tell me we had to kiss all the time, and when we start practicing I was having a real good time. Now I wasn't worried no more, and I was even more determine to get piece of Miss Clement black pudding, cause Miss Maynard does cook nuff saltfish and pigtail, and my mouth watering already.

One Thursday morning Kim and I was playing Snakes and Ladders in the front house; when we hear my mother shout out that she got to go and look at the wedding cake at Miss Clement house. Daddy was inside lying down in the chair, but he get up and tell she that he would stop by Miss Clement house for she cause he going down by Tallman to play dominoes.

Kim nudge me. "We should go and see what the cake look like."

I jump up and shout, "Daddddyyy! We want to come wid you!"

"NO, Stand home!" He yell back. I really don't know why he does got to get on like that sometimes.

I stupse and sit back down, and Kim nudge me again; and call me to come closer. "Come let we follow he," she whisper.

"You gine get we in trouble," I say, but then I give she the smile, so we creep out the house; and follow Daddy down the cart road.

It was real nuff fun following Daddy, and we pretend that we was in the movies; ducking behind the breadfruit and coconut trees when we think he would look back. We was having such a good time that we was both disappointed when we reach Miss Clement house.

Daddy holler for Miss Clement, push open the front door and went inside.

“What we suppose to do now?” Kim ask.

I point to a tiny window. “We could try to peep through that kitchen window. Bend down let me climb up on you shoulders.”

“Why I can’t climb up on you shoulders?” Kim said, pouting.

I stupse. “Girl, you bigger than me!”

So I get on Kim shoulders, but we was still too short and I couldn’t see inside.

“Why we just don’t peep inside?” Kim ask; after we fall down pun each other the second time. “Just pull the back door.”

Before I could say anything, Kim sneak over to the back door and open it soft, and then we tip-toe into the kitchen. Miss Clement had the biggest and best-looking kitchen I ever see in my life. First thing, it was made out of wall, and it had tiles. You would have never expect to find all this in she board house; that got all the paint peeling off on the outside and the breakdown gallery.

I was so distracted by the big kitchen that I didn’t even notice the cake on the counter until Kim point at it. It was bout three cakes in one, with pink and yellow icing flowers all over it, and I could understand why people get marry just

for this cake. I hold Kim hand, and for a few moments we just stand in the kitchen staring at it.

But then we hear voices, and loud footsteps on the board creaking toward the kitchen. Me and Kim was so frighten that we jump and run and hide under the big table in the middle of the kitchen. It was a good thing that the tablecloth was long, so it stop them from seeing we.

I recognise Daddy feet with all the corns on them, and some big feet with pink nails. Them was talking bout how much the cake cost, and Daddy was trying to bring down the price. Me and Kim soon start to get bored, and I wish that them would hurry up cause my back was hurting me from hunching over so.

All a sudden we hear this big blast of calypso music that hurt my ears so bad I had to cover them. I don't know what was happening, but all a sudden Miss Clement feet disappear, but we could still see Daddy feet so we know he was still there. Daddy toes moving up and down to the calypso beat, and then the table start rocking from side to side, and Daddy start to breathe hard from all the wukking up he had to be doing with Miss Clement.

I look at Kim and she had she ears cover up from the music too, except that she was smiling and nodding she head. I don't know what this girl find so funny, cause Daddy would lick both of we down with blows if he know that we follow he and hide under a table.

After bout five minutes, the music get turn off, and the calypso must've been hurting Miss Clement ears too, cause she shout out "Hallelujah!". I hear Daddy laughing, and then Miss Clement feet appear and them leave the room.

“Wait another minute in case them come back.” I trying to seem smart, but the truth is I still too frighten to move.

After another minute went by, Kim stupse and say she moving and crawl from under the table, so I follow she. Lord, I thought we get way, but as soon as I creep out I butt Miss Clement right in front of me.

She let out a little gasp and stand there staring at we with she thick lips hanging open, and she hand on top of them big bubbies that my mother always making fun at. I hold onto Kim, and we trembling bad, waiting on Miss Clement to shout and beat we, and then call we parents who would beat we some more.

Miss Clement ask we how long we was under that table, and I couldn't answer she. Kim hide she face, and I burse out crying and beg she not to tell my Daddy what I do. To our surprise, she give we a big smile and tell we that she won't tell a soul, and ask we if we hungry. She got some extra cake that she could give we.

“That cake over there?” I ask, pointing at the big three cake.

Miss Clement stare at we long, and I start to feel uncomfortable. Then she tell we that if we get some of that cake, we can't tell nobody cause she would get in trouble. Me and Kim smile hard, hard, hard, and nod, and my mouth start watering when she take the big knife and cut into a big icing flower.

Kim and I look at each other with big smiles, and we hold hands. Miss Clement put the cake on plates for we, and Kim tell me that I had to feed she, and she would feed me. This is the happiest day of my life, cause I never taste cake so soft and sweet and full of cherries, nuts and raisins.

When I get back home, I hear Daddy tell Mummy that he get Miss Clement to give we the cake half price, and I laugh to myself. Daddy and Mummy would never know that I had the cake and marry before them, cause I ain't foolish enough to talk and get my behind roast.

I wake up the next day a little worried about how being marry would change my life. I went cross by Miss Maynard and Kim give me some of she salt fish and bakes that she had for breakfast, but then she complain that she was still hungry so I had to give back the food. By the afternoon, we did tired of kissing so all the time, and we went into the backyard and run bout, and throw pebbles at the stray cats.

By the time I was ready to go in my bed that night I wasn't worried no more, cause I realise that getting marry don't change a thing.