

Eulogy of Daniel Louis

Daniel Sylvester Louis was born Daniel Sylvester John on Tuesday October 8th, 1991 to Ms. Doreen John who is now Mrs. Doreen Louis- Prescott. I had the honour of giving him his first name: when my mother was 6 months pregnant, I told her if she had a boy call him Daniel and if she had a girl call her Nicole. My mother honoured my request on that faithful day and thus began a very eventful journey.

Many of you knew Daniel Louis but let me introduce you to Daniel John. As a child he was very hairy. I remember him having hair on his ears and always wearing corn rows on his head. In my childish mind it reminded me of sonic the hedgehog and I nicknamed him baby sonic. Daniel as a child was brave and was not scared of anything. We spent lots of time stealing granny's tamarind balls, climbing the plumb tree when granny left the house and getting up to all kinds of mischief which, was usually followed up by a dose of lashes from my mother or grandmother.

We had a grasshopper collection, we caught grasshoppers and took off their jumping legs so they could not escape. From time to time we would group up with our cousins Nehemiah, Anniah, Delvan and Shervan and it was nonstop fun or mischief... depends on if you ask us or our parents. One day my mother cut Daniel's hair and, as sure a Samson from the Bible lost his strength my brother lost his courage. He became a cry baby, crying for the slightest thing, and he developed an uncanny fear of grasshoppers. I picked on him quite a bit to try to toughen him up but that was met by lots of lashes from my mother. When school days began I was an A student. Coming home with excellent grades term after term while Daniel scraped C's. I recall every term my mother praised Daniel's grades while mine were such a regular that I got no praise. Looking back now I remember being so jealous but I now understand that my mother tried to motivate him.

Daniel from a child loved toys with wheels on them. He took that into his adult life with his love for vehicles. When Daniel was 9 months old he was playing with a toy bike our uncle Brian had bought me and I took it away from him for fear of him destroying it. He gave off such a loud scream that my mother came into the room and gave me a beating that I can't forget 25 years later. Anyone who knew my brother knew of his love for cars. And his signature phrase when he saw a performance vehicle drive past... "Chee!!!! Da is what I talking bout man".

Daniel treated his vehicles like they were a part of his family and whenever I was using his car he would call me to ask how his car was doing. I remember when my first daughter Kalijandra was born, Daniel was so excited for me. I could see the joy in his eyes to meet his niece. Daniel celebrated the birth of his son on April 15th, 2014 and his daughter on March 12th, 2015. Having children made Daniel very over-protective and as Tiffany can attest, you better be able to account for every bump and scrape on those children: very much like his car. Daniel made many sacrifices for his children, from paying rent for a place he could not afford to spending a day with them after working all night. There was nothing he would not do for them. The sacrifices he made were not limited to his children, my mother proudly recalls days when Daniel would come and give her his last. He was a good big brother to Lucius Jr and Sarah. He made sure to keep them in line as the military kept him in line. For me, he was my best friend, roommate, little brother and at times very annoying, especially when he had talk for my cooking.

I have had the joy of Daniel for 25 years two months and twenty days and these memories will last me for a lifetime. It hurts that I have to find a new best man for my wedding. It hurts that I have to find a new confidant. It hurts that all of the new and interesting things that I have yet to experience, he will not be here to share them with me. His departure is not one that any of us will soon forget. I urge you do not remember how he died, remember how he lived. Daniel, as hard as things were, found time to do the things he loved. He found time for his loved ones despite his heavy workload. He went to the beach, met new people and most of all he drove, which was his passion. Remember him for his smile, his love for cars and his dedication to family. Take a page out of his book and take some time to enjoy your life because we don't know when it will end. Finally, let us all pray to be lucky to die doing what we love as he did. And if ever you wonder why he had to leave us so early, comfort yourself with the fact that God was in need of a good driver who had an infectious smile.

Written and delivered by Kemar John in honour of my beloved brother Daniel Louis on the occasion of his burial on January 13th, 2017.