



Bobby & Sherry Burnette
A true story from the Mission Field in Haiti

NANA'S STORY

“ Her little arms were as tiny as the sticks she carried in her basket. Nana was the **picture of hopelessness**, but after three days of not finding any food to eat, she did something desperate... ”

The Long Walk to the “Ma”

It was early in the morning and the sun was peeking through the layers of dried straw, which made up nine-year-old Nana’s “home.” Soon Nana would make the long trek to the nearest water hole, or “ma” in Creole. **The animals and humans all get their water from this same place...** The water is contaminated with animal waste and many children in the village have already died of Cholera.

Even though Nana was very thirsty, she resisted drinking it as one of her relatives died from Cholera. **She was so afraid, that she would go for days without drinking anything.** Today she had to bring a bucket of water back to her straw hut to wash clothes. **Shaking, she carefully lifted the five-gallon plastic bucket filled with water onto her head** and balanced the heavy load with a “troket.” (A troket is a twisted piece of rag placed under a heavy load to help balance it.)

Nana had only one dress that her mother had bought for her from the bundle of used clothes someone was selling on the street. (Used clothes are called “pepe” in Creole.) She kept that one dress for going to the market, but it was dirty.

A Little Girl and a Heavy Load

Nana’s **tiny bare feet kicked up clogs of dirt as she wobbled back to her hut** with the heavy bucket of dirty water, trying not to spill a drop. **The trip to and from the “ma” took several hours.**

When Nana arrived back at her hut, she carefully lifted the bucket of water down from her head and set it on the ground. Her mother had already left to go out to try to find some sticks to sell. Nana’s **five brothers and sisters** were sitting on the ground, playing with some rocks. **They were all so hungry.** She went inside their tiny, straw hut, but **there was no food to be found.** There was not even one piece of bread to share with her siblings... **There was just an empty pot and a big, wooden “pilon” in the corner.** (A pilon is a large, hollowed-out log used for grinding pitimi, corn, etc.)

Every Day Was the Same

Nana said nothing... **She was hungry and her siblings were hungry, but there was nothing she could do.** Her father had gone out to try to find some large rocks to sell, but she knew he would come home with “nothing” again. **Every day was the same... No food for her or her brothers and sisters to eat.** She wondered to herself if her mother would be able to sell some sticks for food today. As she was washing her only dress and the family’s clothes, **the little ones began to cry. Nana hated to hear them cry.** She put the wet clothes down on a mat and tried to hold and comfort the little ones, but it was no use. **They cried even louder when they were hungry.** She finished washing and put her “wet dress” on. She grabbed the large “panye,” or weaved basket, and began to walk. **Her dry, reddish-black hair was not combed... She was dirty and barefoot, but she didn’t care.**

If My Mother Could Just Sell Some Sticks

Nana’s tiny little arms looked like sticks. **Her chest bones stuck out. She was severely malnourished, as were her smaller sisters.** After an hour of “hunting,” she found a few sticks and put them in her basket. She thought, “If my mother has sold sticks, she will have a little money to buy some rice. And when she comes back, we will need some more sticks for a fire to cook the rice.”

It was always difficult to find sticks in this area of Haiti, but she managed to find five large ones and a piece from a dried palm tree. She put them in her basket and started the long walk back. Her little sisters were left by themselves, but they were so hungry, they never wandered far from home. **After all, none of the children had ever been to school, not even Nana. All she had ever known was endless days of “hard work.”**

This is What Hopelessness Looks Like

It was getting late and the hot tropical sun was setting on the village of L’Estere. **Nana had spent the whole day just making one trip to the water hole and one trip to find sticks for a fire. She was hungry, tired, thirsty and weak.** She sat down in front of the family’s straw hut and held the basket in her hands. **She was a very sad little girl. She was the picture of total despair. There was no “spark” in her eyes.** Her eyes and fingernails showed that she was very anemic. **Nana was the picture of hopelessness.**

Here was a little girl with no plans for the future. She had never had ribbons for her hair. She had never had a doll or even a pair of shoes. She had never had perfume or powder to put on. She did not know what it was like to take a hot shower or bath. There were no birthdays to celebrate, because each day was the same, and there was never enough for a whole plate of food. Worst of all, she had no hope.

The Worst Day of Her Life

As we talked to Nana, **we could see the hopelessness in her eyes.** She would often look down at the ground when she talked. We asked her to tell us about the “worst day of her life,” and this is what she said... **It brought tears to our eyes.** “I remember the day that I heard **Love A Child was starting a feeding program** near my village. My brothers, sisters and I went down, but the line of children was so, so long and **it was very hot. We waited for hours, because we were all so hungry and there were hundreds of other children.** Everyone got a big plate of food, but **when we got to the big cooking pots, there was nothing left. We were so sad.** So, we went back to our hut and thought, ‘We will get back in the line tomorrow.’ But the next day, the same thing happened. We waited and waited once again... The line of children was just as long... When we finally got to the big chodias (large cooking pots), **they were empty again. There was not even a handful of rice, let alone a few grains for us to share.**” (Our Haitian workers had cooked seven large pots full of food each day we were there, and each pot fed one hundred children.)

Tears swelled up in my eyes as I looked at Nana's face. For two days, she had gotten into the line of children we were feeding, and there were nearly seven hundred, **but it was too late for Nana and her brothers and sisters to get food.**

The Pilon or Hollowed-Out Log

I asked her, "Nana, what did you do then?" She said, "That happened for two days. After two days of trying to get food, we all felt so sad." Then, she said, **"I felt that I was like nothing, like no one cared about me. I felt like the big 'pilon' that was stuck in the corner of my hut."** (A pilon is a hollowed-out log that the Haitian people use for grinding coffee or pitimi. They use a large tree limb as a thick wooden pole, and lift the tree limb up and slam it down into the hollowed-out log, to grind.)

What Nana Cooked for Supper

Then she said, **"No one cared about the hunger in my belly.** So, when there was nothing to eat, and my mother was gone, **I got salt and put it into my chodia and poured water in,** from the bucket of water I had gotten to wash our clothes in... I made **'salt water soup'** for us kids to drink. **That's what we had for those two days, when we did not find food."**

I have never heard a story, from any child in Haiti, quite like Nana's. First, she told us of how harsh her life was... Then she shared how she and her siblings **stood in line on two different days, trying to get food** during one of our large Feeding Programs, **but always got there "too late."** She told us **about how she felt like a piece of hollowed-out log, or the pilon in the corner of their hut.** She also talked about **her despair and sadness... All because of hunger, day after day.**

We felt so horrible when we heard about Nana getting to the big cooking pots, only to find **there was no food left, not even a grain of rice.** There had been so many hungry children, and Nana was from another village, so **she never made it in time. Then, she turned to the only "food" she could make... "salt water soup."**

Right now, as I am writing you this letter, I can feel the pain in my heart for this child and so many others. **Hunger makes people, and children, do strange things to survive.** You may be wondering why I am sending you **this Bible Marker with Nana's picture, along with a "salt packet."** I want you to see and taste the same thing that Nana saw and tasted, as she turned to making **"salt water soup" to quench her hunger and that of her siblings.** When I look at Nana's picture, I see a **little girl whose arms are no bigger than the tiny sticks she carries in her basket.** I can see her face of sadness and despair, when I lay in my bed at night.

That is why God has given you and me the "heart of God." It makes us reach out to **those we have never met, but yet we love.** We need to **"wrap the arms of God"** around each hungry child, like Nana, and say, **"Here is a hot plate of food for you to eat," every day.** **We want to increase our Children's Feeding Programs, especially in these poorest areas, and you can make that happen!** **Any sacrificial gift you could give right now would help more than you could ever know.**

A gift of \$16 would supply 432 meals for Nana and other hungry children. Would you be willing to sacrifice **a gift of \$48** if it meant providing **1,296 meals** for hungry children? Or perhaps you could go the “extra mile,” and give **\$120 to sponsor 3,240 meals? Or \$500 to sponsor 13,500 meals? Your gift, large or small or the widow’s mite, will help us feed children like Nana and others, and also help keep all other outreaches of Love A Child going. No gift is too small to a starving child. Every penny counts.**

Perhaps you could sacrifice a gift of **\$1,000, which will provide 27,000 meals**, or enough food to feed those children and families in a small village, like the one that Nana lives in, and so many other villages where the children and their families go without. We are praying and trusting the Lord to supply the funds for several “40-foot shipping containers” of food this month. Each container has **272,000 meals** and costs **\$10,000** for us to bring from the States to Haiti, get it released from Customs and then brought to our Food Distribution Center.

I wish you could be with us one time when we are feeding hungry children... I wish you could watch them pick up each and every single grain of rice and lick their tiny fingers. It would bring tears to your eyes.

You are not reading this story by accident. **God never does anything “by accident,” because there is always a purpose.** He knows you will be the “good Samaritan” who stops to help the poor on the side of the road. **He knows that “you” will stop, even if no one else does.** We need to make sure that no other child stands in line for days trying to get food, only to find out that there is none left. **Remember, there are “blessings” to those who feed and care for the poor.** Psalm 41:1-3 gives “Seven Supernatural Promises” to those who help the less fortunate.

I know that if you were there, you would have never let Nana and her siblings go home hungry. You would have “gone the extra mile” to make sure they had food, and that is why the Lord wants to use you to help feed Nana and many other hungry children, just like her. Don’t let her go to sleep with only “salt water in her belly,” but rather, help us to help her and others have a “full, hot nourishing meal” each day.

Please read over the February Hunger Reply Coupon and choose how much you want to give. The enclosed paper will let you know the ways to get your food gift to the children.

Your urgent food gift is needed right now! Thank you for reading “Nana’s Story.”

Bobby and Sherry Burnette

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P.S. When we receive your gift, we would like to send you our book, *Love Is Something You Do*, if you have not yet received it. Also, we have a beautiful, full-color Devotional titled, *Faith, Hope, and Love Devotional - A 90-Day Walk With God*. You may want one for yourself or for a friend, if you already have one. Be sure to let us know if you would like one or both of these special books when making your gift. And, please remember Nana and her siblings in your prayers. “Food will bring her hope” and as the Haitians say, “Hope makes us live!”

You can give your gift online today at: www.loveachild.com



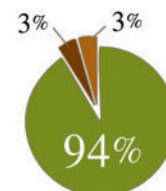
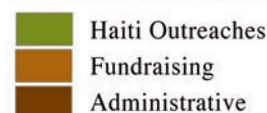
Enhancing Trust



AMERICA'S BEST CHARITIES

Love A Child is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Christian Humanitarian organization serving the needs of children in Haiti. In addition to being a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), Love A Child has earned the America's Best Charities “Best in America” Seal of Excellence and a Four-Star rating from Charity Navigator.

2017 Financial Statement:



HERE IS HOW YOU CAN GET YOUR FOOD GIFT TO NANA AND MANY, MANY OTHER CHILDREN...



You can give by Mail: Enclosed is a **postage-paid envelope and the February Hunger Reply Coupon**. Please pray about what the Lord would have you do and fill the coupon out and mail it in today. **You can keep the Bible Marker with Nana's picture.** It will remind you of how the children of Haiti suffer from hunger and **how blessed we are** that God has given us food to eat and a place to live.



You can give Online: Visit our website at: **www.loveachild.com** and click on the **"Make A Donation" Button**. This is the fastest way to get food to the children. If possible, please try to give an amount each month by "Automatic Giving" on your Credit Card. That way, you won't even have to think about it, and we can count on your gift to come each month.



You can give by Phone: You can reach our Worldwide Missions Office in Fort Myers, FL by calling: **(239) 210-6107**. This is another fast way to get food to the children. When you speak to a Love A Child staff member, they will be glad to answer any questions you may have and if they do not know the answer, they will get in touch with us, wherever we are in Haiti, and get back to you.

NANA'S STORY



Please pray about what the Lord would have you give, and if it takes a sacrifice, God will bless you back 100-fold. **We are on the "front lines" of the battle against starvation.** It is not easy to be a missionary and see these precious children suffering each day, but we know that God has sent "you" to help. Your gift, whether large or small, or the widow's mite, will help us feed these children and help keep all other outreaches of Love A Child going... **No gift is too small. Every penny counts.**

In **1st Samuel 30:21-24**, King David had gone to battle against the Amalakites. He had to leave 200 chosen men to "stay behind and guard the stuff," because they had already been in battle and they were weak. When David returned from the battle with the spoil, he made sure that "everyone would divide" the spoil, alike... those who went to battle and those who had to stay behind. When you and I go to "battle against starvation," some have to stay behind to pray and give, but the Lord will bless us all the same! Thank you for giving. - **Bobby**

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