

MY BIGGEST WORRY

Hello, I am Brian and I'm seven and half years old. I am a creator though I know you will not understand what I mean. I create things and I have lot of them in a big television carton in my room. Nobody in my neighborhood is better than me in creating things although John believes he is better. John is a year older than me and they live directly adjacent to our house. He has an older brother who likes to bully younger children in the neighborhood. I don't worry about him because Grandma told me that bullies do what they do because they have a very low self-esteem. I had asked grandma what that means and she said they believe all the people around them are better than them and because of that, they don't do well in anything. That is true because Thomas is fourteen but he is still in primary six for the third time.

When our pastor in our church preached about one Thomas in the bible, I did not fully understand what he was saying except when he called him doubting Thomas. It was then I remembered John's brother and I pitied him that his parents had to give him a name that will make him doubt and feel bad about himself which is affecting him. To avoid catching his attention which if you are ten years down to two will be a bad experience, I make sure I don't come in contact with him or play with my creatures in front of him.

I don't also worry about my siblings even though my sister always try to make me aware that she is three years older than me mostly at times when we are given something to share among ourselves. Benita will always tell me she will pick first because she is the senior and she never forgets to take the best and leave the rest for me and Bennett. Bennett is my three years brother, you

should know I'm older than him because you already know my age. I don't worry much about him, only a little when compared to my greatest enemy. But he is something out of this world. I had to move my best creatures from the room we share to the store room because of him. I started having issues with him the day he suddenly decided to test if he was tall enough to reach the carton with my creatures. That day, he destroyed about five of my creatures. I wanted my parents to take him to the orphanage close to our house so I will never see him again. But when I told Dad you will be so surprised what he did. He looked at my face filled with tears and started laughing, then he called Mum and told her what I wanted them to do to Bennett and she also started laughing.

“B2 your brother just turned three a week ago and he just wanted to play with them” Mum said and went back to the kitchen.

“Just that? You will not punish him for destroying my things?” I had asked but nobody answered me.

That day, I went back to my room and refused to eat. Then the next day, I transferred my creatures to the store room when B3 was not looking. Dad bought him a toy car the next day but he threw it away. He wanted my creatures and he cried for a long time but when no one responded, he started screaming. Dad had to pay twenty naira for two of my creatures before I gave it to Bennett. I used the money to buy what I needed to create another one.

Let me tell you who my biggest worry is. It's John. He says he is better than me and three days ago, he

showed me his new creation. It was a very fine boat that can float in water but because its paper, it soaked water and spoiled after some time in the water. All the kids in the neighborhood gathered around him as he demonstrated with his paper boat. Later, they brought ten naira for him to create a boat for them. Do you now see that's he is my biggest worry?

Since that day, nobody gathers around my creatures and two days ago, in the morning he came to show me the hundred naira he made from selling some of his boat. I did not cry because I did want him to feel he has won but I told him I will make something better than his fine paper boat. Later in the afternoon, I saw Uche playing with the boat he bought from John. I had to give him twenty naira to collect the boat. I studied it and I tried producing a similar boat and I was very happy I got it after five trails. I put it in a big bowl of water and the

boat started floating. I wanted to make a bigger boat that will be better than John's own. As I was making it, Mum called me to throw away the dustbin in the kitchen into a bigger one outside. That was when I saw a blue gift wrapper inside the dustbin. I used it to wrap the big boat and when I placed it on the big bowl of water, it floated but it did not soak water. I ran outside and told all the kids I saw to come and watch my new boat. Bennett came with Chika, his four year old friend. Five other kids came and as I was about to place the boat on the big bowl of water, John also came.

By the time I finished my demonstration, all the kids wanted it but I refused to sell it because there was no wrapper to make another one. I promised to make a boat bigger than John's own for the same amount John sold his own. I got two hundred naira that day and I spent the

whole night making the big boats. (Excerpts from the series I AM BRIAN)