

Michael's Great Escape

Before I was even ten, I was kidnapped; sent to a banana plantation in Jamaica. When I got there, I was depressed. I didn't eat or drink. One month later, Jordan - who was my older brother - was sent. I had to work tomorrow. The people, who had already been sent, were nice enough to get me eating and drinking.

Jordan was a rebel and very devious. He wanted us to have our freedom back, but he knew if we were caught trying to escape by the plantation owner, we would be beaten and starved. He had to think of a way out. One day, we found a fallen tree, collected some sticks and took them to the black smith to sharpen. "J, how the plan goin?" he asked excitedly.

"Not good, but this idea might work. Can you sharpen these sticks so we can make a map on the rock in the big field?" he asked. I was not sure about this.... how could we keep it a secret? I'd heard that there was an informant among the workers. We would have to be careful. I told Jordan we would have to cover it up somehow. And how would we even know what to put on the map anyway?

Jordan said we could ask the truck drivers who collect the bananas each week. I was nervous in case they told on us but we had no choice. So that's what we did. Every week, Jordan would be friendly when taking the bananas to the truck. He'd ask them how their journey had been and get bits of information about the roads down to the port. Then he'd take the stick down his trousers when he was in the field and scratch lines into the rock. I would go behind him and cover it over with mud. It wasn't long before we had the route scratched into the rock.

One night a storm blew in from the ocean; the rain poured on the plantation and we couldn't go out to the fields. The next time we went out, I saw all the mud had been washed off the rock leaving the map on show. I couldn't do anything but pray it wasn't seen by the guards. It would be too obvious if I stopped to cover it. I managed to get to Jordan and tell him. We were puzzled about what to do but we came up with this plan instead: Jordan was going to turn the rock over. "Go over there and drop a basket of bananas" he told me quietly. I did as I was told and the guards rushed over giving Jordan time to flip the rock.