

## “William and Abena”

from *Hustling Is Not Stealing*, pp.248-56

Part Two: With the British in a Provincial Capital

Chapter 5: Fucking English People

Excerpted in *First of the Month* 6, no.1 (winter 2004): 15-17

Introduction by Benj DeMott, editor of *First of the Month*

In the late 1970s, a young West African woman named Hawa talked to John Chernoff about her life in Ghana, Togo and Burkina Faso as an “ashawo” woman, an unmarried woman dependent on men. As presented in *Hustling Is Not Stealing: Stories of an African Bar Girl*, Hawa’s story gets pretty wild. And in an age of AIDS, her tales of night life may now be “more of a eulogy than a celebration.” Still, Hawa’s voice strikes a satirical blow against scholarly and journalistic analyses of contemporary Africa that offer (in Chernoff’s words), “at least one sure conclusion, which is that on the entire African continent, no one is having fun.”

A testimony to the “kinetic energy in the running mouth of a laughing girl,” *Hustling Is Not Stealing* is not an easy book to summarize. But Chernoff’s extended introduction offers a deep, felt response to Hawa’s narrative flow (which he treats in a section headed, “Ethnography to the Second Power”). Chernoff writes brilliantly about storytelling, sex-work and AIDS, urban life and traditional values, processes of modernization and the strategy of a brilliant woman warrior (“The Brer Rabbit School of Feminism”):

[Hawa’s] stories prescribe the antidote of humor and the refusal to suffer. She conveys an attitude that encompasses qualities of strength, adaptiveness, and tolerance within a kind of cultivated gentleness and lightheartedness. I have been happy to dwell inside the stories. Faced with the mess Africa seems from a distance, I catch a glimpse of that sweetness that I remember as part of life in Africa. . . . That sweetness is an incredible achievement of the

people there. And it is an achievement to capture it and give us a glimpse of it, as Hawa did.

Alive to “The Politico-economic, Techno-philosophical, Socio-historical, Global-developmental Backdrop,” Chernoff never lets his focus on the larger context distance him from those whom he calls the “dis” people: “In the big picture, where history and money are being made, they are apart and away from the centers of power, out of it, utterly and thoroughly. The prefix ‘dis-,’ which dictionaries say means all of the above, attaches to their names with appalling reliability: disenfranchised and disadvantaged, disaffiliated and disinherited, discomfited and discredited, displaced and discarded, discussed and discounted, dispossessed and dismissed. . . .”

Chernoff’s sense of solidarity is palpable in passages like the following one:

These are the people who are last in line, those without the opportunity to participate in the universal grabbing. They have no choice but to manage with patience. Despite the chicanery at every turn, they hold strongly to a fragile fabric of social decency. Their approach to life is characterized by every type of exploitation but also every type of altruistic kindness. How else can one account for the survival of the common people? No economist has ever figured out how they make it from day to day. The per diem allowance deemed appropriate by the U.S. Department of State is several times the monthly wage of a well-employed worker, and more than half the people in a city like Accra are unemployed. It is a situation that would turn us into gunslingers, and instead, people somehow hang together and get by. The society may be disorganized, but the people are not in disorder. Under pressure from modern life, the old strengths of the traditional societies continue to support the social vessel. The extended family offers shelter to the castaways, and the mentality of the extended family reaches into the urban scene where people from different ethnic groups call each other ‘brother’ and ‘sister.’ The traditional ethic of redistribution ensures that if there is little money to begin with,

then at least the money that is there will move at an incredible velocity. Sharing is everywhere – sharing a room, sharing one’s clothes, sharing food, sharing a cigarette, sharing a laugh, sharing a moment in the evening breeze. Under the pressures of modern living at its worst, the inherited values of the people do not break, though they often bend.

Chernoff’s sympathetic understanding of those values informs his subtle discussion of sexual relationships and “cultural patterns of exchange” in West Africa. We’ve sampled the section of his introduction devoted to these issues (“Commodity Traders”) below and followed that with one of Hawa’s tales, “William and Abena.” The passages below and the story that follows are excerpted from *Hustling Is Not Stealing*, published by the University of Chicago Press, © 2003 by John M. Chernoff, all rights reserved. A second volume, *Exchange Is Not Robbery*, will be published by the University of Chicago Press in 2005.

[Hawa and her associates’] notion of sexual exchange has its broad and complex roots in tradition. In West Africa, giving somebody something shows that you like the person, which makes sense. Among the many things you can give a person, money is one of the better ones. You greet a chief or an elder with a small amount of money and some cola nuts or drink. In many traditional societies, even young boys start their friendships with young girls by giving a token amount of money they call friendship money. The friendship may or may not become sexual, but the money or the gifts that follow establish the relationship and show that the boy is serious about the girl. The friendship will develop with the boy giving the girl gifts that are within his means, such as a fowl or foodstuffs or money if he has any, and the girl will reciprocate by cooking food and sending it to her boyfriend’s house. When children grow up and want to marry, it is customary in many places for a prospective bridegroom to pay money to the family of his bride or to buy many things and have them in place for his bride when she comes to his family’s house; if he fails to spend something substantial, it shows that he doesn’t respect her. When you follow the matter into details, the situation has its permutations: you might find that

some poor people don't want their daughters to marry rich people, because if the marriage later runs into trouble, they might be reproached that they sold their daughter for money; the idea of the exchange is still there even when it is avoided. Of course, when it comes to a prospective marriage, parents make allowances for other people's means, and there is really no fixed price. The point is that even in situations like getting married, there should be something material to stand for the relationship, something for everyone to see. A married woman who can afford her own everything will expect her husband to buy her some cloth for her dresses at least once a year, and if he cannot provide, she may forgive him, but her fellow women will abuse her to her face and tell her that she's wasting her time with that man.

In general, people think about the connection between material things and relationships in terms of respect and in terms of demonstrating the benefits of what one person can do for another. After all, who is your better friend, the one who loves you or the one who helps you? Most people in Africa would answer that the one who helps you is the one who really loves you. Sex is not excluded from this general orientation: sex without exchange is exploitative. In one sense, being out front about it is a way of making sure that there is some sort of equality between the partners. For an ashawo woman in a land without alimony or community property, her deal is often better than that of a traditional wife, a sort of pay-as-you-go marriage. . . . Sex can beget relationships, and relationships are too important to be denied that possible channel. One can do it for fun, of course, but at a certain point, the perception is not that such fun is bad but rather that it is useless. In villages and backward places, some very young or vulnerable girls might follow a man to his room out of obedience because they are too timid or respectful to refuse. People whose eyes are open would disparage such girls as 'bush' girls not because they had sex but because they have no experience and don't respect themselves enough to get something in return. . . .

The corollary is that in towns and in villages too, young girls whose parents cannot help them enough, and whom no one would consider prostitutes, have relationships with men in order to pay their school fees. Remember the poverty factor, the maze of contingencies where people adapt their lives to a changing social environment. To many people, they're just girls growing up and trying to better themselves, and pandering themselves for an education is one of their options. When these girls become adults and find themselves on their own, they continue to assess their relationships with respect to tangible benefits. A working woman in a clerical or sales job might not think of asking for money as a straight exchange for sex, but once a relationship is established, she will ask her boyfriend to help her with some things that her salary cannot provide. Beyond paying entrance fees and entertaining her, he might see a lot of resources moving in her direction. Maybe she asks him to buy her some shoes she says she needs, or maybe she asks for help with her room rent, thus progressing from things to cash. If the man fails to demonstrate an interest in helping her, she will find someone who is more serious about her and her problems. If not, like a traditional wife, she might be abused by her girlfriends for being a fool for a man. . . .

Within a framework of exchange, it's not a question of morals but a question of strategy. Many women in Africa merely supplement other forms of income with what Westerners might call semiprofessional prostitution but what they call getting boyfriends. As for the 'heavy' ashawo women who hang out at the international hotels and nightclubs, rather than simply providing sexual services for a fee, many think of a score as a steady boyfriend who could be a good provider, not unlike the kind of men we tell our daughters to look for. Ashawo women often attempt to develop long-term relationships that exchange emotional sustenance for general economic assistance, which takes such forms as capital or resources for trading, school or apprenticeship fees, or incremental investment in a house.

## *William and Abena*

You know, in Africa here, many girls must follow men for money, to get something for themselves. But the first time, when I was with Nigel in Tamale [a town in northern Ghana], I had no experience to keep money. I just – *pfft-pfft* – spent money like that. Nigel: I stayed with him a long time. Oh, yeah. Sometimes, when I was in Accra, I used to be with a friend for some time, but you know, when I was in Accra, I could be with people for a few days or some weeks, but always I was not staying there. Sometimes, half of my things are in my house, and half of my things are in your house. Maybe it will be two or three days before you will see me. I will be in my house, or I will go with my friends to some places. But when I was with Nigel, I didn't know anybody else in Tamale as a boyfriend, so even when I would go to anyone's house to visit, I still did my everything at Nigel's house. But when I was in Tamale, I had plenty of friends.

Yeah, let me tell you. The first time when I went to Tamale from Accra, I didn't know many girls there, but I got to know some of the African girls who were staying with these British people. We were three. All of us three, we knew each other at Accra, not to go round-round together, not as friends, but I met them first at Accra, and I used to be seeing them sometimes in the town. So when I was in Tamale, we met and saw ourselves there. The one girlfriend was called Gladys. She was married to a Lebanese man. The other was called Abena [pronounced with an accented first syllable: *AH-bey-nah*]. Gladys also knew Abena from Accra. One time I saw Abena in the cinema, so I started telling Gladys that I had seen this girl in the cinema, but as she was not my good friend in Accra, we didn't used to talk to each other. So then Gladys said, "She is a good girl. She is my friend, too." You see? And at the same moment we were talking this talk, we were going to the market, and when we entered the market, we met the girl there. So we all became friends.

The boyfriend of Abena knew her from Accra, and they were together for about three years. I think they went to some places before coming to Tamale. He was working at one of the companies in the town.

He was British. When I met Abena in Tamale, we were living in the same area. The man was living in a bungalow on the road to Bolgatanga, and they had a small road you could join from there to Bagabaga [a suburb of Tamale].

Abena used to come to visit us every time, but we didn't go to her. She was coming to my place at Bagabaga. Gladys would come, and Abena would also come for the whole day. Gladys's husband had a shop, and when he closed the shop, then he would come and look for Gladys at my place. Abena too, when her man closed from work, he would also come and find her in my place. So every time they were coming to me. You know, as for me, I'm free.

So these girls, Gladys and Abena, when we met in Tamale there, as we knew each other from Accra, we were happy. We were good friends, walking together. We would go to our shopping and our everything together. So cinema: when we would go to shopping, we would have to pass to look at the picture to know what is on today. [Films normally change daily; the announcements are made by the display of film posters.] And if it was a nice film, all of us will promise, "Ah, tonight I will come to the cinema."

But whenever I would go, I didn't see the one girlfriend, Abena. I saw the boyfriend, every day. Then, ah! What can it be? Then I said, "Ah!" One day we went to one nice film, and then the next morning time, Abena came to me, and I said, "Ah, Abena. Yesterday you missed something nice, something good!"

Then she said, "Where?"

I said, "At the cinema."

She said, "But I was there," and she started to give me all the story of the film.

Then I said, "What the hell?! I saw your man; I didn't see you. Or did your man tell you?"

She said, "No, no, no, no. You know, my man has a wife in London. So he doesn't want to walk with me, for people to see him that he is walking with an African girl. So any time when you see him upstairs in the balcony, I'm downstairs. Every time we go to cinema, then after cinema I have to wait for him on the road, before he will come and pick me."

So she was telling why they don't sit together when they go to cinema. OK? She was living with this man. At first when she was with the man, the man didn't have a wife. Then he went on leave for three months, and he married. He left the wife there, and he came back. Maybe the wife will come, or the wife won't come. Nobody knows. So he told the girl that now he has to change his life – they shouldn't go to cinema together – in Tamale there are many people who know his wife – they will write to the wife – and all this.

So when this girl was telling me, then I said, “Ah! This man! Oh, no! Look. Don't try to be a fool. Don't you think my man has a wife, too? He also has a wife! Even they wrote his wife. His wife came and met me here. She had nothing to do to him. Even if they write this man's wife, and because of that, the wife will say she will divorce, or she will come and kill you in Africa here, she can't do anything. So the way this man is taking you, he's teaching you [cheating you; showing you about life]. He doesn't want you to know how to spend money. If you know these things, or you like these things much, every time you will be asking him for money to buy them. That's why.”

And I told her this story.

I was with Nigel in Tamale when Nigel's wife came and met us. We didn't know that she was coming. She didn't write any letter. Some people wrote a letter to her, “This is what Nigel is doing.” And she also had a big heart, so she didn't write any letter: she just came like that.

And then, the day when she came, I was afraid, but this man *fucked* her [verbally abused her]. Shit! “What a bloody hell? To come to me without writing? Yes! Here is Hawa! Is she the one you want to see? She is here! Hawa! This is Josephine. She has come to see you. Josephine, this is my girlfriend.”

You know, that day I was ashamed, and I was afraid, too. I thought that when we sleep together, this woman will shoot me. The time I was a kid, they told me that if you go with a European and he has a wife, if the wife meets you, she will kill both of you together. So that night, I didn't sleep the whole night! *Hee-hee*. I was afraid.

And: we even came to Gymkhana Club together, to drink together. All three of us! Yeah. We two women, we were at the back of the car, and then Nigel must be a driver for us. *Hee-hee*. This woman was to sit

in front, and she said “No.” Then she and Nigel asked me too to sit in front, then I said no, too. How can I sit? You are the *Madame*: you have to sit before me. But I was thinking: maybe I will be sitting in front and then she will punch my back!! *Ha!* So we two both went to the back of the car. We went to Gymkhana and drank. And everybody said, “*Eh-h-h!* Nigel! What you are doing is not good!”

You know, these English people, they are very fucking people. They talked about me, that I’m this and that. But the wife didn’t say anything. She stayed one week, then she went away. She said, “OK, Hawa, you watch my husband for me. I think you can take care of him well. Because he’s so stupid. He drinks much. If he is doing something foolish, you should stop him.” Then this woman went. When she went, she gave me a *nice* dress, a nice one. She made it by herself. She was a good tailor. In London. Yeah.

So when this girl, Abena, was telling me all this, you know, *ah!* Then I said, “Oh!”

So it came to a time when this girl was telling us *all-l-l* her problem. OK, we used to go to shopping, to get some new dresses, to get some shoes, to get some Cutex, and some lipstick – some things like that. But if you asked this girl, “Wouldn’t you buy some of this? It’s a nice thing,” then she would say, “No, my man doesn’t like it.”

*Mm-hm.* And so, then we used to ask, “Why doesn’t your man like it?”

She’d say, “If I dress like this, my man will say I’m ashawo.” And her hair, the man didn’t like it when she would plait the hair. He said it’s ashawo. Every time she should look like a student.

So from this point, what this girl was bringing out, then I thought, “Ah, if this girl doesn’t get sense! This man is teaching her! So I have to give her some experience.” *Ha-ha!* So this is the time when I told her, “Look, this man is teaching you.”

Then she said, “Oh, my man is not good. He doesn’t want me to tie my hair, because if I have plenty hair, maybe they will call me ashawo, and I should put on this, and I shouldn’t put on high shoes, and –”

Then I said, “No. My friend, this man is teaching you. He doesn’t want you to know money. He doesn’t want you to know how to spend

money. He's teaching you 'don't-do-that.' The next time when he tells you 'don't do that,' do it – and see.”

So I thought I was a good sister to give her advice. But then, this girl was stupid. I was thinking she was a nice girl, so I would try to change her mind to know that this man was teaching her. You see? But that was how I got her problem. She was stupid. When I gave her advice, she went and told this man *all* that I had been telling her. *Um-hum! Ha! Ah!*

So the man got annoyed. “What kind of girl is this? Hawa? Trying to spoil my girl? I will see her.”

So the next morning, seven o'clock, we were inside. We were coming to table to eat, then this man just walked up to our house and knocked the door: *boom-boom-boom-boom*. So Nigel opened the door. “Ah, good morning, Mr. William.”

Then this man had a big voice, “Where is Hawa?”

Then Nigel said, “What? What is wrong?”

Then he said, in his big voice, “I want to see Hawa.”

Then I said, “Yeah. I'm here. What?”

He said, “Look. You are fucking. If you are a fucking girl” – *ha!* – “If you are a fucking girl, you don't think of yourself? You shouldn't tell all these things to my girlfriend like that, because the girl loves me. I want to tell you today. You don't know where I met Abena. You know, I met Abena, it's a long time, it's about three years now. You just found Nigel about two months, so you think you are high. Because Nigel is a fool. He's a fucking old man. He gives you money to do whatever you want.” *Ha!* Then: “Don't try to spoil my Abena for me. What did you tell her yesterday?”

Then I said, “What did I tell her?! Yes! What I told her is true. Because I'm African. If I see a kind of African and she is fooling herself like this, too. One man like you, you are not the size for Abena. [You are not up to the standard for Abena, i.e., you don't have the money to take care of her properly.] And then you say she should follow you because of love, I think, the way I don't follow Nigel with love.”

Then Nigel said, “Yes! Yes! Hawa doesn't follow me with love. Money cannot buy love, but money can rent love!” *Ha!*

So my man, he was strong, you know. Nigel. This man just came there to fuck me off. And you know, Nigel didn't need things like this. When this man told me these fucking things, that was the time when Nigel also put his mouth inside. So he just came out and said, "Look, you shouldn't treat this girl this way. She's a — they are all Africans. Hawa can show her some experience, because they don't live with us free. You say you have married. You won't marry her. So because of money, they live with us." *Ha-ha!* You know, Nigel was trying to tell him the truth, what he should do but he didn't want to do it. "If you don't like the girl, you should let her go. You shouldn't do that to a girlfriend." So Nigel just shamed him like that. He said, "Yes. What Hawa is telling her is correct. Because she's African. When she sees this African girl living with a white man that is not correct living, she must tell her."

Then Nigel said, "Abena is eating every day in my house. So from today going, she must pay for what she eats here. Because, I don't want — you say Hawa's spoiling her — maybe it's because she is giving her food. Suppose you were feeding her well, she wouldn't come to my house to eat. Then, she can listen to advice also. So: if you don't want this, then you must pay for what Abena eats."

Then he said, "How much?"

Then Nigel said, "OK. You take it like: African food is very cheap. She ate here about two weeks now. So, you know yourself."

He said, "Yes."

"OK. You yourself, make account. Two weeks: how much?"

Then this man said *he* doesn't know how much I have spent to get my food. So Nigel said, "What do we make it? We must make all our accounts: fifty cedis! Yeah! For two weeks! Yeah, we won't take it to be much. Fifty cedis only."

Then we sent a letter to him. And William said he wouldn't pay this, because, every time he gives this girl food in the house, so if she doesn't eat in the house and she comes to me and eats, then this girl herself should go and pay the bill.

So Nigel said, "OK. If this will be the case, Hawa will come to you and eat, too."

I didn't like the idea, you know, but Nigel just told me. "OK. You just make a quick way. You are not going to eat, but you should say you are coming to greet her." So when the girl came to me, I told her that I would be coming to greet her, to know her place.

So one day we were in the house. Then Nigel said, "You won't eat in this house today. Let's go to Abena's house!" *Hee-hee*. And then, nine o'clock in the morning, he carried me with his car, and he dropped me at Abena's place. Then Nigel told this man that, oh, he's going to Kumbungu, so I'm alone in the house, and that's why he brought me here to talk to Abena. He didn't talk about food.

So, we were there. Twelve o'clock. *Bing!* Then this man said, "You must go to the quarters! [servant's quarters: small separate rooms behind or attached to a house] Some people are coming to me!"

What the bloody hell! When I'm in the house, and Abena comes to me, even a thousand people can come to Nigel, and Nigel will never tell us to go to the quarters or to go to the toilet. And this man said, if we don't want to go to the quarters, if it's hot, we can go to his bedroom, but when we hear that somebody is going to enter the bedroom, we must hide ourselves in the toilet. Then I said, "No. As for me, I won't do that."

So Abena got up and went. And I was sitting there. And he was trying to force me! And I said, "*He-e-ey!*" *Ha!* This man, I dealt with him before. I said, "Hey! Don't try to force me! I won't go anywhere. If you want, you must take me back to my house. Because when Abena comes to me, you know, Nigel used to drop her. But Nigel has traveled; he's not there. So if you don't want somebody to see me in your room, you should take me back with your car."

He said, "But these people are *coming!* Oh, Hawa, *please.*"

Then I said, "I'm not 'please.' First time you are forcing me, and now you are asking me with 'please'. These people, are they eating people? Or if they come and meet me here, they will say something about —"

"No-o, you know, I have big problems — and my wife — her friends are coming here. If they come and see, they will write something against me." And that and this and that.

“Uh-huh! Is that the way? But I’m not among. And these people: many people know me here. I’m living with Nigel. If they come and see you with me, it’s nothing.”

Then this man started, “*Ba, ba, ba-ba.*” And then these people came. *Ha!*

“Oh, hello! Hello!” And then, some of them didn’t like it. You know, English people are very wicked. Some of the women squeezed their face [frowned; tightened their faces] and made their face so. I didn’t care. I lit my cigarette, brought my leg to cross my leg. Then I said, “Hey! *Hey Abena!* Won’t you come?”

Then this man looked at me. He wanted to tell me to shut up, but these people were looking at him, so he was just standing like this. And I was laughing. So at the last minute, I left them. Then I went to the quarters. I said, “Oh! Abena! How can you be a prisoner like this?” You know, I didn’t stop from what I told her at home. The first warning is not a warning; the second one, too: I wanted to say it again. “Why do you want to be foolish like this? When you come to Nigel, don’t you see that plenty people come to Nigel. And I don’t go anywhere. I sit on a stool, and we talk together. They talk to him, and whatever they talk, if I’m living there, he never tells me to go out. But why you are living like this? You think you are a small girl? You are not a small girl. This man knows you for about three years. What did you get from him? Won’t you leave him and go and find another man?” That’s what I said, in the quarters.

So, I vexed. I passed from the quarters. Even I didn’t tell the man anything. I just passed from the quarters, then I went out. I got my taxi and went to my bungalow, and then I told Nigel what happened. Then Nigel said, “Let’s go.” *Heh-heh.* My Nigel was another foolish man, you know. “Let’s go there! What a fucking bloody hell! This fucking man, he thinks he is the best man? He thinks he’s an Englishman? This man is from bush! [an abuse, that a person has no sense or manners] He’s not a real Englishman. Fucking man with a long legs!” Because this man was very tall! *Ha!* So we went there.

“William, William.”

“What?” He had this big voice, you know. “What should I do for you? Nigel, you want to trouble me. I don’t want that. Even if you want Abena, I can give you her things, together with Hawa’s things. Why?”

Then Nigel said, “But, you can’t do that. Abena comes to me. If people are there, we eat together with Abena. Why should you sack Hawa?”

Then he said, “I didn’t sack her, but I told her to give me excuse, and she refused. And these people met her.”

Then Nigel said, “OK.” Then, “Did she eat?”

Then he said, “No, she didn’t eat.”

The Nigel said, “Hey, William. You must pay the fifty cedis. You must pay the fifty cedis. We are all coming here to find money, you know? I’m also from London to come and find money. And you are from your village, too!” – *Ha!* – “To come and find your money. How can I be feeding your girl?”

Then: Abena was very foolish, stupid. So she came and announced these topics again which I told her. She said, “*Um-hum*. Even if I am foolish, it’s true. What you told me is true. Since I stayed with him, three years, he didn’t get me anything. You just came here two months, and you have two sewing machines, you have that and this, and that. You told me all. But I’m foolish, because, if you love a man, they say you are foolish. William, I love you. That’s why you think I am a fool. Hawa came here about two months now. She met me here in Tamale but now she has two machines and she has that and this and you don’t give me anything and now I can see what Hawa is telling me is true.”

He said, “Who told you that?”

I said, “Yes, I told her that she is fool. Because, first time – you go to cinema, you don’t go with her. You have to go to a different place. And after cinema, she has to wait for you on the road. OK. And when she is here with you, she doesn’t put on a high shoe because it is costly. If she’s going to buy it, you are going to buy it for her, and it’s costly, so you don’t want her to do it. So you say, ‘If you do that, you will be ashawo.’ So, suppose she’s not ashawo, where did you meet her?”

He said, “Lido nightclub.”

Then I said, “Lido nightclub! Which people are there? The married people?” *Ha-ha-ha!* “The ashawo people! They are the ashawos. At Lido nightclub, if you find some girl there, you must know that she’s ashawo. You should let her enjoy herself, because you are not going to

marry her. You have a wife. And you have to give her something so that when you go away, she will remember you. She will say, 'Ah, first time I met one man, and he was that and this, and he is the one who gave me this.' She will remember you. But when you treat her like this, it's not good."

Then we talked, *o-o-o*. Nigel said something, I said something. William was annoyed. Then, he had a parrot. This parrot, since we knew this parrot, until this man left Tamale, this parrot had no hair. He said they brought the parrot when it was baby. It didn't have hair. Any time when one hair comes out like this, this parrot would eat it. And so every time, it was like a chicken when you take all the hair out. Then the parrot also started talking, saying, "*Quago, quago. Kak kak, kak kak, kak kak, kak, ka-kak.*"

Then Nigel said, "You see, the way you are bad, you have a parrot who has no hair but he can *talk!*"

So we left this man and went away. And this man was annoyed. You know, in the Gymkhana Club, sometimes when we went, we met this man. He wouldn't say hello to us. He was *annoyed*. He used to come to the Gymkhana Club alone. You would never know that the girl was staying with him. So from there, this man didn't talk to us, and we didn't talk to this man. Our friendship was finished, with that Abena, and with this man also. Before, this man used to come to us every day. From that time, no friends. *Ha!* No understanding; no friends. Yeah, so all this is why I don't like to give friends advice. You will be getting problems inside. *Ha-ha!*