

## ■ WHO KILLED RAOUL?

Raoul was a tough kid. You had to be to survive in Haiti. This past year had been a nightmare for him. He and his parents had been one of the luckier families in Haiti. They owned a small piece of land that they were able to farm. It was hard work, but they were always able to provide enough food for their family and still have some left over for other families. Most months, they were even able to save a little money.

Then the nightmare started. The government condemned their land. Government troops showed up late one night and demanded that they abandon their property because the government had sold it to a large U.S.-owned corporation. Raoul's parents refused, and they told the government troops to leave. Then they met with all the other landowners and suggested that they form a protest movement.

Two weeks later, Raoul's sister disappeared. Raoul's family knew they would never see her again. Just one week later, Raoul's brother was found beaten so severely that his brain was damaged.

Raoul's family broke. They decided to leave Haiti and try to find freedom from oppression. They collected all their savings and purchased passage on a small illegal boat to America. The boat was too small and too crowded and was guarded by three men with submachine guns. After they put out to sea, the gunmen took everyone's wallets, money, jewelry, and anything else that had value. Then the storm came. Only ten of the thirty-three people survived. Raoul was one of them.

When Raoul regained consciousness, he was in an American detention camp. It was there that he learned about a large Haitian community in New York. Raoul and several others escaped from the camp one night and made it to New York City. They talked a Haitian cab driver into taking them to the Haitian part of town.

Raoul found a family to stay with for a while, but when it became obvious that he couldn't find a job, the family asked him to leave. He began to roam the streets and soon met up with a small gang of Haitians who survived by committing muggings and small-time robberies. It

wasn't long before he saw his participation with the gang as a way to survive and to eventually get out of New York and establish himself as a potential citizen.

After Raoul participated in a few muggings, he began to like what he was doing. It was easy, and there was little risk of being caught. Then Paulo, the gang leader, asked Raoul if he would like to become part of a select group and participate in much more "important" activities—like robbing banks. At first Raoul refused, but then he realized that if his share of the money was enough, he could get out of New York and make a legitimate start. He decided to participate in the robbery of a jewelry store.

The night of the robbery something went wrong. A silent alarm was tripped. When the gang came out of the store, the police were waiting. The gang members began to run. Paulo pulled out a gun and shot at the officers. The police shot back. Raoul was killed.

► Rank the following characters on the basis of who was most responsible for Raoul's death? Raoul, the Haitian government, Raoul's parents, Paulo, the U.S. Corporation that purchased Haitian property, the officials at the detention camp.

► Provide a reason for each of the rankings.

● Scripture Guide: 2 Chronicles 21:8–20 Micah 6:9–16  
Proverbs 14:31 Matthew 26:11  
Ecclesiastes 5:8–9