

PARTY TIME IN THE SIXTIES

By Michelle Gadpaille



Well, me fren—yuh did evah go a party back dem time?
Me did tink so.

An yuh fine you foots up to Dizzy and feel seriously cool? Rite again.
Courtleigh Manor did see yuh face pon Friday nite? It did see mine tuh.
So, de two a we know a ting or two bout nineteen sixty-nine.

Roun dat time, yours truly put a flowahs een she hair (me grammy bougainvillea), braps on she mini-skirt an head for Constant Spring. What she nevah braps on was she glasses dem. Yes, me fren, Yours Truly bline as batty but she naw favour dose coke battle tings wat de yeye doctor give she. Nat at all at all.

So, is how she did see den?
See? Is oo need to see eena party?

Some party bettah dan odder party. It did have a ratin system fe tell:
If tree bwoy did ask yuh feh dance, den de party pass de test. Jus.
If five bwoy tek dem life eena dem mout an ask yuh fe dance, de party
a success.

An if dat speshul bwoy spen de evenin rentin a tile wid yuh, den de
party did rock.

Was a fool-proof system.

Party did run pan a set a rule. We did learn dese good wen we round eleven or twelve, and by de time we tun thirteen, we know dem by heart. If any a dem leffout, fill dem in an let me know.

- Nice gal no crash party. But if yuh jus happen to tun in at de gate as de DJ did putton “De Games People Play,” den yuh smile good pan de parents what sit pan de verandah, tell dem who is yuh madda and faddah (providing yuh sure a dis), an tuts on into de party. Maddah and faddah name was a kinea secret password. Allah de maddah and faddah dem know one anaddah.
- If de party run outa cool drink an ice at 11, it did cawl. (Tings back den did either “boss” or “cawl.”)
- If all a de bottle pan de drinks table seh “Wincarnis” den the party cawl.
- If de madda stan over de drinks table, ladling out de punch an seh to mine de ice, dat party deh pan a cawl soon time.
- But if Red Stripe an rum-an-ginger a flow, den de party boss.
- If some young gal nat troatsin up a scandal eena dark corner, den de dance floor lights too bright.
- If no young gal answer de invitation, den a raidin party go out fe round dem up. Dem hit de rich huntin grounds a Washington Drive, Drumblair an Cherry Gyarden.
- If Friday nite come an yuh no have no invitation, den yuh preten yuh studyin fe de GCE.

- If the party hol in de yaad an the cistern sen some rahtid smell up de nawstril dem, den de party move a de front gate.
- If "O Carolina" not playin on New Year's Eve, someting wrong. Jerry not pan de DJ table.
- If Andre come a party wid im fingahs choppoff an bandage up, all de gal dem run im dung. Was de smell a blood. Is onea dose instinct tings.
- If yuh go a toga party an not see de tree Gordon gal dem, yuh not lookin good undah de sheet dem. An if wan a dem eena red toga—short up shortup--den it did signify de Decline a Rome. Fe troot.
- If some facety person call de police, den all de gues dem start play Scrabble, while de parent dem give de constable some punch pan de verandah. Was no big ting.
- If yuh step trough de door an Nigel not pan de premises, den you have de wrong nite. No party nevah appen widdout Nigel—dis a firm rule.
- If party done, an one bare Anglia waitin to tek you an yuh fren dem, den de seatin plan go like dis: tree a unnuh pan de back seat, one gal a lie pan dose tree (mekkit a mawga gal), two eena passenger seat, one wid long han feh hole awn a de person wat sit pan de bonnet. Den yuh drive real slow down Stony Hill.