

The visitors loved to stand still on the upper deck and breathe in the fresh Carenage air. They sucked in the air and in the process rejuvenated lungs long deprived of purity in the toxic environments of Toronto, New York and London.

I recalled the grayish wooden boats known as Lighters that idled on the calm waters of the Carenage. There were also the large wooden vessels that journeyed between Grenada and its sister isle Carriacou. With each trip, the boats tightened the bond between the two islands. The Carenage had its various forms of entertainment. People flocked to Empire Cinema to see the movies. Even the Saturday matinee drew a large crowd. The Cubby Hole was a popular dance spot and a good place to lime or buy a chicken snack. And then there was that teller of tales called Grubay. He used to pull crowds as he told his far fetched stories on the sidewalks of the Carenage. He spoke of pulling cane from cane trucks, and succeeding in pulling the entire truck. He told stories of Hurricane Janet and of parting fights in the sea between barracudas and sharks. Grubay was the comic relief for the citizens of the Carenage.

The Carenage Ghetto I also remembered. I thought of the Rasta men reeling from their grassy high as they smoked their weed in the narrow corridors. I pictured them with their flying dreadlocks dipping themselves into the water of the Carenage to cool off.

There are other memories of the Carenage. The smell still lingers there, engraved somewhere within the brain. Oh, yes, the smell! There was the unmistakable smell of tobacco from the tourists mixed with the scent of fish from the small fishing boats that docked near the bigger boats.

The Carenage was the spot where firemen breezed out and waited for the next fire. And when there was a fire, they rode to it in their fire engines and fiercely fought the fire until the building was reduced to ashes. And then they headed back to the firehouse on the Carenage to play dominoes and wait for the next building to erupt in flames.

I looked at the picture and the memories hit me like an avalanche. I pictured the huge political demonstrations that took place on the Carenage. I even saw myself buying a hot bread with butter and a quarter pound of salami from Tony in that small shop on the Carenage. The taste is still in my mouth.

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