

2022 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Youth Category – 3rd Prize]

MY VALUE, MY LIFE

(Original)

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I realized the true meaning of possessing a value at the age of 12. I lived with my aunt who had two children who were older than I. I always get scolded for what I did not do but circumstances would always make me hold back my tears. When I think of my parents who died in a ghastly road accident, I always feel devastated. They have always been very good parents. They taught me the way to behave and the way not to behave.

It was a shock for me on that bad day when the news got to me that my parent died while going for a friend's wedding in Lagos. My aunt who seems to be the only concerned out of my other family members came to pick me up. Even though I know she can't be like my biological mother, I decided to cope no matter what the situation may be.

My aunt who had always been nice all this while before my parents passed away suddenly turned to a dreadful being. I was shocked when she told me that I will be at home that she can't waste her money sending me to school. I wasn't happy but I had no choice but to obey everything she tells me to do; I do the entire house chores: washing everyone's clothes and cooking food for the family.

It was a sunny Monday. I was the only one at home. I sat down and thought about different things to do but suddenly! I sighted an old man with a small child outside waiting to cross the road. I guess the man could not see well because I could sight an incoming vehicle, so I ran outside as fast as I could and pulled the man back just at the last minutes when they were about to be hit by the car.

I was so joyous about saving a life that I could picture my mother smiling at me. I looked up, smiled, and then ran back inside. On that same day, when my aunt returned from work,

I was accused of stealing the money kept on the table. I knew I saw that money on the table earlier that day and remembered that it was one of her children that took it claiming that it is his school fees, but I didn't bother to question the boy further. My aunt told me to produce the money before the day ran out if not, she would send me out of her house. I told her the person who took the money but she didn't believe me.

The next day, she told me to leave the house immediately. I begged her to let me stay but all my pleas fell on deaf ears; so, I had to leave her house.

I left the house without a destination in mind. I wandered around for about 7 hours looking for a Good Samaritan who would take me in but it seemed there was no one coming to my aid. Thankfully, as I was walking down, a man stopped and took me to his house. He asked me why I was walking aimlessly and I narrated all my ordeals to him. He was shocked that, at my age and with all I am facing, I could still perform such attributes. My story touched him dearly that he decided to apply these lessons to every aspect of his life.

He took good care of me, fed me, clothed me and even sent me to the best school in town. Once again, I felt the presence of a father in my life. Now, I know kindness, honesty and truthfulness are what pay, possessing the right value is like possessing Gold.