

The Zenya Bernard Story
by Austin G. Mitchell

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Chapter One

Dean Bogle couldn't believe that Zenya Bernard had changed so much in four years. They had been batch mates in college and many persons speculated that it was more than that. There was a rumor that they had fallen out because he got one of her friends pregnant. He had refused to own up to the pregnancy. One of his friends had stepped forward to claim the child. She was a senior teacher at Mc Cauley High school in St. Catherine and was along with Karl Watson. He was a businessman in the village. She was in her middle twenties, wasn't married, but the mother of a little girl. Dean taught at the nearby Jackson Primary school. He had a woman, Tena Davis in Norris. His baby mother was Kathy Tulloch and she lived in Portmore. He was also fooling around a teacher at the nearby preparatory school, Britney Rowe. Karl was known to have a lot of women. He had three baby mothers. His main woman was Carlene Powell and she had two children for him. She lived in Norris two miles away. His other baby mothers were Nelly Ray and Portia Willis, both of whom have one child for him. Portia was with another man, Leroy Jones. Norton was another man who liked Zenya. Karl was in his middle thirties, was married, but separated from his wife. They have two children, a boy and a girl, both pre-teens. They live in Montego Bay with their mother. Zenya had told both Dean and Norton that she was a one-man woman. Norton was a mini-bus operator. Her baby father, Wendel White, was still interested in her and kept on calling and visiting her.

Zenya was at her house Friday evening when Carlene called her. Outside the rain was pouring down.

"Why are you along with Karl? Is it his money you're after? Don't you make enough as a senior teacher?"

"It was he who looked me, and that's why I'm along with him. As a matter of fact, I wanted him."

"My children need their father. Right now, he isn't coming home because of you. They're very unhappy when he doesn't come home. You're a cold, heartless woman."

"I'm not that kind of woman. I always encourage him to go home to his children and his baby mothers. Am I the only one of his women that you called?"

“You’re the only one I know about.”

“Obviously, you don’t know anything about him.”

“I know enough to know that you’re fattening your bank account with his money while my children go hungry.”

“If your children are hungry, how is that my fault? Go and look for him and leave me alone,” she told her and ended the call.

There was a party being held in Norris that Friday night. Karl came with Zenya. Dean came with Britney. Carlene came alone. Wendel heard about it and came with his woman, Audrey. Carlene was sitting on a bench, drinking a malt beverage when Karl confronted her.

“Leave me alone. Go back to Zenya. You have two children with me and none with her and yet you prefer her to me.”

“It’s the children, I’m asking you about. Are they all right?”

“They should be all right, I left them with my mother.”

“That’s what you do all the time, if it’s not your mother, it’s some neighbor.”

“Leave me alone. You can baby sit them too, instead of being out here partying.”

The man she was dancing with, came back and she went to dance with him. Karl saw Zenya dancing with Wendel and walked out of the party. She went after him.

“You’re too jealous. He’s my baby father. You can’t stop me from dancing with him.”

Dean was dancing with Britney when he spotted Tena dancing with a guy he didn’t know. When the song finished playing, he went over to her.

“Why are you at this party and you didn’t tell me that you were coming?”

“I’m my own big woman. I’m free to do as I please. I’m not telling you what to do or where to go, so why do you want to dictate to me?”

Britney came over.

“Look who you’re partying with, Britney, of all persons. She’s trash, compared to me.”

“You’re no good, Tena. Any man in Keswick who hasn’t sampled you is because he doesn’t want to.”

“Talk about yourself. You know how many stories I’ve heard about you and countless men.”

Dean intervened and took Britney away. Karl and Zenya were sitting down and arguing.

“Carlene called me, complaining about the amount of money you’re giving her children. She said that it’s not enough.”

“She’s lying, each month I give her a generous amount of money. I can only think that she’s spending it on herself that’s why it finishes so quickly.”

“She’s also complaining that your children hardly see you as most times you’re missing in action. You only spend weekends with me and maybe a day in the week. So where are you the rest of the time?”

“I’m with her when I’m not with you, but she wants me to spend all the time I have with her.”

“You have to choose between me and her. People are passing all kinds of remarks about the situation as it is. I’m tired of women calling to tell me to leave you alone.”

Wendel came over and she went to dance with him. Karl made another attempt to walk out of the party, but changed his mind and went to buy a sorrel beer instead. Dean saw all of this and was tempted to ask Zenya for a dance. She had refused all his attempts. He found it strange that she would refuse to dance with him of all persons. It was when he saw Norton dancing with her that he was encouraged and came over. When the song finished playing, he went up to her, but she refused and went into Karl’s arms. When he returned, Britney was nowhere to be found. A man told him that she had gone outside. When he went outside, he saw her getting into a taxi. He shouted at her, but the taxi drove off. Frustrated, he went inside. He was drinking a sorrel beer when he saw a girl he knew. She was Ashley Marsh. He beckoned to her and she came over. He bought a sorrel beer for her.

“What happened between you and Britney? Why did she leave the party so suddenly?”

“She got angry because I was quarrelling with Tena and begged Zenya for a dance.”

“I will dance with you, but no sex, not for tonight.”

“Are you alone at this party?”

“Yes, I came by myself.”

“What about your baby father?”

“He and I broke up about six months ago. He was always watching me. If I talked to a next man, he would quarrel. But I don’t understand men anyway.”

“Maybe, when you get a bit older,” he told her.

“All the young guys are going crazy over Zenya. I know that you wouldn’t mind if it was you who was dancing with her.”

Chapter Two

Zenya was now dancing with Wendel. Karl was dancing with another of his women, Portia. Carlene came over to where Zenya was sitting on a bench and drinking a malt beverage. She had just finished dancing with Wendel.

"You're just using Karl. I know that's what you're doing. You're taking his money for what, I don't know. You don't have any morals, girl. You should leave him alone and go and look a man for yourself."

"You can't stop me from being along with him."

She drank some more of the drink she was having.

"You told me that it was he who looked you, but I know it's you who looked him. You're still along with your baby father, Wendel."

"I'm not along with him. He's married and has a wife. You're just trying to stir up trouble."

Carlene left and went to another section of the party. Reta, Norton's woman went over to Zenya.

"Zenya, I don't want you to dance with Norton again."

Another woman, Debbie was nearby and heard what Reta said to Zenya.

"I have two children for Norton. I have more claims to him than you who just has one child for him. He lives with me and not you."

"He spends more time with me than you."

After a while, Norton started to dance with Reta and Debbie began to fume. Dean was dancing with Ashley when a woman, Shirley came over.

"Don't get too comfortable with Dean. Tena and Britney will beat you to leave him alone. "

"Miss Shirley, you know that nothing like that will happen," he told her.

"If you say so, but I'm just warning her," she said and returned to her man, and they started dancing again.

Dean took Ashley down to the Keswick back road to talk at around one o'clock that morning.

"Most women don't trust you. Especially after what you did to Delaine."

"I used protection every time I slept with her. Her boyfriend, Delton, claimed the baby."

“I have seen the baby several time and she resembles you very much.”

Despite her reservations she allowed him to make love to her in the backseat of his car. He took her home afterwards. He didn't feel sleepy and decided to go back to the party. He had seen Margot French inside, dancing alone. She had winked at him when he was leaving the party. It was a good thing he had used a condom on Ashley. He saw Margot still dancing alone. He took a seat on a bench. He watched her dance. Several young men were watching her too. Some of them had asked her for a dance, which he knew she had refused. Not many of them could waltz with a woman like her on a dance floor. His mother had taught him ballroom dancing and he was grateful to her. When the song finished playing, she came and sat beside him.

“I see you have just done a quickie with Ashley.”

“She said she was tired and wanted to sleep so I just took her home.”

“I don't want any trouble with her, Tena or Britney. I like you. The problem is that I'm not sure that you like me.”

“From I came up here and saw you, I was attracted to you. Don't listen to all those rumors about me.”

“Are you saying that you didn't get Delaine pregnant? When you refused to own the baby, Delton stepped forward and claimed it.”

“You know him. Does he look like a fool to you?”

“I don't know what was the agreement between you, him and Delaine. I have seen the baby and she resembles you very much.”

“But he claimed that the baby resembled him.”

She laughed. He bought food and drinks and they sat and ate it. She agreed to go down to the Keswick back road. They went unto the backseat of the car and made love.

Saturday, Dean was at his house when Zenya called him. It was slightly drizzling.

“I will never dance with you or have anything more to do with you.”

“Why are you refusing to dance with me and now saying that you don't want anything to do with me? You think I've lost my dancing skills and will step all over your toes. Are you angry with me or something?”

“Yes, I’m angry with you for what you did to Delaine. You forced another man to step forward and own her baby.”

“That child that she has isn’t mine. Why would he claim that baby and he’s no fool?”

“If you want to repair relations with me you have to reclaim the baby and apologize to both of them.”

“They’re both happy as things are. Why should I go and upset them?”

“Because I don’t think both of them are happy as things are.”

“I don’t know if you realize what you’re asking me to do. You danced with Wendel and Norton but refuse to dance with me.”

“I danced with Norton because sometimes when my car breaks down, I have to take his bus. I danced with Wendel because he’s my baby father.”

“I don’t like how you’re treating me.”

“There’s a big rumor that you slept with both Ashley and Margot last night.”

“I was on the Keswick back road last night. I was there with Ashley first. We were drinking malt beverages and talking. When she said she was tired, I took her home. It was then that I went back for Margot and we did the same thing that I said Ashley and I did. No sex with either of them was involved.”

She burst out laughing.

“I have passed your car on both the Jackson and Keswick back roads with women in it many nights. Don’t tell me that you and those girls were just having drinks as you are alleging you and them did.”

“Of course, that’s what we were doing, just having drinks and enjoying the atmosphere. Up there is like being in the mountains and feeling all that refreshing air coming down on you.”

“You know that I don’t believe that you have only one baby mother. Come on, tell me the truth about the women with whom you have children.”

“What would my students think about me if they heard that I have several baby mothers?”

“So, are you hiding the truth? What would they say if they heard about what you and various girls are on the back roads at nights doing?”

“As I told you, nothing went on between me and any woman on those backroads. And as I told you before I just have one baby mother.”

“I still don’t believe you, not after the way you behaved in college.”
“You can go on, you hear,” he told her and ended the call.

Chapter Three

Zenya had just finished speaking with Dean when Wendel called her.

“What’s going on? I have a party in Kingston to invite you to. It’s at Delroy’s house in Jacks’ Hill. You know he always makes good parties. You used to enjoy them.”

“What about your wife, Audrey? I don’t think she would be all that pleased to know that I went out with you. I just don’t want to be in any confrontations with her.”

“Don’t worry about her. She can’t do you anything.”

“I’m sorry, but I’m going to a party with Karl.”

“How about us going clubbing on Sunday? We could go to Ruddy’s or Eason’s night club.”

“I’m going to ask you about Audrey again. Why don’t you go clubbing with her?”

“Believe me, she’s no fun to be with. She hardly wants to go out with me. I have to threaten to leave her sometimes.”

“I don’t believe you. She doesn’t look like that type of person. So why don’t you find a different woman?”

“The only woman, I can think about is you. I want you to leave Karl and return to me. He has a lot of women. I don’t know how you manage him and his baby mother drama. What is really keeping you in that relationship?”

“He’s been very good to me. He was there for me when you left me for Audrey.”

“I left you for Audrey, that’s news to me. It was you who left me for Karl. Now there is a big rumor that you’re now along with Dean. Your refusal to dance with him at the party the other night doesn’t mean anything.”

She burst out laughing.

“You really don’t know anything about me. Why would I be along with him when I know what he’s done? He got a friend of mine, Delaine, pregnant and refused to own up to his responsibilities. Another man had to step forward and claim the child.”

“How could that have happened?”

“The man was a friend of his and obviously wanted a child.”

“I can’t believe any man could be so stupid.”

“As I said before, the man desperately wanted a child,” she said and ended the conversation.

Ashley was at her house that Saturday when Tena called her.

“Tena, what’s the meaning of this call?” Ashley asked, acting as if she was surprised that she had called her.

“You’re just a cheap girl, but I will deal with you, you hear girl. You sold your body to Dean for cheap sex.”

Ashley burst out laughing. She drank some more of the melon beer she was drinking.

“I think you’re just blasted jealous. He invited me to go out with him and I did. I think you just want to find out what happened between us, but you won’t hear anything from me.”

“I don’t have to hear anything from you, to know what happened between you and him last night. It’s all over the place that you were seen naked in his car having sex with him. You’re just a shameless slut.”

“I won’t tell you about anything that we did last night. But I’d like to ask when was having sex a shame?”

“My friends called me from both out here and abroad. Are you an exhibitionist?”

“Go get lost, Tena. You’re just making up the whole thing. He complained to me about you. He said that you were no good in bed and that was why he was leaving you.”

Tena laughed. She drank some more of her drink.

“You’re the one making up stories. What you want to say is that you’re better in bed than me. He has never found any fault with me.”

“So why did he seek me out?”

“Go to hell, Ashley. He sought you out because you’re a cheap slut,” Tena told her and ended the call.”

Margot was at her house when Tena called her. She wondered at the reason for her calling her and was in two minds whether to answer the call or not. She decided to take the call as she would only call back.

“I wonder what’s the meaning of this call? I know it has something to do with Dean.”

"You're right. It's about him sure enough. I didn't know that you're a prostitute. You're selling your body to him for money. I thought you were a decent girl."

"Of course, I'm that kind of a girl. If you must know, I went out with him because he asked me to. And as to whether there was anything else between us, that's between me and him. I know that's why you called."

"I know about everything that happened between you and him. It's no secret that he had you on the backroad last night."

Margot burst out laughing.

"You know everything, so why did you call me?"

"I didn't know you were so cheap."

"I don't think you consider yourself also cheap as you've slept with him many times."

"He and I are in a relationship, which you're not as far as I know."

"Well, if you must know, he and I are also in a relationship."

"When did it start?"

"What does it matter? I'm now one of his women."

"He's just using you. I bet he's paying you to sleep with him. That's what he does with girls like you."

"I just told you that I'm along with him, so why should he pay me to sleep with him?"

"You're lying if you say that's not what happened. You're just a prostitute. He said he paid you to have sex with him last night."

"Listen girl and listen good nobody is going to tell me who to go out with. He asked me to go out with him and I did. I don't see why you're having a problem, seeing that he's not your man."

Tena drank some more of the fruit punch she was having.

"I told you that I was along with him. But with cheap girls like you around, who can't seem to keep your legs closed, I don't know what I'm going to do with him."

"You're very fresh and out of order to call me cheap. You don't own him. You're not married or engaged to him, so why should you have a problem with me? All I can tell you is that you had better be prepared to share him."

Tena burst out laughing.

"Imagine, I have to be sharing a man with two sluts like you and Ashley. Both of you used to work on the back roads. I know about your reputation."

“Tena, you’re behaving like an angel when you know that you’re not.”

“You know nothing about me. Tell him all that you know about me, girl,” Tena told her and ended the call.

Chapter Four

Margot had just come off the phone to Tena when Britney called her. She had gone for a sorrel beer out of her refrigerator. She wondered why Britney was calling her. If it was the same things that Tena talked to her about, she would cut off the call.

“What a surprise to hear from you. I hope you’re not going to ask me about Dean.

“That’s exactly where I’m going. I think you’re a shameless girl. You’re involved in prostitution. Last night you were on the Keswick back road having sex with Dean.”

“You’re making that up. I went out with him, but I was never on the back road. You’re just trying to find out what he and I were doing last night. You’re just talking a lot of foolishness. I’m now seeing him. I don’t know why you should have a problem with that seeing that you’re neither his fiancé nor his wife.”

“I’m seeing him. He must have hit his head or something to have been with a cheap girl like you. I know that once the money is right, you’ll open your legs to just about any man.”

“Since he’s now my boyfriend, it’s none of your business what I do with him. You should come out of my business and leave me alone.”

“He’s not your man as I said he was looking some cheap fun and he got it from you. You should go about your business and leave him alone,” Britney declared.

She drank some more of her drink before continuing.

“I was along with him before you pushed yourself up on him. He’s just using you and will run you away from him as soon as he’s finished with you.”

“He has already left you. He’s along with me now. You’re past tense as far as he’s concerned.”

“We’ll see Margot, we’ll see,” Britney said and ended the call.

An hour later, Britney called Ashley. Ashley wondered if she should take the call from her or cut it off. She drank some more of her ginger beer. She looked at the phone again.

“How can I help you, Britney? I hope it’s not the same foolishness that Tena came to me about. I’ll cut off the call if you bring up anything about me and Dean.”

Britney drank some more of her drink while Ashley took some more of her ginger beer soda.

"That's just where I'm going. So go ahead and cut off the call."

But Ashley didn't cut her off.

"Just like how you and Dean are friends so is he and I. I'm free to do anything I want with him. In other words, I'm announcing myself as his newest girlfriend."

Britney drank some more of her drink before she burst out laughing.

"Margot got in before you did. At least she announced herself as his newest woman. I don't know where you two girls are going. I can tell both of you that he's using you. He will soon get rid of both of you."

Ashley laughed and drank some more of her drink.

"If he hasn't gotten rid of a classless girl like you, I don't see why he would want to dump me. He might want to dump a harlot like Margot, but not me."

"I thought Margot was the one who was always insisting that she had class. Well, this is a new one, but I'll warn you and her and even Tena too for that matter, that all of you are wasting your time. I have him locked and there's nothing any of you girls can do about it."

"Go about your business, Britney, all you want to do is to fast in my business," Ashley told her and cut off the call.

Saturday night, there was a dance in Keswick. Karl went to dance with Carlene infuriating Zenya.

"Karl, what the hell do you think you're doing by going to dance with Carlene?"

"So, what's wrong if I dance with him? I own a part of him too. You're going on as if he belongs to you alone."

"Go to hell Carlene, look how long you've been looking him and he's still with me."

Wendel went to dance with Zenya infuriating Karl and his new woman, Brandy.

"Zenya, you're criticizing me for going to dance with Carlene. But now you're dancing with Wendel. I wonder how you expect me to feel?" Karl asked.

"I came to this party with you only to find you now want to abandon me for Zenya," Brandy protested.

"I'm not abandoning you for her. I'm just trying to calm things down."

"Don't try to trick me. I didn't come to this party to get this kind of treatment from you. I'll leave and go home if you don't stop dancing with her."

When the song finished playing, Wendel went back to Brandy, but Karl continued dancing with Carlene. A woman came to the party unescorted. She was Caslyn Holmes. Dean went to dance with her infuriating both Tena and Britney.

"Dean, what the hell are you doing? You're leaving me for Caslyn? I should never have come to this party with you," Britney protested. "What's wrong if I dance with her? It's not like I'm going to bed with her."

"Why didn't you bring her to the party then? Why did you bring me?" she asked him.

But he persisted in dancing with the girl.

"I should have known that something like this was bound to happen from the moment I saw you bring that classless girl, Britney to this party," Tena said.

Britney drank some more of her sorrel beer. Tena drank some more of her melon beer.

"Tena don't be fresh with me. I want to know who you're calling classless?"

"Britney, you deserve any name I call you. I heard that you cursed off both Ashley and Margot and called them all sorts of names. But you're worse than them."

Tena drank some more of her beer and put away the bottle.

"Go to hell Britney, you can stay and fight Ashley, Margo and Caslyn for him, but I'm going home."

She went outside the venue and got into a taxi and left for her house. Britney saw her leaving and burst out laughing. She was still drinking her beer. She came over to where Ashley and Margot were sitting down.

"What are you two girls waiting for? He doesn't want anything to do with either of you tonight, so you might as well go home."

"I'm minding my own business. Maybe that's what you should do too," Margot told her.

Britney finished drinking her beer and put away the bottle.

"I know what you girls are looking, but it won't happen tonight," she told them as she headed out of the party to a parked taxi.

"Go to hell, Britney," Ashley threw a parting shot at her.

Ashley and Margot stayed behind, but Ashley soon left.

"Margot, you're willing to take anything he dishes out to you.

People say that you're one of his call girls. I know that he's paying you to sleep with him."

"I shouldn't be talking to a girl like you. The grapevine has it that you open your legs to just about any man. All he has to do is to give you some money."

"Go to hell, Margot," Ashley shouted and boarded a waiting taxi headed for her house.

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