

THE UNKNOWN LEGEND OF SIPARIA



The Williams family lived in a mansion in Santa Flora. Ariana, aged thirteen, was the eldest of the three children. Zion was ten and Brandon, the youngest, was three years old. Sometimes, they argued about things, but they were very happy together.

Every year, they all looked forward to going to the big annual festival of La Divina Pastora, the festival dedicated to the patron saint of the Siparia Roman Catholic Church. She is also called the Black Virgin and people from many religions come to the festival.

The night before the event, the children got their favourite clothes ready. They were very excited. On the morning of the festival, they said their prayers quickly.

"Go brush your teeth and come for breakfast", their Mummy shouted from downstairs.

They hurried their breakfast of pancakes, bacon, eggs, tomato choka, sada roti and cereal with milk, and soon, the entire family was on its way to the Siparia Festival. They knew it was going to be an exciting day, but not only in the way they had imagined.

As they were driving along, one of their car tires blew. When Mr Williams discovered that the spare tire was flat he quickly called a mechanic. Nothing would stop them from reaching their destination! The mechanic was soon there, fixed both tires and the Williams family was back on the road.

At the festival, the children joined crowds of people in the packed church. They prayed to Mary to ask Jesus to help them in their exams. Ariana was writing SEA and wanted God's blessings.

Then suddenly, a lot of noise, drumming on the walls and shouting began to drown out their praying. A vagrant had come into the church. He was drunk.

Mr. Williams got up and firmly led the vagrant out.

"You must not disturb the church. This is a holy place. And this is a special time", he told him.

Mr Williams did not expect the vagrant to curse and slap him in response, but he simply walked away, went back inside, leaving the vagrant to think about his behaviour.

After the service, everyone joined in singing hymns and saying the rosary as the traditional procession left the church. People carried the statue of Mary on their shoulders. It was a solemn occasion but the children felt happy and peaceful.

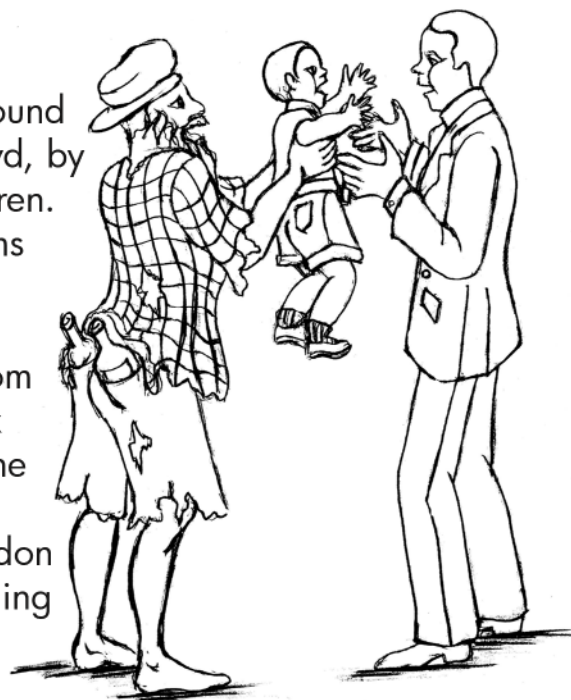


Then came the festivities of dancing and singing and the next source of excitement. Little Brandon disappeared. The Williams family were in a panic.

"Brandon! Brandon!!!" they all yelled.

They could not find him but he had been found wandering around, looking lost in the crowd, by a bad man who kidnapped and sold children. He recognized Brandon as the rich Williams family's youngest son.

He decided to hold the boy for a big ransom of three and a half million dollars and took him to a warehouse to hide him. Little did he know that the vagrant lived there and watched his every move. As soon as Brandon was left alone, the vagrant came out of hiding and took him quietly and quickly away.



The vagrant was very happy to come to Brandon's rescue to make up for treating his father very badly earlier on, especially since he realized that Mr. Williams had not abused him. He was only trying to stop him disturbing the people in the church.

The vagrant returned Brandon to his worried family who learned that the vagrant's name was Jassim and that he had lost his job because he drank too much alcohol and became very lazy and confused. Many times, he had tried to stop, as the alcohol made him feel very angry.

The children's father was moved by Jassim's story and his good deed and offered to send him to rehab. Jassim came out a sober man. Now, he works for Mr. Williams and never stops thanking God to whom he had prayed on the day of the festival to change his life.

"God works in wonderful ways!" he would always tell the children.

THE END