

Helping others.

About a month ago we had a knock on our door. A young man introduced himself as Darkey told me he would work for money. (*We had been warned when we first arrived it was not advisable to give money out and that we should keep our doors locked and to not let unknown people in the house.*) I told him we didn't have work to be done and he left. A couple of nights later he returned and said that he was hungry and didn't have any food or money. I felt badly for him so I gave him some food and he went on his way.

A few days later Darkey was again at the door. Not to ask for food but to thank me for the food. I wished him well and he left. I locked up the house and headed for work. As I started to walk off, 3 men ran past me and up the hill and behind the neighbor's house. Then 3 more ran past yelling. As I walked past the neighbor's house all 6 men came out from behind the house yelling, pulling and pushing Darkey. Three more men came up and started yelling at him, pushing, slapping him and forcing him to walk down the road. They were speaking in English as well as Ewe and I understood enough to know that they were accusing him of stealing from one of the last men to join the group. They were ahead of me and I watched as they broke limbs off trees to use as whips and picked up stones for throwing from the road. Still pushing, pulling, and slapping him, I knew they were planning to beat him. As I got closer I felt compelled to intervene. I said, "Please stop hurting him, don't hit him anymore just take him to the police". Someone replied, "He stole from that man, he is a thief, and he's a bad person". Darkey turned to me pleading saying, "Madame, I didn't steal. Madame, please. Help me". Again I asked, "Please just take him to the police. If he has stolen, the police will take care of the punishment". Someone from the group said YES we will take him to the police station. They continued walking away while some were still pushing and yelling at him. As we headed in different directions, I again asked them to not hurt him but to let the police handle it. I said a prayer for them that they would do the right thing.

A few hours later at the hospital a policeman brought in 2 men handcuffed together informing us that one needed attention. I recognized one as Darkey. Darkey told the policeman that I was the one who stopped them from beating him and that I knew him. The officer asked me what happened. I explained that I had given him food the previous night, what I witnessed earlier and what I said. Other than that I did not know him or anything further.

After a quick exam it was determined that Darkey had only a few bruises but no other injuries, he received Insulin for his diabetes and was released to the police.

I was happy to see that the group of men did as I asked and did not beat him and took him to the police.

Normally I would not interfere in incidents as this, because of fear of retaliation towards me; the men thinking this is not any of my business, and you are a woman telling men what and what not to do. However, seeing this person being treated this way made me sad and I feared for his safety. I didn't know the situation and I didn't care if he was guilty or not. I just wanted him treated fairly. I am thankful to God that God gave me the strength to speak up and that He gave the men the wisdom to do what was right.

A couple of days later Darkey stopped at the house again. This time he came to thank me for helping him and treating him at the hospital. I told him I was glad he was alright and that I hope he stays out of trouble.

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