



Demon Child: *The Story of Bidan*

The sounds of growling sent the village mothers into a panic. Hurriedly they rushed to bring their children inside. **The "demon child" was once again coming down the streets.** Naked, filthy, stinking of his own excrement, picking up bits of trash and stuffing them into his mouth, this was his only means of nourishment. Instinct taught him what no human ever had - you must eat to live.

This "demon child" lives in Guinea Bissau, West Africa. He was thrown out of his mother's house at a young age. Maybe three or four, we don't know for sure. He can't speak; instead he makes disturbing growling sounds. To add to his frightening appearance, he has difficulty walking.

We suspect the boy may have had a stroke at some point. This could be why he was thrown out of his parent's home. In their ignorance, they declared him a demon, bad luck for every one in the village. **No one would give him food or care. Even his mother feared him.** So he was left to roam the streets at the mercy of others, who, in their fear, would give no mercy.

Eventually, an old uncle took him in. Unfortunately, the uncle died not long after. And once again the "demon child" was turned out into the streets. He returned to his family home looking for help. Instead, **he was locked up in the back yard and treated as an animal.**

A Catholic nun passing through the village heard of the demon child and decided to see what was going on. When she saw the inhumane treatment that he was being subjected to, she was horrified and contacted the "Regulo", chief of the village. "This abuse must not be allowed!" she declared. "Take the boy to Casa Emanuel Orphanage".

At Casa Emanuel, a **Life Link** supported orphanage, the confused, frightened child was received with love and tenderness, something he had never experienced before. After feeding him and making him feel welcome, the staff set about teaching him how to use a bathroom and wear clothes. **He had never worn clothing in his life.** It was a hard concept for him to grasp.

Communication is still a struggle. But the same instinct that said, "You must eat", has now begun to say, "You are loved"!

Although confused at times, he is beginning to adapt to his new life. One day, with patience and prayer, we believe the haunted look in his eyes will be replaced with a look of joy.

For now, he is the "demon child" no longer. His name is Bidan. And he is one of God's little ones, loved and precious in His sight.

Casa Emmanuel was there for Bidan – and so many others desperate for care and love – because you are there for Life Link.

Thank you – and may God bless you for your generosity!

Together for the children,

Connie

My trip to the orphanages in Ivory Coast and Benin in late March has been postponed until late April or early May due to civil unrest. At this time I have only \$200 of the necessary funds to purchase the plane tickets and pay for in country expenses. If you would like to help, I need to raise about \$4000. Please mark your donation – Africa Trip.

Life Link is a non-profit international human service corporation committed to improving the quality of life for children everywhere. All donations are tax deductible.

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