The Love and Life of Rend Percente

As told to
Richard Stoffle
Little Farmer's Cay
Exuma, Bahamas
2013
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As told to Richard W. Stoffle
At Little Farmer’s Cay,
Exuma Cays, the Bahamas

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At
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"I had a lifetime of so many things...
I is a pretty settled fellow now-- I’m fifty-three, you know."

School Days

I had an early experience ’cause I step outta school young. And during the time I was in school, I had me some vast experiences. Take for instance the young ladies, well they call them young ladies on this cay, they was all my students in class because my uncle used to leave me in charge. And they is woman folks with grandchildren now! You know what I mean? The chap with the Ocean Cabin called Terry Bain – me and him was schoolmates. When he goin' into Africa, I goin’ into Grand Bahama.

Growin' Up in Nassau

I tell you this much, growing up ’round Nassau I mostly spend all o' my days in the theatre. I go to the movie a lot. You see, I grewed up with two sisters behind me and I actually used to carry them in and out of school. I had two sisters right behind me before the boys start to come into the world. So I carry them back and forth to school. And I used to do my chores like my mother. She growed us up but she mostly stayed into the fruit and
vegetable market. She sells fruits and vegetables from when we was born. And that's only income we had.

My father used to be on a project called a contract away. He stayed in the United States all his time. In fact, when he did come home for good, it's the year when I was eligible enough to go, and he said he stopped so I couldn't get to go. And I was looking forward to that for a long time, you know. You being a boy growing up and knowing your father always away to the States and sometime he tell you things. And every Christmas he bring you a cowboy suit or some gun case and the other. I say, you're feelin' as if he used to go to heaven and come back, you know. You look forward to goin' where he been! But the same year I was old enough – he quit. It wasn't long in that year I move outta my house. I goin' sleepin' in old cars and boxes and things. And my mother used to be searchin' for me through Nassau, and a carryin' me home with a beatin' sometime when she find me. And when she don't find me, I got a longer stay out. And actually that's from playing the hookie, when you don't go to school, and it was to the ending of my school period right then—eleven, twelve, and so forth. And then I come back home for a spell and be a good boy for a while before I go on again. And sorta finish off school with a good remark because my teachers used to give me credit. The only thing they used to say, "He just don't show up for school but whenever he's in school, he's a brilliant boy."

See, I feel as if my sisters behind me was not eligible. They was not old enough to do the house chores, and I just didn't wanna cut that off. And I was a boy, ten years old. My sisters, them was eight and seven, they couldn't do washing dishes and so forth, scrubbing floor and things. And I just sorta stray into manhood and start going to the movies and sleeping out from the movies.

I never used to bother with girl stuff much. But it was some boys used to be behind me in a bunch and them boys used to be bad boys 'cause they do anything I say do or anything they got a motive to do. And I never used to really stop them because it used to be profitable at that time. I see there's times I couldn't have them walk along side me, you know? I had to walk up in front or had them walk way in the back or way off on the side. 'Cause when I go on Bay Street, I be singin' for the white folks and dancin' for the tourists. See, when I was a much smaller boy I used to be across the harbor at my father's home, Eleuthera. And my uncle play music to a certain hotel across there called Pink Sand. And I had a job there to dance for the tourists as a youth growing up. And that's how I was familiar with dancin' for the tourists. I sing song like "When you leavin' New York, you had a wonderful talk about little Nassau...little Nassau," and so on...

But, as I was a boy growin' up, I be with much more older mens than me, you know. Selectin' the friends I usedta travel around with me, they couldn't move in my company. They had to walk way in the back or way off on the side and I walk by myself because, not that I was ashamed of them, it's jus' that I was always cautious. I don't want to be branded. I was alert to the thing called law, and policemen was a thing in my youth that jack a lot of fear into young fellows. And nobody want to be in the police hands when they was small. Was like we used to hear about, somethin' like goin' to school. You don't want a truant officer catch you playin' the hookie and things of the sort. So that's the fear I grow up with,
you know. That's why I had my gang always movin' at a distance from me. I say, but somehow, and it not like I put them up to bad ideas, my gang was the one that had the bad ideas, you know. There's only one thing bad about me, when they come up with these ideas I never say no. I say, "Ok, let's go do it!" And they had me for the nerve. Like I was the boss of the gang. If Rend say do it, it's nothing can stop them from doin' it, you know. And the people got their bottles in their back yard stock up so nice and neatly and when they come and look for it the next day, the spot clean. We carried the bottles and we go pick them up to sell 'em to the metal man. You know they wouldn't make much noise, but the same time they allowin' us to pick up their garbage. We spottin' out their yard. And you know that's a crooked way to behave. I say, somehow you can't trust a snake in the grass. They come around so friendly and you never know what damage they doin' to you. The next day, or the next week or so, you miss something. You never know it was that seemin' bad crew o' boys through the edge of your bushes there, say they pickin' up rocks, they pickin' up aluminum and so forth, and sellin' it to the metal man...

I sell peanuts. I shine shoes. I sold a little newspaper, but not much. My other brothers sold a lot of papers. They make money off that too 'cause that was in the more modest pay, you know. But I sold a lot of peanuts.

We used to have a horse race track in Nassau, you see. Every time somebody got their horse tied 'side the road, I loose it and jump on it and go down to the horse tracks on the back of it with my bag o' peanuts, you know. "Giddy up, giddy up!" My cousin over there, Randall, could tell you some things. When I reach the golf course, sometime I tie my horse there and I make use of one of the people's golf cart, you know. Goin' 'cross the golf course with their golf cart! And then I park that in the pine yard by the horse track so we had transportation back to my horse and then from my horse back to the village up town, you know. 'Cause I was outta skirt o' town, you see?

Anyhow, it was a fun day sellin' peanuts and sellin' things. I do shining shoes and all that. I do all o' those little sorta hustles because I had to find a fee to go in the theatre. I stayed in the theatre. The theatre was like a second home to me. I couldn't let a picture come out in the Bahamas that I ain't see. You don't wanna miss a thing. And then, after my theatre days I goin' into nightclubbing. I see all the Sonny Johnson, Smokey 007, and the rest of the singing stars was around Nassau: Sonny Johnson, and Smokey 007 and the Rooster, Ronnie and the Roosters, and the other guys. I was too young for the Captain Fiddle and the Silver Slippers but this night club in the grove usedta be called Johnson's. I usedta stay in there and quite a few others. I go to the Banana Boat at times...I go to King of Nights. I started in nightclub 'cause I liked dancin'. From a small boy I was dancin'. I was only 'round fifteen, sixteen, you know. And I just get my second ambitious big-time job with construction. And I night clubbin' a bit 'cause my friends jus' bring me in to drinking a little beer. I never used to drink much but I remember going to the drinking contest on a Bay Street place called the Horseshoe. It was there where I drink over a case a Heineken. Yeah, it made me sick. My mother-in-law and my mistress took me and put me to bed, change my clothes and I didn't know nothing about it. Anyhow, that's how come when I got eighteen and was in my marriage life I couldn't take my wife out to dance so often, you know, 'cause I was into nightclub life in that stage.
I know there was a time when they used to have race cars in Nassau, and we used to go down there to clean the race cars. And I had a few friends, they died out now, one called Frank Bean. We call him Cappy (really captain). I gotta friend in Nassau. He's a big time contractor too and has a rich lookin' house. Ruby Straw. There was three of us: Me, Frank Bean, Ruby Straw. We get caught heistin' boats. We steal boats in Nassau Harbor and we up and down the harbor. Well, that's before Paradise Island was developed, you know. We used to go across to Paradise Island. It was only like a bush cay then but we used to go across there to tote the brass out the old buildin' over there and bring it 'cross to Nassau to sell and things of the sort. And up and down the waterfront we broke off people's old brass off they boat and sell 'em, you see. Anytime we find metal that's good, we heistin' that. We put it in the boat and get a boat load.

**Early Manhood/ Masonry Jobs**

Now, actually when I become twelve and thirteen, I had a good job. I worked with a fellow called Melvin Smith – M.J. Smith, and he who sorta lift me up. He give me a high recommendation right to the day – you could ask my mother. He said he'll get to live to see the day to meet another man in this field ‘could work equal to this René Perconte. You don't see their do masonry like me.

After I had that steady job with Melvin Smith, I work there until we finish quite a few subdivisions, but then somehow my mother ask for another job for me and it was with Mr. Jackson. Earl Jackson. And he lift me up highly too. Mostly when the Haitians comin' to town, I used to be drawin' three payroll in one week! I draw a payroll for bashin' down Haitians; I draw a payroll for out-workin' the other workers; I draw a payroll that is a regular payroll, you know! And I was about fifteen then – that's about two years later, you know. And I work with Mr. Jackson – he was building even hotels and all, so I had a vast experience in engineering a hotel building – and subdivision was small time. He’s a minister now, he come on air, on these street gospel channel. He own a place on Nassau Street called the Reef.

He used to build shoppin' centers and all of that. So, I had experience in engineering in shoppin' centers and landscaping and so forth. And I see one hotel we's builin' on West Bay Street... a white man called Cartwright – Mr. Cartwright – he come in to Mr. Jackson and asked for some good men. And I was one of the lucky ones that was chosen to go out with him, 'cause we was finishing that Holiday Inn Hotel there. And, in fact, I went to repair a old hotel called Fort Monteque. Up to the fifth floor, I think it were, and I finished the first, second, and third floor. And the other two floor had to get finished maybe later to me, because there's another fellow called Johnson come looking for somebody to go to Grand Bahama. There was a word out that they was recruiting some o' the best masons in Nassau to go into Freeport, you know – to build that up.

So, I gone into Grand Bahama through west end – I was working for Jack Tower. And I end up in Freeport after a while. I worked with some tough fellows. All the John Rolles and them, and Lloyd, and the Lundy's – them is late fellows... I meet up with them later in life after I come back from Grand Bahama. I was talking ‘bout this fellow called – in
Grand Bahama – called Lucky, and John Rolle... and Sam Davis. They were the names out there when Freeport was in the start and the breakthrough and the get-go. And we build that city – houses all over from to and fro. Business places and lands, apartments, and then hotels, and so forth. And they even get a twenty-three-story to build in there. Then you get a twin building called the eighteen-story building out in there, you know. Then they get the place called the Oil Refinery. Then they get a pipe factory. The Tide Waters come in there, buildin' silos out. These things for Bahamas Cement, and then Freecon was in there from the start now. Freecon was a concrete place where they used to buy most of it.

I live from apartment to apartment through Freeport. And my wife, when I did get married some years later, she got a job with customs – she was a custom claim. ‘Till the end of our marriage, she was workin' for the casino, and she was a cashier there. In fact, she was a cashier down at the Jack Tower some time ago when we were closer. And she had that kind of exposure, you know – she's a very smart girl. In fact, she's schooled in Jamaica. She was educated in Jamaica school – passed outta the Bahama school, brought up right...

**Grand Bahama**

But I'd like to go way back and start off from when I first was going into Grand Bahama. I was in love with a girl called Loretta in Nassau, and supposed to send for her the time they recruited us. My boss man asked me to pick out five good men to be with myself, 'n need a half a dozen specialists in Nassau to go into Grand Bahama. That's before the city called Freeport was built.

Now, I said I was in love with a girl and supposed to have her join me in the Grand Bahama when they sorta recruit me to go down to west end. I worked for the fifth richest man in the world, called Jack Simon. And he has a hotel lying in the street called Jack Tower, you know, Jack Tower's Hotel.

I had a few occasion where I had close contact with him 'cause every morning he used to walk on the beach – I don't know if he's pick up shells or what not, but he's a little short white man – walks in short pants, and even a tore up shirt! It's clean, you know, but he look ordinary, you know? And he's the fifth richest man in the world.

Somehow people used to wonder. And when I get the story out that that's where he does be in the morning, I know a few others try to see him. ‘Cause it's hard to get to those top fellows, you know. I had occasion in that hotel where I had to run into Mr. Blanco too. Mr. Blanco is the hotel manager, and he was the meanest one. Well, he had so much report about me swimming with the guests in the pool – and he was saying the staff isn’t supposed to mix with the guests, and so forth. But now, I clear myself up one or two times, but it seems as if one occasion when I get terminated – I couldn’t clear myself up. I had a fellow that I took off the job site when I first reached down there called Charles Cox. He's a good mason, now – he's one o' the best Nassau ever had. And Mr. Fred and Alistar – two white fellows – who was in charge of all the construction rings in Jack's Tower had replaced Charles Cox with me and my crew. Charles Cox used to keep coming around and he'd bring this little cooler with gin in it and crack ice – he call it "mason water" – and he give most of
my boys a drink all the time. I say, this one time I missin' Loretta and then I thought I'd take a drink along with him and that's the very time the word get into – well, the word was out – but the word get into the authorities there, and they come and investigate. And I couldn't say, "No, I didn't drink, this time, because it's the first time I catch a drink really." So I couldn't clear myself.

Say, "Percente! And, all of your mens with you hafta report into the office. We gonna have to look into this seriously."

And I used to live in the Jack Tower Hotel for months, and I build a few, oh, what do they call... oh, man – these large buildings – they call them a certain name. Something like when I worked for Tide Waters, we used to call the towers "silo" – I say, they call these beach house a certain name, that we built for Jack Tower. And, well, mostly things was breaking down to a finish at that stage. Anyhow, so I could see why they trying to get rid a the crew of us. I say, but we was terminated, and we had the ministries out in Nassau comin' and talkin' on the case, and this colored fellow: Mr. LaBarity – he's supposed to been good defendin' black boys – well, come to the white fellows dealing. And somehow he didn't defend us right, 'cause we didn't get clear.

I had gone back to work for Jack Towers when I workin' under a different profession. I go on and be a bar waiter, you know. I lost that good job, and they give you a place to stay, and you used to eat in two different kitchens. They had a kitchen called "Bahamian Kitchen", and had a kitchen called the "European Kitchen". And you had a kitchen for the front staff, which was the white folks, and I used to eat in there. Oh, they had good food. Now, I took from there into Freeport after I get through with Jack Tower and west end.

You know I had an offer to go halfway around the world? I work with a company in Freeport in Grand Bahama, and after we did Blair House, they sent us into the captain into Nassau to do the high-risin' plasterin' on one hotel – government hotel – and the man said, "If you guys wanna stay on with us, I say, just have your documents straight, and we'll carry you halfway around the world. We got work all the time." And, what happened, I had the same record and my passport was taken from me, so I had difficulties to stick with the company. Unless I might have been travellin' and working right now. See them wind up scaffold up to the top o' the hotel and hang on the outside. I say, man they know we is so good at it, and they recommend us to a job.

I was on drugs, though in that time, too. See, because I usedta smoke these long bombers of marijuana – these long joints! And then, like, it usedta give me my boost –my zest – for working, you know? And, all o' my life down in Grand Bahama I know I usedta go in the pine yard. I usedta get red, more or less. Smoke – roll up a bomber, and smoke that, and then I turn to – and... by the time I lay out the helpers would – they knew it was due time I come out, you know, like I went to the toilet or something – jus’ for a flush. And when I come out, my eyes red, and I sort of hypnotized and jus’ a lay block – I usedta lay a thousand block a day, easy. You see, I run up to thirteen-hundred in less than ten hours! Yeah, we usedta lay ‘em for ten cent a piece, and we trying to make ourselfs over a hundred dollars, you know – everyday. Ten cents a piece. In that same Freeport – the fastest built city.
I was fishin' between the age of thirteen and fifteen. When the construction job give a break, I made a trip up here 'n I catch up with my cousin, who's a boat captain, and Will. From the age of thirteen to fifteen – I was a big young man – fourteen years old or something – fourteen to fifteen. And when the job give a short break – that's how come I change from the M.J. Smith job to the Earl Jackson job – I had a break in between there, and I was on the sea for ten months. About a whole year, I'd been outta construction circulation. But I know I was still good, it's jus' that that company had come to a close.

And my mother look for another job for me when I goin' back in the city, and I get one with Earl Jackson – it was easy for her, you know, 'cause she just asked the man and the man said, "If he can do it, we can sure use him." And then I go on in there, and I get stuck in the company – they don't remember firing me. I be with the company until thirty.

Rich: So, you kinda fished in between construction jobs?

Rend: Yeah, between construction work, you see.

Rich: Did you ever fish after you were twenty?

Rend: After I was twenty? I do some fishing, but not actually for the market – only mostly for myself. That was when I used to dive. I was a good diver. When I was eighteen, twenty I had a trip out to Grand Bahama – at that time, too. And when I was twenty-one, I was in prison... Let me see, when I was twenty... four... twenty-five I had a trip up here – in my twenties, anyhow. And I was a good diver then. Up until the age thirty I was still divin'.

Rich: How deep could you go?

Rend: I musta gone about ninety-six feet... so somewhere near a hundred feet I down – I go without tank. I used to go down pretty deep because there's no waters around here... we couldn't find for me to go into. I said I usedta try and go down on the edge of the ocean – I on the cliff trying to go down... and go to them shelves on the edge o' the ocean, you know. I say, I usedta dive up in the land – the water goes up in the land – and you get breathin' hole inside the land. I find crawfish nests and things just like that!

Rich: Up inside there?

Rend: Up inside the land! And people wonderin' why you wouldn't come out – they didn't know you could live up underneath here – underneath the land. And you breathin' holes up in the land, and you push your head up, and you breath. And you stay right there – it's like little caves, you know. It's plenty o'caves even right here...

Rich: Did you need a light or somethin' to see?
**Rend:** Well, some o' the holes broke out through the surface and the sunlight shinin' in one or two holes beyond there, so it show you where you is. You're at a stage of this close hole where you can breath and head back out with enough breath to go out to the water through this way.

**Rich:** You have a mask and everything?

**Rend:** Yeah, you have your goggles, you have your fins, and you sometimes have your spear. See, because you need lookin' for things to shoot.

**Rich:** Did you use the spear on the crawfish or did you use a hook?

**Rend:** We spear the crawfish with the spear. We took them and sorta killed them...

**Rich:** How big were they?

**Rend:** We get some big ones, now, some big ones. Some o' the head your two hands can't get around the head. You gotta hold them up like little children, you know, little babies. And then some you can hold with one hand, and then you crump them. And they die easy. Right in the water, they die sometime. They put 'em in the boat – sometime they flop, but they don't take long.

**Rich:** So did you sell the crawfish or did you eat those?

**Rend:** We eat those, but the bigger share usedta go for selling... who I diving along with, you know. But like my share, I caught for it to eat, and so they only cut a percentage off my share and gave to me. They put the bigger portion into the sellin' budget.

**Rich:** So, who owned the boat? Was it the owner of the boat that did this?

**Rend:** Well, my uncle was a great boatsman and he had some boys. I travel along with them. Lincoln Maycock –he was one of the first teachers here. He actually had nine boys – he got one more than my father – and four girls. He is my grandmother's oldest son-in-law. He married to the first born in that family, my oldest auntie –auntie Zerline – Zerline Maycock. He's a guy from Rancord Island, but he spent all his days right here at the Farmer's Cay. He was a boat builder. In fact, he had a son called Avril – the one I tell you's the captain. Well, like I was saying: Me, Will and Avril used to be coming out, you know, from the city, of course – that's Nassau – and we coming to the Exumas. Sometime we stay a week, sometime we even go to two weeks – that's when we come so far up. We goes into this cay called Stocking Island, and... well, I wouldn't remember all the name of these cays in between here, but some of them is building up now. They was sort of deserted islands at that time – course 'round the shores was loaded with conch. And you dive from one cay – like when we go up here by Darby Island – we dive from Darby island, come right down through all 'dem cays, and we pickin' up conch. My cousin Avril used to have a bag – a crocus bag in his mouth... and first he pick up the conch, he put it in the bag, and he dive with it. And he dives naked, you know! So all you could see is a naked guy going ahead
you... and I right on the side. I dive in and pick it up, but I go back to the boat and drop `em in, you see. And that time we carry the boat along - our hand in the water. Sometime we leave the boat driftin' and we dive with the tide, you know - let the boat drift down the tide, and we dive going down the tide, so anytime we pick up a conch, we pickin' up two. We swim towards the boat and drop it in - that boat carryin' itself... We was making conch trip at that time, and we carry a lot of conch into the city.

Coming from there - that's goin' towards Nassau - comin' from the east, goin' to the west is "down" we call it. We goin' into the city. I usedta like go to the movies at that time, when I get to the city. Avril and Will set up and start sellin' conchs; I do my cookin', and then I clean up and go show, you know. And then we be ready for next three days, two days, to go out again, come out here again. And we was makin' trips after trips just like the first, you know. Sometimes we go set fish pots.

But we had came to the city from after that trip, because we select conch right along as we was goin' past that rock. And we was makin' it down towards the city. I said, we jus' about gone into another trip - but one trip is just like the next, you know. You come down through the sea - you beat up from the city. You take your boat - it take you a day and a half or so to get 'cross from Nassau to the Exumas! And you sailin' cross 'n cross - you're beaten! And when you goin' back to Nassau, you usually have the wind in the stern, so you have a sweet sailing... you don't have to switch sailing, so forth - you sweet sailing going back to Nassau. But long in and out through the cays is different experience at different times, when you gonna run into little changes, you know, you might see somebody - another fishin' boat or something. But we was always clever enough to stay out to ourselves mosta the time.

Rich: When you were fishin', and you were catchin' all the lobster and the conchs - did you keep `em in a container in the boat?

Rend: Ok, the conchs we used to put right on deck, but the vessel we was usin' for fish had a well with holes to the bottom of it, and the fish stay alive in the well. So when we catch `em in the pot, we dump `em in the well in the boat, and we carry our fish to Nassau alive.

Rich: Oh! That's a pretty good deal. I didn't know how you got `em there. That was before refrigeration.

Rend: Yeah! That's a long time ago!

The Spirit Ship

I see one night - I dive along with my conch - some big pretty shells! These pretty shells! Queen shells, King shells, and so forth, and I get up through the night on the boat there - now, we sleep below - I get up...and I look...I hear this music playing! I see the shadows... a light like a window, so I say, "That must be a yacht next to us." You know? I say - I get up the captain - I say, "Avril! Avril there's some yacht parked `side us out here in a..." I think it's Stocking Island - there's an island up here with three cross on the hill, you
know, like graves – they talk about it there was pirating along time ago and there's a history behind it, a matter a fact...

Well Avril say, "Yes, they tourists, you could sell your shells to them in the morning." So in the morning I gettin' up bright and early now, just before daybreak, you know. And...I lookin' as the day clear. I looking to see yachts! I ain't seen a boat, I ain't seen a thing around! We were the only boat in there!

I said, "Avril, the boat pull out that early?"

He said, "No," – say – "they wasn't boats," – say – "they was Jack o' lantern!"

I say, "Oh my God!"

He say, "We used to hear about Jack o' lantern, the spirit ships, you know, they light up like lamplighters! And, they actually don't be there!"

I say, "Oh my! We slept with spirits last night!" You know? So, I still had all my shells. I couldn't get to sell them.

The Fish Hawk

Now, I was telling you about when we was down there and run into the Jack o' lantern... Ok, further on down we goin' diving up here by Darby Island. Darby Island now has some big rock in the sea, like cays, but they are rocks, you know. And this big bird – either it's a fish hawk or something or some sort a hawk – have a nest on top o' the rock, you know? So, Avril say they got good eggs.

I said, "Well I goin' climb up on that rock!" We divin' conch 'round the rock, you see?

He say, "Don't let the bird getcha!"

Man, and soon as I get up on the rock and went to lick the bird, I hear a "quawk" over my head! Man, and he comin' down like he comin' down in ye head! I had to jump in the water! He run me off the nest!

Avril said, "I told you, don't let the mother bird catch you up there!" He had little ones in those eggs, I believe. I didn't get to eat a one of those eggs. Well, so much for Darby Island...

Adventures in South Andros

I know one time we went island hoppin'. We went into Andros – South Andros, now, this is not North Andros where I do my work. We say we meeting family and friends. And then we get the people to give us an old house, or some place to stay in, and it was five of us
boys. And we go like scouts and camp with tents on our back. We goin' through the islands, all through the islands – different islands... hoppin' on the mail boat – we payin' our way of course, ‘cause we hustlin’. And last time I went into Mangrove Cay – the central islands; the south and central – they’d two different sections of Andros. Andros made up into three parts. The south, the north, and the central is in the park. And we went into central and south Andros, and experience a little up in there...

**Rich:** What did you do? Did you fish or did you swim?

**Rend:** We fish for bonefish and we climb a lot of coconut trees – we eat a lot of coconut. But mostly we only went meetin' people...

**Regatta**

Lincoln Maycock was my grandfather... And, we used to have a boat called the Brothers. Used to win all the Regatta race up there in George Town! The Brothers – right from Farmer's Cay here. And then, he have another brother called Patrick – used to build boat jus' like his old man: Lincoln Maycock. Patrick buil' a boat called the Farmer's Cay Bird – it only used to recognize... it only used to place and it didn't used to win the race, but it was a good sailin' boat.

**Rich:** So did they build their boats right here?

**Rend:** Yeah! Right down on this bay here called Big Harbor. And – sometimes they even take the mangroves outta that swamp right there. And they go across to these cays and get the timber for the boat, you know.

**Rich:** So, when you were sailin' with the Regatta, would you go down the outside?

**Rend:** One of the races right around Stockin' Island, you see? Right around Stocking Island. The other races is around buoy – inside the harbor. You go down the side o’ the island, and come up through the center o’ the harbor – you know, and go ‘round the buoy two or three times... And that's Exuma Regatta, you know – George Town, Exuma. And I used to go to quite a few o’ those Regattas. After the boat race, we go to the show or we go and watch boxing. Boxing they have up there, you know, during that time.

**Rich:** Where's the ring? Where do they set up the ring?

**Rend:** They set the ring right up in town square there – right in the middle of the park within George Town. Now it's laid out so differently, they got a straw market there. I don't know where they put the rings now. But during my time, we had a place there – the old dock. You go into the old dock on boat side. In the center there was a big open area. They got ring and they got bleachers for people to sit. And they usedta have kitchen ‘long the side o’ the road – on boat side there, where you buy something to eat. And the straw market on one side too, where they sell the lil' gift, you know. What they call it? They got a word for it, ah... souvenirs.
Tiller Stick Story

I know coming from the Regatta to Exuma... we had to ride the north side down, and sometime the night catch us. One o' my cousins fall out the boat...

Rich: Oh, my gosh! Really? At night?

Rend: At night! – and before his hair get wet too good, he was back on the deck. That's the way he was so frightened. I know when we used to be sailin', goin' up to the Regatta, we stop for some fish, you know. I be the last one sailing. I was responsible o' the tiller stick. And the tiller stick is a heavy piece o' wood – a piece o' wood with the sail. And I see one time, the tiller stick drop out o' the tiller and it went right to bottom. And all over the bottom was sharks, you know, 'round the tiller stick!

So my uncle get up and say, "Who is responsible for the tiller stick?"

And everybody say: "Rend."

"Yeah, that's me! I..."

Rich: Everybody pointed to you!

Rend: Yeah, they pointed at me! I say, "Oh, yes, I was steering last."

He said, "Well, you gotta go down in that and get that tiller stick!"

So, I goin' up on the house o' the boat, and I 'sploosh'! And before I get to the bottom good, I jus' snatch it up, you know – back on the deck! The sharks jus' run off like that. Before they could get back to me, I was on that deck. It was some scary moments, now... And I sailin' the boat out.

Fresh Creek, Andros

I went into Fresh Creek, Andros. This chap by the name of Skinny Moxey – they call him Skinny, but he's a Moxey, you know. I know he has another name... He welcome me in his home! Had his wife fix up the guest room, and he have – I think it's five boys – five big boys, you know. I was a young man with them so he told them to stay close to me and anything I need to know about Andros was for me knowing it. Mind you, I went to Andros before – there was a livestock farm that was builin' some project houses out there. Arnold Carter, the contractor, carried me to Andros. And, in fact that's how I get acquainted to Skinny Moxey – Arnold Carter had me as a worker and they told them I was so good. So Skinny Moxey come into the city and inquire for me. And he locate me, and he hire me to go back and build his restaurant first. And then after I finish his restaurant, he come again – he said he's gonna put a hotel onto his restaurant. We had another project supposed to go in there, but it's on the waterfront – a bigger project – but I never did get around to it. In fact, I believe he heard that I went into the madhouse. You know, a lifetime of drugs does put you
in the madhouse – I been on drugs long time ago. Well, I give up the habit long before I give myself to Christ. Even though I smokes a little tobacco, I still feel like a Christian. Anyway, I wouldn't call myself converted in a sense, but I was baptized and I accept Christ. Ok...in the Andros, after the livestock project, I went in there to build this a restaurant for Skinny Moxey –

I block up his hotel. I pour up a lot a sections in floors, and then when the plasterin' start, I plasterin'. And, his wife introduced me to one of her friends. She was a cleanin' lady to the school and she's a big and fat...she's a big heavy woman, and she liked me. I ain't get tired of her, but I somehow got afraid to be stuck with her. So, the job was coming down to an end and I told her I have to take a trip into Nassau. She said, "Well what you gonna do with our relationship?"

I said, "Well our relationship is gonna always be, ah... a relationship, but it's not, you know... I goes places, and I work wherever I go. And I make a home wherever I be." I say, "If it come to a time that I gotta come back this way, I'll remember you, and if you's taken, I wouldn't bother you though." I said, "But, with all respect..." I said, "It's like...you's a pretty woman, you know. I like my freedom, but not that I want to make you a prisoner."

I trying to let her know, "Don't make me a prisoner – I go where I work." I said, "I'm not broken up yet, I ain't living here." I said, "I can't be here." She said she could take care of me – offer me an allowance. And I was full of life, and...want my marijuana on time, and gotta eat good, and liked to have my shirt pressed...you know, neatly. "It's too expensive for you to take on a man like me." I said, "Well I'm going back to the city and wherever a job come up, I will be."

And...I finish off Skinny work. In fact I leave with a little corrupted reputation. Skinny say he caught me sleepin' on the cardboard upstairs one day – say he didn't bother to wake me. I musta was pretty tired. I said, but up in that whole place, me one the only mason there. In fact, he had a brother do masonry but he was sort of a rough mason, you know. I put him in them big bed section where I got to go over all of his plasterin' and so forth. And he couldn't lay block... he was mostly the bottom mixer and things of the sort. So, that's the only help I had. I shoulda been tired after building a hotel by myself, eh? I put up all them blocks, man! Say, he caught me sleepin' one day... I heard some years later that he was appetizing the building of the project we'd a talk about next – the third phase, out on the sea rock. I didn't get around to him and that.

The last time I stayed with him, he give me a whole house by myself – I didn't gone into his house, you know, 'cause his wife was a little sweet on me, but he was not a funny fellow to be jealous of anybody. You know I live with plenty people before and I humble with their lady – I let them have their say. And, well it's jus' that he wanted to give me a little more freedom on the island and how I was takin' on a bigger part o' the job – say that I might be more comfortable in my own house. I said, "Yeah, man, give me a own house in case I have to hire a worker – I could put them up too, you know." But it was a little house – only me one that stayed in it.
Anyhow, I went with Brother Moxey in Andros... I depart with his wife's friend, the school lady, and I went into Nassau. And, what I did after I gone into Nassau from Fresh Creek, I had a job – it was before that I had a job to build a church in Nassau called the Chapel on the Hill.

Eleuthera

Now, after that relationship, I think I got in with an Eleuthera woman, and went 'cross to my father's home in North Eleuthera – Harbor Island. Now, me and a cousin o' mine run north, in fact, we met these two ladies: a lady and her niece. And they was like in one age bracket – a lady and her niece, you know, so they was more like friends, right? So me and my cousin – my first cousin – we said we gonna approach these two young ladies. And I talk around my own, and I try to get her to be acceptable, but we only had the treat – the pleasure to walk them on the beach at that time, you know, and she said she live in Nassau. I said, "Well if it come to a place where you could give me an invitation, I'd be more than obliged," you see. And, I actually was hanging around Eleuthera when she leave Eleuthera to come back to Nassau. And my cousin was playing with her niece up there, and, well I didn't have anybody. So, I did make it with somebody else – a Sawyer girl across from Harbor Island by old man's home... And, one day, the call come through her niece, said Mel to say anytime I come in Nassau, I more than welcome to visit her. She said, more or less,
she'll be waiting on my return to Nassau. So, right then I say "Ok!" I pack up my stuff in Eleuthera, and I was getting outta there!

**Life in Nassau with Wife**

I went into Nassau and I went straight to her place, and from that day she took me in. She give me a pad `side her in her bedroom and amongst her children, because her last child she had in life was mine – the rest of them was different daddies – about three or four different daddies she had children for, and sorta had a bad break she claim, and me and Melvia was in this little one room. So I said, "I's a man that make good money. Let me go out and capture a job until we can move outta this little one-room house."

It only a one-bedroom house, you know – it had a kitchen, had a front room, and had one bedroom, so the children gotta sleep in the room on the floor in the front room on the sofa. I say, "We could do better than this." I went and be renting a three-bedroom apartment – put her oldest boy in the bedroom, in fact, give the boys a bedroom and the girls' room was like the guest room. So, she had one little girl still usedta sleep in bed with her; we put her in a small bed inside our room, but she had the girls' room to occupy, you know. She was too young to be on her own in the girls' room, but we still put her with the others – one or two o' the younger boys, you know like little children room. And me and Melvia Cash live in a three-bedroom house maybe ten years! Jus' payin' rent for ten years. My little boy growed up and he was about eight-nine-or ten before we come to our differences, in fact her first set o' children come out a school. Her first boy was a fire cop, you know. And we sorta find our differences when he fi

When he finish school he was still manly – he was manly all during the time – but when he gone on his job, his eyes was open that I usedta smoke drugs... And he sorta said it like this: he said, "Man it isn't good for you to be smokin' drugs in the house where the lords live, eh? And in the bedroom with my mother, you smokin' your drugs!"

See, what happened, I went off a the soft drug, and I goin' onto the hard drug – and I know it was a curse from the whole general public if he smokin' coke here. And it was sorta hurtin' my pocket even a little more, because sometime I chiselin' her grocery money for it, you see? And not that I had a job during that time, I jus' was on the street hustling, and she was maintaining all the workin' at the time, but I for the system. And the police officers used to see that I collect some money from certain individuals and so much percent it was mine, so I couldn't meet up to my commitments, you know. But her job was becoming a responsibility of hers – in case of emergency, I don't get some money – she'll have somethin' to fall back on at the time.

And when we start off it wasn't like that – when we start off, I went a workin', you know, I takin' all the strain. But I take the strain off of her, and sorta get her blend into...an easy way – like she didn't necessarily have to work, but she usedta work anyhow because it was in her bones – she feel like she had a purpose for working, you know. And mainly she did have a purpose because that same year that I walk outta her apartment – three-bedroom apartment that I rent for her – she move into her own house in Pinewood Garden.

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I usedta take her to a bank every Friday night before we go to the grocery store. I didn't know she had a savings in that bank or something like that or the other. Well, she was saving all the time. I know another transaction gone through that same bank where she was doing business with – but if you break it down, she might even tell me that her policeman son cost her to have that house – she may even tell the public that. He paid in government job, and she can get a credit to the bank and so forth – that put her in a home. What I most believe she was makin' enough off of me – because the grocery money didn't ever usually all go – she always have money to cover her rent. Rent is once a month, and from the grocery she don't buy that much clothes for her children – she have “x” amount of money from the grocery that she could take care o' paying – throw in the asu drawers, and I never see where no asu drawer made good for us, because I don't remember occasion, or celebration, or some entertainment from some asu drawer funds. She was banking it up all the while.

One time I had to buy a car – see, I used to drive a Cadillac. When I come into Nassau, I had me an old Cadillac in Nassau called Antique Cadillac – a fish tail, you know. And, I jus' get into my ride and I drive around my girl and she sorta take me in from there. And she was waiting on somebody. And she was sorta bashful and scared of a relationship, because there's so many mens – she actually wanna try to make it and she couldn't make it. Because these mens – most of them who would run out on her with another woman – had a woman, and was two-timing her. Now, and when we fall out is when she had to take side with her children. She said I'll have to live elsewhere because I can't seems to leave the drug and the smokin' and it wouldn't be good with her. So I jus' go on to my father house, and that's how...

**Rich:** So you went back to-

**Rend:** I went home to my father's house-

**Rich:** Eleuthera?

**Rend:** No, right here in Nassau.

**Rich:** Oh, that's when your dad and mom were livin' in Nassau.

**Rend:** In Nassau, that's where they were livin'... And I was a drug user, and another brother of mine was a big drug dealer, you know. He's the contractor in Nassau – he's a minister now.

**Transformation/ Life These Days**

From drugs...I more or less gone into the church. But you see, not only was I into a lot of churches and so forth; the last baby mother I had around me – visiting a lot of churches – I had a Bible study some years previously to that, when I was in prison. I do something like eighteen months! In prison. And, one year I studied the Bible and earned a certificate. So, it had me based in Christianity, anyhow. In fact, I could remember my grandfather when I was livin' in Harbor Island as a boy – he was a minister at the Church of God – my father's
father. He was a minister – all I know him is as a minister. And he used to see that we go to church regular. So, my background was more or less from that Biblical sense, the Christianity. But somehow, it's not that I don't go for Christianity, it's that I wondering if there's anything more, you know. I'm in that sense – that stage – now, to wonder what life is really all about. That's why I sort of gone back on my life and like to relate about it – see through some of the past and see if I missed out anywhere; didn't go into this or didn't go into that... Well, I feel like I've been through most of it – whatever I seen on TV, I've been through it, because if I talk about trouble-ish things, you know – street things and things of the sort – it's just like what you see on the screen! So, I wouldn't talk about those things, you know – I'll just say, "Well I been through this back my own life..."

I come out here in Farmer's Cay. I take a job from family when I can... But I live day to day jus' wakin' up every day. I visit my mother and father every morning, and I say good night to them every evening, you know.

I have a little girl that is three years old. Her mummy is just twenty, and I'm a old man. Mind you she was married now, don't think she's a little girl. She was married to a lawyer fellow, but life didn't work out too well for them. And I happens to met her in Nassau in her distress moment, and somehow we come together. In fact, she still look here for me, it's just that she got a job in the city, and to make a choice between a job and livin' out here – she couldn't choose out here. You might know – it look good to you, but it's a little rough on these rocks in the waters, you know what I mean? I say, everything you got it depends on what come on the boat or what plane come in. It's like that.

I can't see how far I gonna get yet, but I can't look at tomorrow, I gotta look right here today. See, I gotta look out for what's happening right now to me. See, because if I reach out for tomorrow, no telling what it may become. And, actually, yesterday's gone and you thank God for that – that's passed – and you get over yesterday. So, tomorrow is just what you make of it today... I'm waitin' on the Lord.

Rich: Are ya? You're real upset about your daddy aren't ya?

Rend: Somehow, those change I spoke of... they was more or less expected. Not that you hoped for it, you know, and the effect I got of it, I don't think, I'm trying not for it to be noticed. I say, it more serious than the eyes could see. See, what I'm thinkin' about is how my life had a lot of friction in it – like movies – is what I'm sayin'. So, to some people, they gotta believe that it's better than the others. See, the movies is real life to me and because – you know the good book talk about how all things is possible?

Rich: Um hmm

Rend: Every man fantasy that they put in this friction. I say it's reality. I say it just take a certain time for these things to take place. And—

Rich: To come true.
Rend: Ahhhh!

Rich: Um hmm.

Rend: So, I figure that effect draw me to certain movies that I see. And how it make drastic change in some people part, especially the star when a death occur that is real close to them. So, some people take revenge. Some people, it’s a change of luck. Some people, it’s a change of heart. You know what I’m saying?

Rich: I hear you.

Rend: I say, but to me, it’s life giving me experience in a different view. That’s the way I see it.

Daddy Percente

I recall when my greatness, first, my granddaddy – my grandfather. See I was a small boy and I grew up around them. That’s how come I miss him so dearly. I was his favorite and he used to take me in his lap and I become a big boy and he even had me buttonin’ the last button on his white shirts. I say that affect me so greatly. One day, I like to put that on paper. I like to write about it so people can really know, ‘cause to explain it would take a drastic amount of time. See, but, if I explain it, who will hear it, will experience the visibility of my life-spirit expressing it? And that’s something that everybody gonna be privileged to grab. You know, that’s a privilege. But if I was to explain that to you, that’s another leap you can put – See, because he’s native – just take them African culture. All them African movies they made and things like that. I say, isn’t that good money in circulation that feed some hungry family and so forth? I say, even them slavery pictures. I say, all pictures that is genuine, that is what reality is if you have privilege of puttin’ them in books. It ain’t gonna be the wealth right here for you. I say, but your children’s children, your grandson might – could take off they grandpa. And they worthy of certain valuable documents, you understand me?

Rich: Right, I understand you.

Rend: See, because if he got clever associates, would all of them go put their thinkers and faculties together and they can put spotlight on the story and put it in their means even if they have to put their fantasy with it? They hide it. Don’t be different. See they wasn’t here to personally experience the truths, know how – so, whatever they put, I say the congregation that he take that, doesn’t he accept that, believe that?

The Holy Book

Just like the Bible, when it was written. Why do you think everybody convinced of the Holy Book and the Holy Book is so precious? You understand? A book of so much vital truth and constructive means and such prodigy that it almost shattered the strongest minds they is among us today. I said, you know how much respect the church have? I mean, from
great man still, you know how much fear that put in them wealthy fellas and all, just mentioning God? You think of it, mind you, that book – the Bible – could be simple truth of native boys grewed up and rewrite, but the inspiration put in that in such a manner that the Holy Spirit, and life and, true living men, all those things. Do you understand what I'm sayin'?  

They put this expression in it that make simple truth so powerful. Then you've got something here they gonna do. I said, but, you even got these a partner and these means, you know? See, you’s the one with the cleverness. Me – I’s the one with the exposure, with experience, and certain means. I go express it in such a means that you could put it to an intelligent mean. See, more people are gonna accept you than they accept me. I'm being frank with ya’ – from man to man. Not to say you’re better than me, you understand? Good. I say, we are men. And we all is a ring of the twelve disciple and our creator sent the twelve disciples to the four corners of the Earth to deliver the truth – spread the gospel. See? You got your followers even if I only got one. I mean – it’s – some people hardly successful in gaining a follower. I said, but even if I got one, I got my follower. See – and even if that one out there who ain’t got no follower all by himself, he is an individual. He is a man. To capture him, that’s one added to you or me. So those without even, it’s useful. You understand? Without followers is useful ‘cause you gotta convince him to come over. I say, so, when we unite like this, I want you to believe your power and mine is going forward and if you feel happy in spirit, you’re body don’t have to appear happy, you know. Like, to see happiness, some people will blow it up in this likeness. A happy person is somebody out there laughin’ and talkin’, jokin’, dancin’ and eatin’ and drinkin’, publicly exposin’ all the time – that’s a happy spirit. They call that a happy person who havin’ a ball of life. I said, but a man who is quiet right there and silent – he could be happy too. His physique might not show it but he could be happy; his mind could be at ease.

You take for instance – some sick people. They lyin’ there all in pain and hurtin’ and they look very bad. I said, but even them – one of them out of thousand maybe – I say, even them could be tight foot. You know why? They could say, “At least I still ‘live.” You see what I’m sayin. They hurtin’ but they still thank him because they thank God that they still alive. They alive! And they hurtin’. Not only by their feelings, I say, by others looking at them they could see they full of pain. And so not only the person which you see out there rejoicin’ is happy, he ain't only a person. What they notice as the mad case is really mad. See, me and you are the brothers who’s supposed to know how to accept them all. Some of these folks here at night has the means to fulfill. You and me gotta be technically enough to address our self. Them, they mean it’s only a situation. When we get that, we gonna know exactly, see, why he contented or why he is not contented. Or is he contented?

**Relationships**

See, you got female – like how I’m a bachelor, right? You got female out there, not that they’re hungry for me. I say, but through my eyes they may look. I say, they only respect me and they be rooted to their companion, but that ain’t gotta be their desire, you know? Their heart and their means – they want for big, drastic change, for they only wish. In other words, this is what I just sense out of people’s physical means. That’s why I can
express myself. I’ve been seeing couples all over this Cay so they represent me – not that they woman folks is disrespecting to their man – but I could see their spirit. I see their spirit tellin’ theirselves something, “If only it was different.” Simple. Not that I can’t be forward or out of my tones or out of my respect because I lonely. I say, because there’s plenty of times, even in my hungriest means, I tell myself no to that meat.

A lady, just the other day, mentioned to me, “My husband in the states. I go into my bed by myself. I go and lay down now.”

And then I said to myself, “What’d you tell me that for?” You see a young man who fast in this life, like how I know I was advanced and everything – I used to talk all of those hintings as opportunities and meetings. You understand? I said I coulda hit on that. I said, but you know what one man subconsciously tell me? It’s there but it’s technical – put me in a situation when you hear I trouble. My friend’s possession because he is on his backside – you know? – because he is down. I said, you know, I don’t need no woman who gets clever with me. I don’t need nobody who needs to call me and think I ain’t seein’. I say, but, there’s times when you see things, like, sometimes plenty things you talk is pretty deep. That’s why, as much as I talk, I says you think there’s a limit to you or me talkin’? Some people who don’t talk at all.

All them senses, just how you could see out of your eyes. You can more than talk with your eyes. And when you look here at me eyes, your eyes can feel it, see what I’m sayin’? I say, all your sense have equally them other senses, but it depends. I say, and the way man put to you through school, see, expression. A street brother mightn’t grab all the technical words and all them such means. I say, but their understanding is so advanced that if a schoolboy take attention to one of those street boys means, I say he’d learn something the school didn’t teach him. And not that he coulda learned that on the street by experience and that, uh-uh. He learned that by being blessed with the privilege to run into certain individual till that boy pleading to these means to grabs.

A Word on Astrology

I tell you that, I tell you this: just like you and I, there is another messenger right here. He’s a fisherman out there; call him Alan Roy, you know? He’s a brother. I say, but you got to have my understanding and my study to see through the eyes that I’m looking through. See, because when I was studying astrology, I learned something more than about myself, even about the other eleven. I say, but, Jesus was – he picked twelve disciples in that same means. I say, but ain’t naturally got to be so. Two of them could’ve been born in the same month – it had to of been twelve different months. I say, but technically the understanding and the acceptance of their sense put it in that meanin’ that they were different individuals with different means. That’s why he pick, like the twelve months of the year, twelve disciples. That’s why man re-write these things in such a manner that all would be covered, nobody would be left out.

While studying myself, I don’t want you to think me and you brothers have the same viewpoint, see? The power lies if you can get all that is you’s brothers, all that is me and you,
our planet, reaction to unite, agree on certain acceptable terms, see. That not only this one and that one agree on that all and such like manner agree – that’s to unite. That mean, us here that have a unique power that is powerful enough not to under-dog or over-power, to convince in an acceptable manner with another face of one of the other eleven, see, and to get them to see things in an acceptable – and knowing they are on the... That means, it’s not only the power that is important there and accepting. I say it’s more; it’s like being... being faithful unto thy maker and really obedient. That mean you do, you’re worthy. You accomplish your means. That means you finish. See, your commitment in some circumstance, you done your part. See, the reward of doing your part is more greater than the individual need. That’s why I say it’s so precious... If I’m able to convince a brother in not my accepted means, others have to accept that. That means you have to accept that for me to be successful. See, my persuasion don’t mean something but my persuasion, if it appear to you, I say, it is your knowledge of self, not of somebody honored or given you this knowledge. It’s perfectly accepted. But anytime somebody telling you somethin’, not only that you disbelieve it, it then means that grabs you, that gain your interest. You understand? You have no interest in that and particularly, you’re willing to spend time of being convinced of that. See, that does come like this.

You and a brother here debating – all of a sudden a spirit come cross his mind and reflect or switch the subject. That’s that force now that tell you that you ain’t convinced him. You’re unpersuasive. You’re not successful. You see what I’m saying! That’s why you find, if some people on a telephone, they gotta-gotta... In modern times of corporal manner, you don’t disturb or interrupt. If two people having a debate or talking, they got it in modern times, the proper means is to be excused before making announcement. You understand what I’m saying? See! In other words, there’s some cases you have to insist to get into a debate. If you know notice there are times that’s where truest level of qualification, man is only be testing other mans by certain mean.

**Wealth**

You know what my brother teach me? The last job I went into the city to help them on. That’s the contractor like myself – he was a young one. He said, “Rend, we eat lunch here... Don’t eat with your workers.” You understand what I said?

**Rich:** Uh-huh. Don’t eat with your workers.

**Rend:** He don’t eat or drink with nobody that work for him. He put himself on another level. Not that he think himself better, but technical. But I know he explained the reason but I reading between line and learn beyond that. I says, it’s something with elevatin’ yourself. If he don’t know that writin’ the book teaching the powerful man to be merciful – that mean if you can be merciful, you really powerful. In my whole opinion say that rich man, that rich man. See being rich ain’t all to it you know. If you worthy of that wealth, ahhh, then you can feel proud of it. I say, but you take a man just murder another man for his bill fold, his documents to have power of companies and all of this stuff so far – not only he, himself, know in his heart what he done to get these things. I only even say God knows all things there and that’s still reassured. But that wealth he got like that – if he worthy of it – you
know when you'll see? When the results are without show effect outside of him and even him involved. See, because, if you're oriented in the right way, it don't help nobody, it don't even help you.

That blood – that blood wealth precaution be an armor of sin. That mean it will be pain to a lot of people. Don’t mind how right he tried to use that wealth, I say, that wealth will be hurtin’ other people because that’s how it comes – if it don’t be hurtin’ himself. He ain’t gotta – I say, we all got a conscious. I say ain’t gotta have an organ problem ailing him that’s licking his conscious. Maybe that’s why he gets the suit. You understand what I’m saying? I say, it may be simple. Gee, wonder why all this wealth I got, I got, I gotta have a piece of mind with certain individual? Just one person’s gotta have a cross spirit with me. All this wealth I got, the common guy, they won’t hear me. You understand what I’m saying? That’s something about wealth. Don’t matter how wealthy you are – to be wealthy you need to be worthy.

The Life

I tell myself, trying to support here after because I’ve got a lot of grandchildren on expected great Rend and so forth. I’m trying to help myself presently as it stand; even if we know it passes on. I say, I feel accepted with that. That’s why – how come I join force with man, see, because my heart is for helping. It don’t make me no different. Some people here ain’t got that kind of heart. If I join force, they say unity is power, more power, you see? You join force because I know it mean an improvement on... My idea is to help others. So to join force got to be with people who in similar spirit. Like me, you understand? I know a lot of selfish ones. Some people selfish – I shouldn’t say it’s not of their nature – but some people here conscious of nature. In other words, they can’t help themselves. If it in their nature, they be up against the world to that affair. That’s why I know it. I’m trying to train you to accept all things in your environment like how I practice in them my environment. If this be some bitter, bitter medicine we have to swallow. You know you just go against so wild sharks. It does happen.

See, I know the reality in life. See, ‘cause when I feel – don’t tell me outside of me feels the same thing. Even though if you’re conscious of something, be real my brother. See, take that same consciousness – that’s your heart you know. That it is possible others has the consciousness of seeing similar things and even amazing things beyond that so don’t never let it be surprising to you. Whenever you pass through life, don’t let things shock you out. All things is possible. Not only being led by this good book, being led by my natural understanding and my simple accepted senses which they say is five. And then contrary, there’s afterwards, you got common sense with that. You understand what I’m saying?

I be among fellows that is so bad, tell they think they are the toughest things in life. I say – smokin’ drug some time ago in Grand Bahama – we sit into this table you know, gun nasty all around... And he put the gun tight, he touch my ass, right to my ass and fired but fired at the wall. You know what the fella in front of me say?  Said, that guy is rigged! That’s how cool they think I was. They play around me, test me. I know one time, this big disc jockey right now is in the station, he used to drive a mark-one or mark-three mustang in
frequent drug mile pick up disc jockey stock on the radio. I just wanna run into him sometime. I hear him on the radio so I can remind him. He was my driver because he was driving a mustang. I shoot – I shooting this guy up, you know. He says, “Let’s go, let’s go!” He frighten – frighten – frighten.

I say, “Hold on.” And then I shoot him, I see I ain’t stop him. I said, “Okay, head for the cow.”

I run past him to guide his way. He wanna run in a contrived direction, I say “No, come this way, it’s shorter to the car.”

He tell himself right today, I save him. That’s true, let him talk with me! “See Rend there, he’s a gunmen.”

There fellas closin’ on us and I say, “I’m shooting my way out.” He won’t run. “Let’s go! Let’s go!” I say.

“No, no, let me stop some of these. Slow them up.” You know? Let him get ‘em. He is the driver. I couldn’t let him run me beat because I ain’t got no escape. Anyhow, that’s a long story.

Strength From Horrible Things

Rich: So when you talk getting strength from even horrible things, is that how you feel about the death of your grandfather and your father? That these are bad things but they give you a new kind of strength, you said?

Rend: Somehow, somehow when my father passed away, I really believe that it was only his physique that carried away. Somehow, his spirit and his presence never leave me and if I wanna see him, all I do is put my mind in a matter of memory fashion and then I’ll go look on a photo. Memory fashion! See, I know my father. But I could see him sitting in right here in this chair beside us and I know what he would be doing or what would he say. See I know him that good. I stayed with him in his later years and I know him all of the years that he was alive even though he was going on the contract he was coming back. And then he rejoined the people the last time I was here. So to his job and profession and the city, I say, I was scared, even though I’d gone off abroad for years. See, I came home today of his doings. I’s the one who returned from Grand Bahama, remodeled a home. I mean, before I leave, I even see that the home they put there. I say ain’t nothing about our home in Nassau my father had done in my absence or my mother. Even this supermarket they build up there behind my back. I say, during the time I was in Grand Bahama – the long spell that I didn’t even attend Nassau – that cardboard house with the bill for the shop down there first. That, and the little bath – they were engineered in my absence. I say, on my return, has it to the model it is today. ‘Cause you see the addition to the back rooms? I put down a concrete floor back there so anything masonry in the front, I do that. I say, and to finish off the shelf plastering and put down on the rug, vinyl tiles, and rock sheet, dry wall the ceiling. In my way, I put the finishing touch on that shop. See? So whatever they’d done in my absence, I
still had a part of it. You know what I mean? So to say miss my father, oh yeah, physically you can’t miss this. I say, but in your heart you know someone and if that someone is accepted by you in your heart, then I will leave you because the way they carry body or whatever. See, my spirit combine with him. That don’t seeing part of him – it’s always abuse.

Like they say, I can’t see the one side of you and you can’t see the inside of me or something of the sort. See – it could be the truth. I say, but all things is possible, remember. You can’t admit that you didn’t see even if it come in appearance to disappear or they could’ve mean you can’t always like – your mind could be at times in a certain state. But there’s times when – there’s a time for the impossible to be possible. I say – that means – that means it’s a time when even that can change, what they say. And they say it as the truth don’t really have to be the truth. You know, like take a dollar bill – one side is head and one side is tail? That’s just how the truth is, you know, the truth is also a lie. The truth have the dark side. So what we doing here now is being puttin’ a value to ourselves. I’m not puttin’ a value to our self. That mean things of this world would not what you does. See? Live without price. In other words, we could cost nothing at all. When men live where the good side is, that mean money come by us, wealth and to come buy a castle. See, that’s the good side. It’s the shadow of God – mean the devil, if we want to value ourselves.

God give you right and wrong to choose. Now, what would you soul worth? You know what your soul worth? What is in your heart that you desire? That somebody could give you exactly what your mind click on of approval. I say that make a value. That’s the devil your own self could be devil. I say, but you see, God and you are stronger than the devil. That’s why you are made the devil. God teaches us that. We are his children. We are little gods. But the devil is that thought and doubt that who would ever go against his teaching. See, means to say go around relating that there’s no God, there’s no maker. That you need... you go doubting yourself, that’s the devil. The devil is a shadow of God. It’s the reflection of ourselves. I say, but what we desire in this world is already ours. It’s only – all God’s children have to do is clean themselves.

**My Maker**

People know man on earth, bless him. And God give him the power to anoint in his hand to do the laboring. That’s maybe why he pronounce or execute all of that power he was holding. See, just like me. But I learn from my father even though he is absent. I say, it’s something about what you know you rather keep, something about elaborating on certain seam. You hear the sermon say self-praises is no recommendation? He goes behind those qualities, but I wouldn’t say that’s a – that could be a fact – but I wouldn’t say that acceptance to one hundred percent. And see, my maker teach me don’t be over one hundred percent, not even one hundred and one. Or don’t be one percent under one hundred percent. My maker teach me you got to be exact – one hundred percent exact. So you see, my approval, I feel, is the only approval could be genuine unless I find outside of me acceptance. You see what I’m sayin’? If a friend ain’t my friend, I ain’t his friend. I say, regardless of calling him friend, oh yes! A natural love is there because he’s human. And see, my maker make all human lovely and he teach me to love brothers and their sisters. The love, you
know, of mankind. He teach me to accept this. See, because at least this here is among you. Look where he is. You can’t touch him even though he’s in your presence. I say, you can’t touch him, you can’t get where he is. You know what I mean? How could you accept things you can’t reach if you can’t accept things that is with you? You see how technical that good book is? I say technically, but simply, it teach you – it tellin’ you something. It’s like a guideline. You hear way to heaven having this long and narrow- narrow way, right?

My Mother

I look at my mother outside, way down - my mother down there at the supermarket. I talked to her earlier and I mentioned I was gonna write a book based on her. She mentioned I must talk about her plenty-plenty. See, simple! I say I would put my mother in before I put my father but I elaborate all about my father. But my mother technically is what I supposed to be putting forth. Everybody appears to despise her. When I say everybody, I mean the majority. I say, even though majority win, that don’t mean majority rule, you know. Minority rule. I say, but even rulin’ to be good, you gotta be good and good alone. But to be bad, you could be anything, technically, or you could be pure bad. You could be good and bad! To be bad, you could be good. You could be blessed, you know. But to be bad, you could be blessed, but to be good, you could be pure – one hundred percent. You could only be good, you can’t be even better, or you can’t be best. Be good. You only could be one hundred percent good. Exact. Now regardless of how they put it, you see, let me tell you – what I mean is everybody seems to be my mother’s opposition. But they look into my mother’s lifestyle... She’s completely acceptable in my life, you know. Not that I don’t have sore days with her. I have worse days with her, I think, than I ever had with my father because me and my father, even though have mouth to mouth made when it comes to discussion contrary to each others misunderstandings, I say – but me and my mother have to straighten out facts for every trip. I say, but to me, my mother has full acceptance even through her wrong. Somehow people have to tell me her faults. You remember me saying something about some people just can’t help the disposition of what reality they play? That’s my mother. Naturally I feel as if, and not only that, her purpose is being served, she has more than the right. She has the solid foundation that she stand on, and there ain’t none other foundation as strong as hers. Her foundation is solid. It ain’t shaking at all. Stable. See, even though my teaching and different studies in school and experience and things show me contrary things to her meanings and her attitude and her position, I say I still accept all her faults with her one goodness that she is my ma’. See, because that’s the only goodness that I could accept – that you are the woman and the woman who brought me here an earth.

Females and Acceptance

I say the only goodness I could accept about female is that it’s a gift from God that she is woman. I say but see, that’s why I may seem choosy when it come to female. I say you either strive in like manner or you got total freedom from me. And I ain’t trying to come on to your side of the street. I don’t like running or dodging from you, I say, but I say I ain’t trying to come on your side of the street. Me and female has got that understanding. You know why? Because, technically, I believe a females is holy ground when it comes to male and female. And anytime I reach to their companionship rebelling against each other, I
condemn them even though they know the two really has a fault. Even if he right, he wrong because the fault is he in that predicament. He got this woman that is wrong. You understand what I’m sayin’? I say, they’re all love but you see accepting... acceptable is accepting them. You got to have a choice of acceptance. It’s way beyond reach right now, but just listen. Brush a little bit of dust from the surface and go a little deeper.

See, you take for instance your body. Plenty times you’ll tell yourself, “I could do better with an extra hand” or something of the sort like that. But ain’t much of a time you’ll wanna tell yourself, “Take this head off, I rather walk without this head.” Mind you, in certain means you got those things possible in life, you know. And it real only because this finger aching, they want it off like pulling a tooth. Take the finger off, they okay with that. It is some means where we’re naturally... a man’s spirit at times don’t be holy. And I saw, I saw it like a regret or like, you’ll find a native teller with really huge mouth and a thick-thick lip. In their heart they tell theirselves plenty times native black man, they real. Not only that some will go to extend and spend for it. I mean, at any case you just toots it around. I talkin’ about native people. You find them say Shane got a big broad lip, right. Plenty man have it. Even some may go to the expense and get surgical operation to turn in their lip. Plenty of man, they rather their lip cut off. Done. Specially after winning so much wealth, they’ll go through that operation to make a cut on their lip to make it small. Done to accept naturally what is their real mouth. Some men, some people really regret the creation of God instead of taking it upon themselves and get an understanding why their physic is in such a form. You take- I won’t put it to women, I’ll put it to men- I say, some men body is out of order and not because they go to the gym, you know. Some people really curse the creation of their maker of their own physic, their own parts, when they know so much things about their self. I say, and that’s the part where dirt lies within some people that they need true messengers from God, see, to open their eyes. You hear about God making the blind see? Simply it’s this – it’s to bring understanding, bring acceptance. See, understanding to an individual that is in the dark. See, anytime you in the dark or you confuse or you don’t have understanding, any time there’s a problem solved – that’s sight to the blind. Any time your eye opening so much way, I say, “These are miracles!” But they only have to be blown up or spotlighted in certain fashion, see, and put to the open congregation, to the public, to the people in such a way that they shout back with amaze, “Oh yeah, now I see.” You understand?

Rich: So how did they to get to not like themselves? What caused them not to like themselves?

Rend: Okay, you got, you got man today with a sex organ that don’t appear to be mature. Just like you have premature babies, you got men with their penis overlarge. You got females who just brag about these things and make men believe that that ain’t only their goal but that’s all women or most women’s goal. It’s to have a masculine man with a huge penis and so forth. See, and not only men, you got female with them tiny immature breasts too. On such manner, I call the sex organs so it can touch the most inner confidential issue and most personal means – you understand – so it can reach our spirit or our interests in such a
manner. See, you got some men born with these overlarge organs. You got plenty, the majority of men, who is ashamed of their organ. Not only that they feel within their selves their organ is undersized, they doubting the results of their organs. See. Because – let me tell you something, unless you know it, to each of us men God made a mate for. Just how you give Adam, the one man, one woman. Every man here got his proper mate. And you see what Adam did? Adam sinned because, he sinned because his mate sinned. See, because that mate that God give you is you! It’s only you! It’s only you in a tale fashion, see. You was always there but the dollar bill was only head at that time. When you used to spend money. It’s only head and tale now. See, that man come in. See, man is no God. When man come in to existence, all man do is blow it up when God already did. See, that mean I too make more of what already been done. I say you calculate the creations. I say, what next? Life is like this, man. How does you enjoy – I’m not changing the subject – just smoking, indulging in subjected after you complete certain task or the backer or just satisfying just naturally gettin’ it good? Okay, I enjoy it. Sometimes when I am on that, ah, when I’m on that ah... when I’m in danger zone on that power T-drive that no basis. You know, when tide low with me in the back I feel like one of this couldn’t erase, couldn’t afford it? Understand what I’m saying? See, because if you don’t look out, if you looking right down here to your big toe, you could lose out. I say, but if you look out, everybody is teach and in some sense live the day as it comes like the good book teach. I say, it’s accepting too. But I just have – just like how I see yesterday, I just have to see my tomorrow.

**Rich:** When the tide is high...

**Rend:** When the tide is high! But when the tide is low, you enjoy it as it is. Accept it. I come to you again. You see, when it was only Adam and only God creation... God is the one who come with this means that man don’t appear to be happy... When God made his creation – that is man – man come right back and make something too. He make God call him from behind the hedges.

“Adam, where are you!”

“I’m right there lord! Hi! You able to find out we are naked!”

You understand? See, man gone to work and call himself sin. You know, it might have been. See, but the dollar bill was only head then so man couldn’t sin by himself. When we get here, he sin. He only show God that the dollar bill is head and tale now. That’s why he blame it on the woman. That’s why we is exceptional. See, not that we think the woman is no less or no better or other else than apart of us. Accept all the woman which seem to be holy with the relationship involved in woman. You gonna have to remember you destiny. You’re gonna have to remind yourself of the beginning. You’re gonna have to carry yourself right then. I gotta make a choice here.

I tell you why – this long and narrow way, that broad way. I say every time you commit a sin, it’s a time when Lucifer outwit you with your soul and spirit. That’s why that way is so narrow to go to heaven – there’s only one way there. And that’s why God said we gotta make a choice. That’s why he does forgive you so many time. And you know he put a
limit to you being able to forgive – God may always forgive you but anytime you always go around forgiving men, you lost bad 'cause you ain’t God. You say, forget that brother, seventy times seven. He give man a limit. He is the only one without limit. That mean if you cut off a brother or sister, see, you only make a choice. That’s every time – mind you will find individuals that you do wrong. But you only use God at that time. You stayed on the long and narrow way even if it mean you going to difficulties. Sometimes you gotta turn down a dollar bill to stay on the long and narrow way.

People may wonder, you know, there a time – okay, my last son is twenty years older than my last daughter, right. Not that I was turning in the soul for them twenty years but, I was sorta mixin’ it up for the eyes to see that I’m active. I say right now it may be far from that and it is near twenty years since my last relationship and I ain’t got a companion. I say, but the eyes seem privilege to see that far in my life. Man is accepted in me, they’ll possibly see that. See, why? It’s because these times now, if you ain’t learn, you never did know. If you didn’t born wise you wouldn’t end up wise. Let me tell you something – I will tell you, my brother. I make decisions... when the good book teach me you gotta make a choice, I make a decision concerning a mate. Not that I don’t like woman. They may talk or, okay, they say some man’s born premature and, because of that, what is natural is sin in their heart. They sin with their practice. They sin in their mind. You understand? Its all sort of ways God made it that all man is sinners. But there’s no man that is God creation gonna miss heaven. If my approval and my opinion, I say, because I’m telling you there’s no woman on earth contrary to me as my own mother who brought me here and I don’t think I would, I would pass no woman approval beyond my mother.

See, acceptance is like that. Not because it’s your blood or your nature, see. It’s when you live long enough and you know so much only to your knowledge you can express yourself, you know. To make understanding of acceptance is only based on your qualifications. And you see, my qualification told me in more ways than one. I meet female that appear in their more brighter light than I meet my own blood – I mean female in my family there. I meet them in approval in my opinion; they’re more times that I make in my own family. I say, but I don’t put down my own family for none of them I approve of. You know why? Okay, take for instance, even though I approve of them, I find none worthy of the acceptance I’m in search of. See, because they don’t add up. You know why it don’t add up? The good book, which is the Holy Bible, if it was made clear and understanding of all people, then I would expect this statement to be accepted by all people. I say but, them ones with the better qualification keeping darker conviction of going on contrary way, off of the narrow way. That’s why I say, not because my family I find to be lesser in their education and experience than the world out there that I figure my family is more holier and more pure. And it’s the reason why I have them as acceptance. See. It’s because it’s a choice you have to make. You have to accept yourself in order to be able to accept other. And the falls with my family is the falls with me if it take a keen eyes to see it. Every fault that my family has, I has it too. I say but the more fault, that means there’s a brighter or more distinguisher mark in the person with more faults than the person that polish of their faults. See, because there’s a more darker skin than that person who know how to polish it off better. I’m talking about the whole holy version you know. See, in the spirit light this practice would make perfect. If somebody is good in this... see, to me, good and bad is the same. It’s only the
choice. I say, but to be bad you gonna have to be bad naturally to be accepted. But to be technically bad, you know what I mean? Not contrived, pretending or acting or making believe that you are good is technical bad. You see? Trying to be good is not bad. Trying to be good is good. So, you see, those ones with practice to be an athlete and they in good shape. I ain’t talking about the best athlete or the worst athlete, all them athlete with practice to be athlete. They have to be... they’re in good shape. They have to practice; they are in good order. I say, you take an athlete and a good man; I say you take another form and fashion of practice such as, say, laundry staff cleaning. Athlete and a janitor, I don’t see where an athlete should be making more money janitor making. Regardless. See, depends on the level that janitor had and the level that athlete had. If you was a small time athlete, a small time janitor should be making that money. If you's the top janitor in the world, you should be making the same money a top star or a top athlete making.

You see, my mother give me a bad round of treating. But, when I wanna talk about my mother being a woman. Technically, it ain't hard at all. It’s just like being a man. You see a woman by itself, it’s like a cripple because you have no man. A woman has a man if she bring forth deceiving. The man always – the man is physically present. See, because I notice my mother give the babies their attention. And my mother always put her business at first privilege and you never detect the differences between her home taking care on her business. It’s like everything was on the same level, her space. You see what I’m saying? That’s why
mother is such a special specimen. You realize that twenty—when my mother twenty-four—the only man who could capture her interest was my father? When she was twenty-four, see, when she brought me into this world from—from she took that oath, it was like... in fact, I'll tell myself, even before my father was, my mother was the same even though my father departed now.

See, my mother, Eugenia—she's the same. See, I could see the acceptance of what they call, even the grief, or the acceptance of grief, that's true there. But the person itself is hope, only being a spirit and its means is reality. Its practice of purpose. I say its goal, whatever. I say I ain't see that change that's in my mother. I see sad days with her, but I still seeing the same woman. The practice is the same. Acceptance is the same.

You know when somebody with one son educated and they go to school and they become educated, you may detect a difference? You maybe could, not in all cases you does, because that smart man have to want to let on that he's educated. A smart man don't have reflect that he's educated, you know. Not if he was uneducated before. If he gone to and learn something, he let you know that he know that if he like. The only time or here anybody can see that he knows that. Even some people would know things that some people can't see that they know that. You see where I'm puttin' you? I'm puttin' you back. If you wanna study, I don't think you could be on the outside to see who she is. You either gotta be gifted, blessed with the privilege for someone to share their opinion.

But to know my mother, I don't think none know her like I do. If they do, they ain't here on earth. They have been recent men like her parents or somebody before. I say, because all who there with her now, I say I know just as much. I don't mind they just as old as her or whatever, or older than me. See, I's a part of her. I know. I see. I say they only could know what I know. They can't know no more. Technically, they could tell you things that I wasn't privileged to experience physically, in a logical manner, like when she lives with her parents. But somehow plenty things I know, I wasn't even counted present on earth, concerning my parents. Things I know come to me is before my time. See I only prove it's a fact by living it out and confirming it after being eligible enough to see that far. Something come to me like in the spirit world—above my parents. See, after you learn or rub against and know of those ones before them and hear from them, themselves, about certain means and watch and give attention and put your understanding to what you've been missing, you could draw line, relay conclusion. That's what the good book teach us about making a choice.

See, a choice ain't something that you could learn to do in school you know. It's something that you could do by practicing to be a model or something. Or training to be athlete, you know. See, by choice it's something come, like how they say that's impossible to do. It come automatically, it come in the spirit, see. It's freedom of self and a relief to come to conclusion. You understand where I come from? Now, if I base a book on writing about my mother, I would like for it to begin she is a young woman at twenty-four years old. Slim and dark, long black hair and very pretty. Not Indian, not Indian, ah-ah African Indian or so forth, but a Chinese African. See, somehow that Russian decent blood, see, the eyes of the Chinese and the native. See, because eyes of an Indian is more like my father personal. You see that’s my blessing or that’s my luck.
Rich: You’ve got your book by your, I’m sorry – you were saying you were starting your book when you mother was twenty-four with long hair. Where did the Russian come from?

Rend: Okay, okay, okay. See, not because my father is a descendant Fern. I say his name is actually Fern – alien’s name, you know, for Sandy, Russian and all that, Cuba, descendant – my father. We all are Bahamian natives. My father is Bahamian too, but you see his father comes from Cuba. His father was Cuban. That made his father in the Bahamas. That’s my grandfather. See, my great grandfather is Cuban. Okay, but you see, nothing how I look, see. The culture in these islands is all we got. You see Columbus and these different walks of life with past true and discoveries as well, even in America. I say, let me tell you something, right. You ain’t got to go foreign land. Anywhere you exist you can find a breed of people from the original pinpoint. I say, instead of using Russian, American, Cuban and so forth, just let’s say Egyptians ‘cause at that time Egyptians were ruling. That’s right before the empire rule. I say the children of Israel were slaves – Israelites. I say, the Israelites is who we are you know. But anyhow, let me go to this – why I break it down to my mother. Even though they say Bahamians here are Arawack Indian, my mother is a really Indian side. Okay, I can believe that, you see. I see it, a culture that is mixed in my family life tree.

Eugenia and Duke Percente:

Eugenia was born in 1927 at Little Farmer's Cay. Eugenia’s parents raised her and her nine other siblings in Little Farmer’s Cay. Eugenia had only one brother and the rest of her siblings were girls. Her father taught them all to fish at a young age and they all grew up fishing and cutting sisal. In her words, they all "grew up like boys."
Eugenia moved to Eleuthera to work at a young age. There, she met her husband, Duke, and they were married in 1948. They have been married for fifty-four years to date. Eugenia became a market woman in Nassau, where she raised her children. She sold both vegetables and fish. She spent her days back in Little Farmer's Cay with her husband and a few of her sons. She wanted to share with Rend the story of how she and her husband met.

Rend let me tell you what your father and I do when we marry at Harbor Island... Well, he met me there. And how I get there: my mother's girls was brought up... My mother had all girls, and the only son was... Now how I gonna get away from my mother – 'cause we born an' grew right here – this my home. But my daddy get a caretaker for an island – not from here, a rich man – to Harbor Island. And he had a place there. And he want a caretaker for the place – and happens to get my daddy, and my daddy gotta go there. So, my ma' said, "You's the only one o' my children I can depend on. If daddy gotta go, you know daddy can't read an' write – well, you gotta go to take care o' your daddy's money, you know?"

So that's how they send me. And they send me to Harbor. I cry, I didn't wanna go. I cry, but finally I did go. I did go. I was almost in my twenty-three. When I married him I was twenty-four. And I went to Harbor Island. I knew some people – these white people come to Nassau, and they married in Nassau, live in a hotel in Nassau – and they come over there to spend they honeymoon. So, when I come to find out the man – I see this young fellow come down every day sittin' down there. So, one
day he (the honeymoon man) asks my daddy – say, "Who the young man comin' around there?"

And my father tell him, "That's a Harbor Island young man."

And he say, "He always down here?" Say, "He lookin' at my daughter," say, "He want my daughter."

They say, "Well, what's he gonna do?" So, one day he (Duke) take a bottle of whiskey, and sit on the steps.

And I telled him (the honeymoon man), "I'm not a cook."

And the wife said, "Don't matter," said, "Eugenia, you will be with me."

And I say, "Yeah, I'll help you, but I'm not a cook. I'll keep the place up and do the cleaning." So now, he called the man down on the step and asked what his intentions are.

And he say, "I marrying soon Mr. Nixon's daughter."

He say, "Yeah? What you gonna do about that?"

So, Duke say, "Well I tell you sir, I would like to marry her if I had the opportunity – the earliest chance."

"Then what stop you?"

"Finance, I don't have the finance yet."

He said, "I tell you something: I met my wife at the hotel in Nassau – I marry her and here we are up in our honeymoon. If Eugenia love you enough to marry you, final! I will furnish you, and my wife will furnish Eugenia, and we will see that you are married before we leave here."

That's the luck that he get.

The Passing of Duke Percente

Somehow, it was expected. Not that you hope for it. So the effect, I'm trying for it not to be noticed, I say, it's more serious than the eyes can see. What I'm thinking about is, how my life had a lot of friction in it- like movies. If you realize, listen, to some people, they gotta believe that it's better than the others. See the movies is real life to me, you know? Because, you know how the good book talks about how all things are possible–even man's fantasy that they put in this friction- I say is reality. It just takes a certain time for these things to take place. So I figured that effect draw me to certain movies that I see and how it
made drastic change in some people’s parts, especially the star. When a death occurs in it, that is real close to them, some people take revenge, some people have change of luck, some people have change of heart. But see, to me, it’s life giving me experience in a different view. That’s the way I see it. I recall when my granddaddy said I was a small boy, I grew up around them.

Somehow, it was expected. The change was more or less, expected. Not that you hope for it, I’m just trying not to notice it. I say, this change is more serious than the eyes can see. See, what I think about is how my life has had a lot of friction in it. There’s some people that believe they are better than others, like in the movies. See, the movies is like real life to me. It’s like how the good book talks about how all is possible... Everyman’s fantasy can be realized like in the movies. When someone dies, especially for the star character, who is real close, some people take revenge, for some it’s a change of luck, for some it’s a change of heart. Like in movies this friction, it is drastic friction. Everyman is put in this friction. I say this friction is reality.

For me, I say this life has given me experiences in a different view. I recall when I was a small boy, I grew up around my daddy and my daddy’s daddy, my grandfather. And that’s how I came to miss them so dearly. I remember how I was favorite, and my daddy used to take me in his lap. Then when I became a big boy, he even had me buttoning his white shirts. I remember that used to affect me so greatly. So much, I say, someday I’d like to put it on paper. I’d like to write about him so people can really know who he was, because to explain it would take a drastic amount of time. If I write it, those who can’t hear it can still experience the visibility of my life spirit, even if you ain’t privileged to hear. If you have the privilege of putting it in books, you should. Because it won’t just be here for you, I say for your children’s children. Your grandson could take off and read about grandpa later you know? Those are valuable documents.
Conclusion

So for me to write a book, I would want to write one outside of my own knowledge. Because my father’s old words go beyond normal people. I think a Bahamian would be more accepting of my point of view, my insight that I want to pass on. I’m not limiting the publication only to the Bahamas; I just won’t publish it until I find someone with reasonable acceptance. Otherwise I won’t make sense.

Rend in His House with a Photograph of Him as a Young Man

The good book teaches you that you should think, like, on bread alone, right? So in the same way, it don’t make sense to put a book out on the market just to put a book out on the market. You shouldn’t put a book out just for fashion, because fashion goes in and out of style. When you’re searching for something to put on the market, look for something that never loses value. I don’t need fashion, out of style or out of date; anything that’s behind my acceptance. See, I think that’s what my dead father passed onto me.