

KEI MILLER

*Government Cows*

To the Editor Madam,

It is me again, Augustus Silvera. You must be know me well by my letters. Is me who live on Parsley Lane and used to do electrician work. I write you all the while but you don't publish anything I send you so you will be glad to know, Mrs Editor, that this is the last letter you getting from me.

I don't know is what you have against me so, but before I done this whole business of buying you newspaper and sending in letter, I want you to know bout all the tings that you cause, and I hope you can sleep at night time.

First ting is Mr Norris Walcott who used to live next door to me, a tall dark gentleman who used to treat people ~~descent~~ decent. Even when the sun burning like the dickens that man would be wearing him felt hat and him take it off and nod good morning or good evening when him see you. Mr Walcott had good ways bout him, did speak proper to everybody. When him was a younger man him was the headmaster of the all-age school them now lock down on Wisherpark Avenue.

But as life go, Norris Walcott got on in years and him retire. And still, still him was willing to take the children in him house and learn them some lessons! Many evenings I sit out and listen to him teaching people pickney to read and write and telling them the history of Jamaica, bout Arawaks and Columbus and all them ~~singting~~ singthing. Him was an intelligent man, always willing to chat with you. Is plenty time I over him house slamming down dominoes with the fellows and talking bout politics. Is him first tell me "Augustus, you must write those things to the newspaper editor. Poor people can have voice in this country too."

Mrs Editor, it hurt me the day him die, and I write to you and say that we cyaant afford to bury such a good man any old way. I write the letter appealing to anyone who him did probably teach to come and help us see Mr Norris Walcott on him way to glory. Is plenty people would have helped if them did only know, but you never print the letter Mrs Editor! We dress up Norris in him good suit

and felt hat but we had to put him in a simple cardboard box. Him never deserve that at all, and because of that ma'am I would like to say respectfully, I think you is a bitch!

I write you when that obeah woman, Miss lola, move in the house up the road and every Tuesday night she disturbing the peace bout she having service. But I tell myself I could understand why for you own sake, you was afraid to print that one.

I tell you bout Sarah's big girl Lucille, who only wanted some books to study for her common entrance, cause she was a bright girl. Just some books she wanted. She never pass her common entrance and Sarah send her gone to foreign.

I did tell you bout Mrs James dog who mad and when the head take him, the dog eat all tree. I see it for myself! My own two eyes I see it. The dog was just walking and all of a sudden is like a madness fly up in him head and him start behave ignorant, and him run after Mrs James croton plant and start bite them bite them up, rip off two branches. And I write to you bout it, bout the ~~plage~~ plague of Mad Dog Disease that come to Jamaica. But I read the papers for a week and never see you put it anywhere, and if the whole of we dog population catch sick in them head, is your fault.

Mrs Editor, the last letter I write to you was bout the government cows. I don't know who tell the Priminister that the couple acres of land right across from Parsley Lane is a good place to keep that ~~heard~~ herd. Don't him know that is that same place where all the children play at day time, and where the man them play football when weekend come? Nobody did tell him that is the same piece of land that when church have crusade, them put up tent and have open air meetings? But now government decide that the cows make better use of the land than we.

The poor little boy Rayon soon get buck down by one of them government cows cause him so fool fool and don't know anyting—you always see him jumping over into the field with red shirt bout him teasing the bull, bout him see it on TV and him is matador. But one of these days the cows going kill him.

The worst thing bout it all Mrs Editor is that the stupid animal them always breaking down people fence and coming into people yard to eat down we plants. Every morning I wake up and see all six of them cramp up in front of the house and all them know how

to do is to ~~shit mess~~ shit up people place like we make bathroom for them!

Listen Mrs Editor, since I not going to be writing you no more, I want you to know that though you did try your best, I still did get in you newspaper! It was when police did gun down the ole tiefing Pickaxe right in front of me house. We did all know it was going to happen one day. Even Pickaxe did know. But to see it happen, Jeesus! It still hurt. And is while them was taking up the body and I stand up there saying to meself, "Look what happen to me boy," and a reporter man come up to me and ask "You was the victim's father?" I see my opportunity and I answer yes!

The next day I was in the newspaper ma'am, and the only ting I feel sorry for was that I never remember all the tings I had to say, cause look like them would have printed it. They put in everything I did tell the reporter man. Is just that I was so choke up the day, I never said much. Just that Pickaxe was a good boy, even though him did tief in truth, him never deserve that death.

I want you to also know ma'am, that I did meet your aunty one day. The one with the coolie features who live out at Marcus Bay, who say her husband dead from cancer ten years ago. Is me friend link me up with her because she needed some electrical tings done around the house and she couldn't afford to pay any big big money. So I went.

Is like your aunty never see man in a long long while. She was touching me here and there, always leaning on me and finally when I done the work and was ready to leave, she ask me if I could please just stay the night and keep her company cause sometimes she get scared in that big house all by herself. So I stay.

Your aunty is a sweet woman! I never do anything with her, just sit and talk and I listen. It was the next morning when a paper boy drop off the newspaper and when she come back with it in her hand she ask if I know how is her niece is the editor. I say "Is dat so?" and she tell me, proud as any peacock, yes. She tell me how you did even live with her for a while when you was going to college and how sometimes even now you visit and stay with her. She point out the room that you sleep in, and is that time I hold her and give her what she did want all night. I take her into the same room that she show me was yours, on your own bed, and I give that old woman

a fit work make she hold on to me back and shout out some bad words that even frighten me! I want you know that!

Finally Mrs Editor, I know that there is a God up in heaven who sees and knows all and vengeance is his and I hope that one day government will put some cows in a open lot beside your house. I pray that them will knock down your fence and come into your yard and nyam everything. And after that I want them shit up the whole place. Then you will know Mrs Editor. Then you will understand.

I am etc.

*Augustus Silvera*