

Dear Praying Friends

I didn't expect to write again so soon after being in touch yesterday but would really appreciate your prayers once more.

Last night, I was driving home from having dinner with two very dear friends – Freddy and Marie Josee who lead Youth for Christ here. I was on my way to visit another friend who has been in Burundi to bury her father. I had stopped, looked and then went to turn left and my car collided with a cyclist who had no lights on and whom I had not seen at all. His body bumped across the road. Praise God in heaven although he appeared like he was going to die, when we took him to hospital they said he was not injured – just bruised in his upper thigh.

Things are massively more complex here in Burundi than how they would work in the West. Having insurance seems to count for nothing. Three soldiers at the national radio station appeared straight after the accident and then other cars stopped to get involved. They asked me if I accepted it was my fault which although I do not believe it was my fault (the guy was going at terrific speed, was drunk and had no lights on – apparently it's actually illegal here to ride a bike in the city after 8 pm which it was) I had to say I accepted it because here it is always the driver's fault not the cyclist's. I also had to agree to pay for any treatment he needed because if I insisted on waiting for the Police to come and decide whose fault it was they won't treat him and often the injured die during that process. So I called Freddy and Marie Josee to return who did and they advised me to go with him to the hospital and pay for his treatment. I did that along with Freddy. We waited at the hospital for an hour then he told me to go home and he would finish it all off. I did but then he called 30 minutes later saying he'd dropped the guy back where he stayed at the restaurant where he works. The owner of this restaurant was also very drunk and was keeping Freddy a prisoner in his compound until I came and wrote a statement. I went with my housemate Olivia who was so supportive but this man who was so drunk just didn't accept any information we gave him. He then kept us prisoner for another 2 hours by which time it was gone 1 am. Freddy called his key colleague Euphrates who also joined us and mediated but it is difficult to negotiate with a very drunk man. We thought about calling the Police but then they are often so drunk at night that they are not a help at all. In the end Euphrates, bless him so much, wrote another statement on my behalf which was finally accepted and the man unlocked his gate and allowed us to leave. It was agreed that I have to pay for the bike to be repaired and sort anything else out today and Freddy said we should call the Police and that I should wait on him for directions. I can't even thank God enough for Freddy and Euphrates' help. They were more than brothers last night.

My car bonnet has a big dent and the car is making a funny noise, light is smashed and bumper messed up so I need to get it taken to a garage tomorrow.

As you can imagine I felt pretty shaken and upset last night. Today I just feel utterly exhausted and unsure about what's happening. I am so thankful for God's provision of dear friends though who stood with me in this.

Please pray for a full recovery for the cyclist and for God's full restoration of his peace and my peace as well as his bike and my car. Pray that I will not have to pay money that is beyond what is reasonable. We were sure last night that the boss wanted lots of extra money out of me because I am white.

It seems like the enemy is very busy here at the moment. There's lots going on and I just ask you to pray for my continued protection.

Thanks so much for your prayers.

Every blessing



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