

Joan Andrea Hutchinson pays tribute to Miss Lou

Writer and actress Joan Andrea Hutchinson has over the years captured the essence of Louise Bennett through the writing and performance of her own work, as well as an unapologetic level of honour and respect for the late folklorist.

In an interview, Hutchinson was asked about the constant comparisons, she responded, "It is more than a compliment, it is an honour, but I cannot dream of filling Miss Lou's shoes. I recall hearing her being interviewed on the radio once and she was asked if she had seen anyone who could take over from her and she said 'yes, the lickle Hutchinson chile.' What more could I ask for?" To make permanent her respect for Miss Lou, Hutchinson penned Tenky Miss Lou. Mi a born Jamaican an mi proud and yuh fi feel proud to fi walk roun an big up yuh chest and seh thanks to Miss Lou When she did start, she neva know a how it would a go An nuff nuff people when dah laugh and a call har poppys show But she galang strong and stick it out for she know seh she did right Inna har belly bottom she did know one day dem woulda haffi see di light Anytime trouble tek we a Miss Lou wen put we good name pon di map and wen da push Jamaica heritage an Lawd, she wouldn't stop She seh "Tek kin teet kibba heart bun when times neva suh sweet Good luck will come as long as fowl a cratch up dungle heap" Nuff a dem did tink she crazy and nuff mek up dem face How she did a chat dis boogooyaga patwa all ova de place For dem wen tink patwa was bad English Dem neva know, poor ting Dem wouldn't tell Nancy story and folksong dem wouldn't sing But a de jackass wid him long tail Bag a coco comin down and de peel head jan cro pon tree top jus mek dem head spin roun An lickle by lickle dem start fi back her start fi fan her flame and see deh after fifty year Miss Lou a one household name. Dem a mek flim, dem a write book dem a sing hol heap a song an a seh " Patwa is a good language" But you wen know dat all along So now we tan up proud fi be Jamaican An we want whole worl' fi hear Miss Lou, nuff thanks For howdy and tenky neva bruck no square.