

TAXIS

Q. What are you doing to make this chapter more interesting?

A I've adopted a question and answer format, like Dave Barry does sometimes. The subject is "taxis".

Q. Oh really? Let's get started then. Can you tell us one of your favorite taxi stories about Guinea, told to you by a friend, Bill Polidoro?

A Sure. He said he saw a cab with no windshield driving along in a downpour in Conakry. The driver was holding a large umbrella through the opening where the windshield should have been with one hand, and steering with the other.

Q. What does the accountant in your office swear that he heard a bush taxi driver in Labé saying to attract clients?

A He was saying, *Je n'ai pas de freins, mais Dieu est grand.*

Q. Speaking of brakes, what did another passenger in a taxi you were taking from Kissidougou to Kankan say about the driver, after the driver lost control and ran off the road, rolling to a stop in the tall grass?

A He said, "it's not his fault. The brakes don't work." To make sure that I'd heard correctly, I repeated, "The brakes don't work?"

Q And then?

A And then the same passenger said, "Yes, but don't worry. He's prudent."

Q. What did you say?

A I said, "He's driving a taxi full of people from Kissidougou to Kankan with no brakes and you say he's prudent?"

Q. Did you, Paul, with a wife and children, get back in that same taxi and continue on to Kankan?

A Sorry, that's all we have time for. Gotta go. *Dieu est grand.*

Paul Rippey

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