

Prudence

I was born on the first of February 1960. When I was about one year and nine months old, my grandparents took me away from my mum to live with them in Morn Rouge where I grew up and took my schooling. I entered primary school when I was almost three years old. When I was seven my father took me to live with him. At that age I made my first communion at the Catholic Church.

During those times living with my father was very hard. I had a rough time there. My father and his wife always used to fight. That was happening daily. Otherwise things were very 'crucial'. Sometimes there was no money in the house. We were not able to buy sufficient bread, or there was no bread at all. There were times we did not get a proper meal. No meat or fish, mostly green bananas. Sometimes my father's wife made a flour porridge and I used to drink that three times a day. Sometimes I only had a cup of bush-tea and go to bed or school. I did not do too well at school because I did not have anybody to push me up. Most times I had to miss school to go up to a faraway garden, especially on Fridays to prepare for the market.

As I grew older my father's wife began to dislike me and my other sister because we were not her children. It so happened that my father went to St. Martin for about two weeks and that was her opportunity to treat us badly. For two weeks she never gave us any meals. All she ever gave us were the remainder of what her children did not want. She would just throw it in the bum and leave it uncovered.

But, lucky me, my grandparents were still alive so I used to take my meals there and take some for my sister. It happened like that until my father returned home. When he did come home she told him lots of cruel things about me and my sister. Things we never did or say, that's what she told him. She insisted that as long as we stayed in the house she would not live there any more. At first my father was very upset about her, but that was not for long. There came a time when he was totally against us for his woman's sake. He ordered me to live by a neighbour. I stayed there for about one month and went back to live with him. From that time it was no better. Everything that the other kids would do wrong, I was the one to be blamed and I would also get a good licking.

I left school at fifteen so I was at home doing nothing until my father actually told me to leave his place and go. It was a very bad time for me. Anyway, I took my clothes and I went up to my uncle's place and told him all that had happened. He was furious. I spent the night there and left for town the next morning where my mum lived with her children and a man. When I told her what had happened

she began crying because she knew that was a next problem for her. Things did not go better for her while I was in Morn Rouge. Anyway, she decided, come what may, I had got to stay because I was her daughter. Her boy-friend was not glad to let me stay. He used to make lots of trouble, night and day, with my mother. In the middle of the night I would hear my mother cry, all because of me.

Life with her was very tough. My mum was not working and she could not buy clothes for us. But we had a very good neighbour and she used to help us out. There were times we had to share one egg for breakfast. Sometimes we used to eat the egg by turns. My mother could not afford one egg for each of us.

We continued like that until my mother got a job at the infirmary as a cook and I was the one, the bigger one, to take care of the smaller ones. As my mum continued to work, things began getting a little better. I remember clearly I had a twenty-dollar bill and I decided to open a savings. So, I did as I thought. The following day my mum asked me to go and take five dollars because we had nothing to eat. That was very hard for me to do because it was only one day and the next I had to go and take from it. I began to cry, not because I did not want to take it, but because it was very shameful. I was ashamed to go and take it so soon.

Anyway, I did survive and the others did until I eventually got a job, a baby-sitting job. The salary was twenty dollars a month and with that I could help myself and the others. Then I got another job in a supermarket. Life became brighter and brighter until I met my first boy-friend. He lived a few blocks away and I knew him from school in Morn Rouge. One day we spoke for hours as adults. He invited me to come to the cinema and we became involved. Whilst we were dating I got a small loan and I opened a shop at Morn Rouge, downstairs my father's place. I rewound the shop and my boy-friend started with bananas. Two months after I found myself pregnant. I was very sick for months and I had an appetite for apricot, stout, and milk. People can say that apricot can harm you, but it never did anything to me. I drunk so much milk that my urine turned whitish. That is when I decided to quit with the milk, in spite of the nurse insisting I should have it. For months I only used to eat some dry bread with stout, and I turned very *mèg*.

When I went to the hospital for confinement, that is in Roseau, my dad used to take lots of things in the shop and he did not pay. When I returned with my son there was no money to re-buy goods and so we had another clash. I decided to close. So the little goods I had remaining I sold them to the other shopkeepers and I moved in with my boy-friend and his family, but soon he left for St. Thomas. I did not hear from him for months and I used the little money I had left to go and see him in St. Thomas. I left my boy with his father's parents.

To go to St. Thomas unannounced and uninvited was not very wise for me to do. When my mum heard about my plans she was very grieved, for a daughter of hers was not supposed to run after a man like that.

Anyway, I went only to find my boy-friend staying at this woman's place. At first he said that he was paying her rent and things, but when the woman threatened to 'cough' me, I knew we were finished. After that I could not stay with his parents, and my mum's boy-friend was troubling her for me not to return to their place. Fortunately my mother's sister was looking for somebody to come and live in her place in Point Daniel because she was leaving to go and live in the States with her husband. She could not bring her two girls until she had settled there. I was to move in and look after the two girls. I had no place else to go and I agreed. She and her husband sent enough money for us, and life went alright until my sister and her husband moved in with us. My auntie had permitted them to settle in her house because it was big enough and so I would have a little company.

My sister was pregnant but things did not work out well. When she was five months pregnant her water broke and she had to be hospitalised until the end of her pregnancy. Her husband and I became closer and closer, until in the end I realised I was going to have a second child. I was going to make a child for my sister's husband and I felt so ashamed that I decided to break off the pregnancy. I tried a few of the known bushes and when they did nothing I went to see this lady. She gave me some other bushes, but the child wanted to stay. They say that this is a terrible mortal sin and now I am glad that the treatments I took never worked. I have to thank the Holy Father for not letting me go through with that mistake.

I clearly remember my twenty-first birthday that year. Nobody came to see me and I was crying and crying. The one I wanted to see most, my sister's husband, did not come or call. He had left the island for the States. He told my auntie that I had been chasing him, using *obeah* to get him to fall in love with me. Later I heard that they also believed I had used *obeah* to get my sister in the hospital, to get her out of the way. Everyone was upset about me and my auntie wrote me to leave her house. After my sister came home from the hospital she left for the States where she still lives with her husband. Sometimes she visits Dominica, but she never even asks about me.

After I was sent away from my auntie's house I had nowhere to go. Fortunately, I soon found a job with a family as a servant. I lived with the family while I sent my little boy to stay with my mother. She was living on her own at the time. She was without work and I sent her the money to buy clothes and food for my little one.

My second pregnancy passed without problems but I was never happy and proud about it. After eight moons my second boy was born. I had to register him under my own surname because his father was not there to sign the paper. I felt so ashamed! It is usually only women who can't tell whom they made the baby for, who have to give it their own name! I had to quit my job, but fortunately I could move in with my mum. After a few months we realised he was retarded. I

think I worried too much during the pregnancy and that I did make him feel not loved because of this. I think a nurse told me how this can affect the unborn child.

When my boy was thirteen months old he died of pneumonia, two months after he had caught a common head cold. I had done all I could to treat the cold, but his body never used to be strong. Sometimes a cold or a cough can not be treated properly, and the person gets asthma, bronchitis or *piwézi* you know, pneumonia. This risk is bigger when the sick person is weak.

After we buried the boy, I stayed inside the house for over four months. Most of the time I stayed in bed. I did not feel up to meeting all those people. I did not want to play with my first child either. My mind kept hearing funny noises inside my head, and I felt dizzy most of the time. My mother sent for the doctor and he gave me medicines that made me calm and drowsy. Later he wanted to send me to the psychiatric ward. He said that it all had been too much for me. I refused to leave the house. Then my mother brought a man home. I had always been afraid of him when I was a child, because the other children said he was a *soucquien*. However he told me that it had been my sister who had caused my child to be retarded and myself to feel so confused. He asked if anything unusual had happened during my pregnancy and I remembered that one day I had stepped on a kind of snail on the path to our yard. This particular snail does not live in our part of the island, and at the time I had wondered about it. The man believed that my sister had asked someone to fix me up because of her husband. I did not believe that because my sister always used to say how she hated people to get involved in these things. She was very religious and she would never want to get involved in such evil business. My mother told me that while she was in the hospital during her pregnancy, a neighbour of ours had passed by. He had dreamt of how someone (he did not mention any name) had tried to fix her and the baby in her tummy up. He felt very sorry for her and offered to pay this healer who could deal with *obeah* and things. My mother told me how my sister had thanked the man but refused his offer because she believed that the Holy Father would do as he would see fit. If she or her child was supposed to live, the Lord would take care of that. She herself did not want to have anything to do with this witchcraft thing.

I also remembered how one day she broke off her friendship with the woman who had helped her out while she lived with our father and his second woman. This woman once told how she had put something for her boy-friend. This boy-friend was seeing another woman, and she had told him that if he did not stop seeing this woman, she would make sure he would have an accident. One day he broke his leg at his work. While he was home his girl-friend told him: 'See what I can do you? If you ever make them jokes again you will meet a much more serious accident.' The woman had told this to my sister full of pride that she had arranged things that way and that her boy-friend now left this woman alone. But my sister never liked the story and told the woman so. The woman took it as an insult and they never spoke ever since. I agree with my sister. People should not

mess around with evil. One day it will help you out, but the next day it will turn against you. Always. So, I did take the bush the man gave me, but I never believed that my sister had sent the problems for me. Anyway, they never worked for me. I still think he was mistaken.

Those times were the hardest I ever remembered. Worse than the poverty, because that we can try to overcome. The shame cannot ever be helped. I think it was the shame that made me ill. One day some family came to see us. They wanted me to give my son to them. They said things must be hard on my side. If so was the case, I still did not believe taking my son away would have made it easier. It would have been more hard. I would have had to wonder about so many things. Most people have children, but do not care too much about their health. I was always very careful with that. I avoided people from touching them and from kissing them. I would always wonder if these people would take the same precautions. I felt I was the mother and I would care the best for the child.

After four months new scandals were occupying people's minds. They had no time to worry with me any more and one day I felt good enough to go outside. First thing I did was to go to the Christian church, for my neighbour had told me they often help people who feel sick there. I had a few long talks with the minister of the church and in the end I left feeling much better. This church also organised classes to learn typing. I went to the class because I hoped I would be able to find a job in an office, or with the government if I could type. I also used to visit this church every time I could, for this made me forget about my shame a bit. A young man was visiting this church too. We became close. So close that after one year of dating he asked me to be his June bride, which I accepted. I got married on the 18th of June 1984. We went to live in my husband's village. My husband's father gave him a piece of land for us to build our house on, but the land was too far from the village, and besides, we did not have the money. My husband had a small job as an overseer, and on the land he started growing bananas. We rented a small house near my husband's parents and my husband told me to send for my little boy. I thought I could faint for happiness!

When I was 26 the twins were born. Two more boys. Both were very small, but one was smaller than the other. The smaller one was the one to learn things quicker though! The pregnancy had passed without problems, but my husband irritated me very much, and I could not stand him to touch me. He used to get very mad, but I always told him that if he lift his hand against me, that's it! I would leave sooner than he would know how. Whilst I was living with my mother I had decided that I would let no man ever treat me as her boy-friend treated her. No man! It was difficult for my husband not to beat me, because at his home his father used to beat his mother bad. Even when they were almost over sixty years of age, we used to hear them fight almost daily. Anyway, in all the years of our marriage my husband beat me only once. It was when I had found this job in the shop in town, in the months after our marriage. My husband had bought me a set of nylon

underwears when he was in St. Martin to do some shopping. I do not like the nylon underwears because they make you feel hot and sweaty. Once I felt hot and sticky while working in the shop. I bought a little underwear and at lunch break I changed. I washed the nylon panty and put it in my bag. My husband, who has always been very jealous happened to look in my bag that night and found the wet panty. He immediately believed I had become involved with the shop's owner, and went into a rage. He beat me and then took all the underwears he had bought for me out of my closet. He wanted to burn them, but I told him that I had earned those panties by doing my duty as his wife (I used much rougher words though). Then he left house and went to sleep at his parents' place. The next morning he came back and told me never to go back to the shop. He went into town himself and told the owner I would not be coming back.

Soon after the twins were born, I found myself pregnant again. This was not a good time for me because my husband also lost his job. When our little girl was born in the hospital, things looked crucial. I had four children now, and no job. My husband tried to start his own business, but things were hard. After a fight with his father about his beating his wife, my husband refused to talk to his dad any more. His mother could no longer take it, and left to go and live with her daughter in England.

I had four children to take care of and the next was soon on its way. Without the help of my mother-in-law, it was very hard to get the household done properly. Fortunately the Lord had given us all a good health. I always looked after myself and my kids well, and we hardly suffered illness. I consider it to be very important to take care of one's health, but sometimes you get into trouble with other people about it. This neighbour for instance. This woman was coming from her garden. When she saw Benton, my oldest by the road, she gave him bread and a piece of cheese. I was mad because this woman's hands were dirty man! Everybody knows how this woman's hands were dirty. I had already warned her not to give food to my children, but she did not seem to understand. So I made my boy throw it away. Because I told my son that she had dirty hands, the woman laughed and told him that next time she would wash the bread and hang it to dry first. That made me more mad, I mean, that is an insult.

Those days I was so busy with the children that I sometimes could not pay them all the attention they needed. Most nights they had to look at me sleep instead of me watching them sleep. I often felt so sleepy, I just could not fight that. I never felt like getting up. Day time was a big job, but when night came it was a bigger job still. To have three babies and one little boy to take care of and feeling sleepy is hard. Sometimes I felt chained. Everything was me to do it for them. Sometimes my husband helped me by playing with them, for they need to be up too, and it gave me a little ease-up, but most of the time he was tired himself and refused to help. But if I refused because I felt tired or sleepy, they would not get no care at all. Anyway, it was my responsibility, so I made up my mind to do the best I can.

If I see my children with any problem it always affects me because I am the one responsible.

Though I used herbs to bathe the babies for instance, I still saw that their skin was often ugly. But that is expected, I think, in young children. I don't think they are made perfect. So one day I used lime in their bath, just because my mind told me so. I think most of the time when I obey it I am right, but when I don't I am wrong. Yes, my mind belongs to me and it is nobody's so I do what it says and I get good results. Sometimes I see it as a gift from above. It is like something is always revealed to me. I praise God for that, because to me everyday I get more experience and I know how to care for the kids. This way I get more knowledge than the doctors. One of them told me to use Ammens powder to treat the skin rash. I tried a little on one spot because I never trust these modern drugs because of their side effects and I wanted to try it first. Later I observed a funny white spot on the babies skin, so I gave the powder away for the sake of the lime which helped within two days.

It was the same with these injections. I brought my first boy for the immunization because the nurse insisted. She said that the child would not fall ill after the injection. Well the night after he went for it he ran a high fever which made him very troublesome. I treated the fever and it went, but the child never behaved as nice and quiet as before. After that he slept bad, had bad moods, and cried more often. Until now. The little boy that died, had also had his first injections. So after the second shot I decided not to go back for the rest and when the twins were born, I never brought them for their immunizations. The nurse came up to talk to me, and boy, what she told me! She made me even more sure I did not want to worry with this kind of thing! She told me the vaccine was made of blood, the blood of a diseased horse. This blood is injected in the child. That can't be good! Anyway, I later read in the book of Albertine Pavy about the risks and the side effects of immunization and I knew that my own mind had been right again. To avoid risk of infection, I do not bring the children in big crowds and I make sure I wash my hands before handling babies.

I believe that is the healthiest way, although other people do not always care. Once the woman who now lives with my husband's father came to visit me and the baby. She put her hands on the floor and then handed a biscuit to one of the twins. I told her not to do that, but she would not hear that. She thinks more suspicious than anything else and if you try to teach her something and she takes it bad, she can be a very dangerous person with her tongue. Her topic is evil continuously. Well she is not too much of a normal person, she has gone through a nervous breakdown too. People say that she found her husband dead on his pillow in the morning, and that under the pillow there were some strange things. Nobody knows how they got there, but the husband was in good health the day before. They say she and her husband were involved in evil, and that something had gone wrong. Her husband had died and she never overcame the nervous

breakdown. So I try to forgive her most times, but I tell you, she is stubborn and very insulting too. She can be a very nice lady, but when correction comes she is spoiled.

I always used to say the baby's diet is very important so I always wondered what was best. While I was breast feeding I always tried to eat different things and I watched closely to see if it affected the babies. Once I ate a boiled egg, and the day after I noticed how one of the twins made bowel movements six times. I never got him to sleep and I had to separate him from his brother because he had it all over his face. I met him in a bad condition. He could hardly breathe under it. At first I thought he was teething, but then I remembered the egg I had. After that I avoided to eat eggs and other things, coffee and pepper and things, and I took a bush that is good for loose bowel.

Three days after the boy still had bowel movements often. The third day his brother tried to do the same thing to me. I was very busy washing nappies. I was very confused when I still saw no progress. I did nothing than taking care of babies and I was all tied up. My husband did get irritated with the babies crying all the time and he left.

When he got back he brought chocolate for me, but I was still not satisfied. I mean, such a small pack cost \$2.60. I would put \$1.40 more and buy a whole pound of peanuts. We had to be careful how we spent our money those days. And the chocolate might purge the child still more. All we had was a little cash from my husband's bananas and from the vegetables I tried to grow between taking care of the babies. Life is so expensive. Take the plastic pants. I always make an effort to get some once they are needed. Even the last penny I have. They do good service but since a little tear, well, here it goes. The whole thing goes bad. And so the saying goes, one bad apple spoils the whole bunch. Anyway I am beginning to complain. But I have to complain, because I find I am spending money for nothing. In April I bought six pairs of plastic pants. And look, we are just in May and only two good ones are left. Two is not enough for my little girl, because they take days to dry, especially where the elastic is. They get dirty too, for you cannot pass them through chlorine because that can affect the baby's skin.

Anyway, I bathed the twins in essence fragile to make them feel stronger. The fifth day I still had a lot of nappies to wash. Since the movements were not watery, I did not check the nurse. What could she do? Wash my nappies for me? Tell how I should wash my hands more often? A joke man. If the bowels are watery, and the baby stops peeing, that is the time to check the nurse. Or if the baby has high fever, or when the bowel looks funny. Then you can go and see the doctor. Or if they have worms. I checked the twins for these signs all the time, but I never observed them. My husband said it was probably the teeth. And right he was, after a week I saw how the kids were biting on all kinds of things. The essence helped them to sleep better. Still I am more careful with the things I feed to my family. And I always check if what I take when I am breast feeding babies to see if it agrees with them.

After that week my fingers were all sore because I had to wash so many nappies. I really felt I was in a tight position. I spoke to my mother and she sent one of my younger sisters to do the laundry for me. She wanted this daughter out of town because she was seeing a certain boy too often to her liking. So many young girls get pregnant these days. My mother had tried to talk to my sister, but she answered her back in a rude way. So my sister came to help me and things became a little easier. I felt much stronger in those days (in mind, but not in body). I was even able to spend a little more time with the babies, which I believe they need. They get tired of lying down all the time.

Since I had a little more time for my vegetables too, it was easier to buy proper clothes and things for the children. Unfortunately, I got into trouble with my husband when he decided to use the land to start growing bananas. I could not use the land further down the road, because the children were too small to take them and too small to leave them alone in the house, and I did not want my sister alone in the house either, for people told me this guy came up to meet whenever he thought I would not be around. I did not trust my father-in-law's new wife, and since the land belonged to my husband, I just had to give up my gardening. My husband said he would support us with the cash the bananas would bring, but the children are my responsibility, and I felt very uneasy. So I told him I planned to look for another job in town and bring the children to my mother's place during the day. But after the trouble with the shop owner he did not want to hear about this again. He is my husband and one is supposed to obey her husband, doesn't one? I also started to buy Cerelac for the babies when they were still young. My husband said breast milk would not be enough for them and that the boys would need more than mummy's milk alone to grow up strong and rude. The money I spent on all that formula, you won't believe it. However the diet is important and I am always careful about what I buy and how I prepare it. I have experienced that it is important to eat many different things. I believe this is what the nurses used to tell people too. So I always tried to add new things to our diet, but I often found I was subtracting rather than adding to it. So often I lacked sufficient cash! So, much was not included in the diet, not even egg or cheese. I sometimes could not even afford much peas, which is my substitute for meat. Anyway I always tried my best to use vegetables and peas. It is more nourishing, I can grow it myself, it is cheaper and it is fresh.

Unfortunately I have less vegetables to use since my husband took the land for the bananas. Ripe banana was always induced in our diet too. If we had had to buy it maybe you would hardly have found it there. But I used to thank the Father for he was our great provider. When we had a shortage of fruits and we could not drink juice, we ate a ripe banana after meals.

Up to now, me personally I prefer one or two after meals. I don't like to eat and drink at the same time. I don't believe it is good for anybody, though most people like it. I learned after this illness of my oldest son that it can cause poor

digestion and an upset stomach. Now, I always try to give the children food a long time before I give the drink, but once I was in a hurry and I let him drink his juice while chewing on his bread. Suddenly he had to vomit in a very funny way. Like a fountain it just came out of his mouth. It reached far too!

Another thing we avoided eating was canned food. In fact everything you buy in the shop has chemicals and I always used to say the less chemicals we eat, the healthier we will be. So I wanted to avoid using too much artificial things for my children. Right now I am using these multivitamins, but only because somebody brought them for me. As soon as they finish I will buy my cod-liver oil again.

I am worried about bacterias too. This got me into trouble with the man in the bakery. I once brought him something for him to hold the bread for me. He is handling the money too, and money is touched by everybody. You don't know all the people who touch it. You can spend all your money buying bacteria that way. But you know what the fellow told me? If I thought he has time for that? I was not the queen of England with a softish stomach. What a silly answer. After that I decided to make my own bread, but this asked still more time. And my older boy preferred the white bread from the shop instead of the whole wheat I baked.

I always start my days with prayer because I believe it is one of the most important parts in life which have to do with health. If we don't pray we will lack good health. Praying and fasting can keep one strong and healthy for one or two days, more than a good plate of food will do. So if one day I have just a roast banana to eat, I will still say 'praise God for the banana'. Many praise him when the house is filled. There is food, there is money. When there's nothing they are quiet like anything. They even forget to say praise to the Lord.

One thing that is always giving problems when there are little children around is vomiting. Once I had to give the bigger one of the twins milk that I had reheated. Half an hour later I hears like he was choking. It was just a blessing I was around because I would have met him dead. He was vomiting and it passed through his nostrils so he was having a difficult time. I held him upside down, blow towards his forehead, but after I put him down he was still vomiting. I got a little nervous and took him to hold him for a long time. I breast fed him because I had a paper which I got from the nurse which tells you what to do in case of vomiting, so I was following it. But he vomited after, and even more than the first time. I was frightened and my husband told me not to breast feed him, not until I see he is better. Well I had to add faith with it because I decided to call the nurse. She advised to give a little sugar, salt and lime, and I gave him three tea spoons, but he still vomited. All I could do after that was to hold him up and reaching out to God in prayer. His brother acted as if he understood the position for he stayed well. Then he had a ten-minute nap. After he was up I made a tea from peppermint and later some Dix sweetened with brown sugar. Well there I had to thank the Father for the herbs. For He said the herbs is for the healing of the nation. After

the herbs the vomiting had stopped completely, but it still kept my mind busy. I decided to drink lots of raspberry tea while breast feeding him and to avoid certain foods like milk, ripe banana and paw paw. I also decided never again to reheat milk. That is one bad thing in caring for babies, in fact, two things: vomiting and diarrhoea.

After that none of the children got anything like it again, just a cold now and again, but after I experienced how bathing the wrong way can cause that, they do not catch colds often again. I experienced this with the oldest boy. Like the face, if you wet it and you don't wet the head, then the heat goes up the head and forms a cold. It is the same with front and back. I also experienced it with myself too. Anytime I don't wet my head when I bathe, I keep water in my mouth. That avoids the heat from getting into my head. I keep it there until I am through. But babies can't do that yet, so I wash head and face, mouth, hands and private parts. But I still prefer to give them a whole bath whenever I can. To leave them like that is better than to do a hasty job. To stay without bath one or two days does not kill, but hasty bathing can! I had that experience with my second boy.

Anyway three months after she arrived at my place, my sister found herself in love with this guy in town, and took off with him to settle down in St. Martin. If God spare life, she will make her first baby there. She is only fifteen and it looks as though she is going to make the same mistake I did. I do not blame her though. A woman is supposed to have children, that's her responsibility in life. After I learned that she was going though I felt so disappointed. The first weeks I felt dizzy and depressed. I had a little trouble with my heart and breath too. One day I felt so funny, like I could not breathe and my heart running fast fast. I think it was the tension. I needed to take the exercise. That thing got me scared, man. Since that little problem I used to take a combination of sensitive plants or *mese marie*. Whenever I feel my body needs a tone-up, I use it as a tonic. I use brown sugar to sweeten it, but honey is best. I don't have time to go to the drug store to buy a tonic anyway.

After my sister left I realised I was going to have another child as well. There had been the signs, but my mind was too occupied to make me see them. The nurses speak all the time of birth control, but I believe the Father sends the children for me, because I have proven myself to be an able mother. But to have four babies to care for is hard and I don't know where we are going to stay, the seven of us. We only have a small bedroom and the drawing room is smaller still. My friend gave me a paper the other day that said that if you do not sleep with your husband at certain times, you are not likely to get pregnant. I will try and see if the Lord wants to give me an ease-up.

Fortunately God has opened a way for us: my husband is now working steadily. We even eat a little meat now and again. Benton could eat meat alone, that's how much he likes it. I prefer not to eat it too often because it is the number one cause of inflammation too. I hope that when the new baby comes my husband

can afford to pay a servant for me. Benton is a big boy now and he likes to help me with the babies too.

I have survived rough and tough times and I never complained for I always believed there will come a time when I will have enough for myself and to give others. Right now I am only thinking of one thing. I want to build my own house and I will. Apart from all the struggles I went through, now I am very happy. I have a very happy and wonderful family.