

An illustration of a woman in a blue floral shirt humming into a hand and a boy with glasses asking for bay leaves. The scene is set against a warm, orange background with musical notes. The boy is on the left, and the woman is on the right. A vintage radio sits on a table between them. In the background, a green house with a balcony and a palm tree are visible.

Wait, are they
REALLY SPICY,
Ajee?

WHEN do you
add them?

Can I try ONE?
Can I help?

But Ajee hadn't heard him.
She was too busy humming along
to the radio. She pointed out of the window.
"I forgot de bay leaves. Go fetch dem
will you, bai?"

The garden was bursting with flavours.
Long, spindly Bora beans, shiny, plump tomatoes,
and the gorgeous scent of rosemary.
Faruq wanted to try them all. He proudly
plucked two leaves from the bay tree
and raced back inside.

"I'm going to be a cook too!" he exclaimed.

Ajee shook her head and let out a heavy puff of air.

"Nah be troublin' wit dem ideas again. Study is more important.


You gon' be a doctor like your father."



• She told him to go and
play football in the garden
until dinner was ready.

• "And stay away from dem wiri wiri!"





It was hot and damp outside.
The palm trees glistened in the low hanging sun,
and the wiri wiri peppers glowed like clusters
of twinkling fairy lights.

“Why can’t boys learn to cook?”

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Faruq didn’t want to be a doctor.
“I want to make cook-up rice like Ajee,”
he muttered, “and bake bread and lime cookies.”
He swung his leg towards the ball.

That kick was harder than
he expected.

The ball bounced off the mango tree
and rolled straight into the wiri wiri plants.
Faruq felt around with outstretched arms.

A small voice drifted out from
deep inside the bushy branches.



WHAT'S SO
special
ABOUT you
ANYWAY?

HELLO FARUQ,
WOULD YUH LIKE ME
TO SHOW YOU?