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A traffic police sergeant has been declared wanted by homicide detectives at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Panti, Yaba, Lagos over the murder of his brother-in-law, who was allegedly stabbed by a masked assassin.

Udame Sunday, who was serving at Area 'B' Police Command Headquarters, Apapa, Lagos, was fingered in the murder of Tony Obogo, his wife's younger brother.

*Saturday Independent* gathered that prior to the ugly incident, the deceased and the principal suspect were not on talking terms because of the latter's insistence that his wife's siblings should not live with them in their home.

But the development was said to have degenerated into a major disagreement between the couple, as the wife, Pauline Obogo (30), was said to have stoutly resisted her husband's moves to kick her siblings out of their self-contained apartment at No 8, Adetona Street, Iloro, Magoro in Agege area of Lagos. Pauline's hardline posture was premised on the fact that she paid for the rent and hence her husband did not have the moral right to throw her siblings out of the apartment.

Pauline married Sergeant Udame Sunday in 1989 and the couple were blessed with two children—a boy and a girl. However, the couple got separated in 1999 due to frequent squabbles between them.

Signs that the marriage was heading for the rocks began to emerge when Udame allegedly started behaving strangely and oftentimes beat his wife mercilessly each time they quarrelled. "He would drink to stupor, return home late and beat me mercilessly before the intervention of other tenants," Pauline told our correspondent.

Due to constant beating, the mother of two decided to walk out on the 10-year-old marriage. Pauline relocated to the rented apartment at Mangoro with her children and four of her siblings. She lived happily with her family until January this year when her estranged husband paid her a surprise visit. He purportedly begged for forgiveness and promised to turn a new leaf. The police sergeant also pleaded for reconciliation and the re-validation of their marriage.

But Pauline was not to be fooled. She gave him two conditions; to give his life to Jesus Christ and be ready to shoulder the responsibilities of his two children. Udame agreed to the conditions, but demanded that his wife's siblings vacate the apartment for the reconciliation to be total.

While Pauline was yet



•Tony

## Police Sergeant In Trouble Over In-law's Death

to give a definite answer to her husband's demand, the police officer started visiting her frequently to the point that he was given a spare key to the apartment. Udame thereafter moved his clothes and other personal effects into the apartment.

Despite the reconciliation, it was obvious that staying under the same roof with his wife's siblings was not a comfortable arrangement for Udame. Oftentimes, he allegedly did not respond to greetings from his in-laws. He hated seeing them in the apartment, it was learnt.

Then on Sunday, June 18, Udame found an excuse to kick his in-laws out. He accused his wife and her siblings of being irresponsible. A day earlier, his force pair of shoes, which he spread at the balcony of the apartment, was drenched by rain. Since he reportedly loathed his in-laws, they left the shoes in the rain. Pauline absolved her siblings of any blame when Udame raised the issue.

"When I heard him grumbling and I asked him, what was the matter, what I got in return was a slap. He accused me and my siblings of being irresponsible. Nobody knew he spread his force pair of shoes at the balcony the Saturday he came in and left immediately.

"To be candid, we did not know he had his shoes there, because I knew him he did not want to see any of my brothers and sisters. We all distanced ourselves from him, because I believed he was not in his usual self. After slapping me, he bit me in my left cheek. He gripped me and I was struggling with him to wriggle myself out of his grip. In the process, I suffered a dislocation in my right knee. And it was my screaming that made my younger brother, Tony, to intervene when he could no longer contain his anger. And it was Tony's intervention that freed me from his grip," the Cross River-born woman recounted.

On realising his folly, it was gathered, the traffic police officer mobilised his friends and relations to resolve the matter. But unknown to many, Udame was still bearing grudges against Tony for daring him when he had a scuffle with his elder sister.

The unexpected, however, happened on Sunday, August 6. Udame allegedly visited his wife's home in the afternoon and spent few minutes before leaving. Before 5.30a.m. the following day (Monday, August 7, 2006), it was alleged, Udame had discreetly entered the apartment. He slept on the rug in the sitting room. Pauline only noticed her husband's presence when she went to ease herself in the toilet, which was

beside the sitting room.

She was scared at the sight of Udame lying on the rug because her children and her four siblings usually sleep in the same living room. Precisely 30 minutes after she returned to her bed, a masked man with a long sword woke her from her sleep. The assailant ordered her to keep quiet or else he would stab her to death. At that moment, the only logical option for Pauline was to step backward even while pleading for leniency.

"He asked me to shut up and threatened to stab me if I dared scream. I asked him what he wanted and when I attempted to move backward, he followed me. He eased at me twice and in the process of trying to avoid him I stepped on my daughter, who was sleeping with my younger ones on the rug in the living room.

"My daughter cried and pleaded with the masked man: 'Please, don't kill my mother'.

"She was crying profusely and her cries woke Tony from his sleep. Tony also pleaded with the assailant and asked him why he wanted to kill me. But the question infuriated the assailant and in anger, he stabbed Tony in his right chest and he fled from the room.

"I quickly rushed Tony to White Chapel Hospital situated at Sule Street, Dopemu, but shortly after his admission, he was

pronounced dead. And when this thing happened, my so-called husband was still lying down on the rug in the sitting room. He did nothing to assist me when I was taking the boy to the hospital", she told our correspondent.

Tony's corpse was taken to the village at Obudu, Cross River State on Monday, August 14, and was subsequently buried three days later. Interestingly, shortly after her return from the village, Pauline was allegedly summoned to a meeting by one Theresa Adigor, the wife of her husband's elder brother. To her utter dismay, she was asked when she would formally go to the village to revalidate her marriage to Udame. This latest development, especially coming barely a few weeks after the gruesome murder of her younger brother, was a rude shock to Pauline. She purportedly asked Theresa whether it was right for her to revalidate her marriage when she was still mourning the death of her junior brother.

The development prompted her to conclude that her estranged husband might have a hand in Tony's death. She allegedly accused Theresa of conniving with her husband to act out his script since it had been his desire to ease Tony out of the way so as to have total control of her. "Definitely, Udame has a

hand in my brother's death," she claimed. Later, Theresa allegedly confessed to her that it was the police sergeant that sent her to seek talk her into revalidating the marriage.

"Is it when I was still mourning the death of my brother that you would tell me this? I think Sunday purposely killed Tony in order to pave the way for him to have me. Or was Tony the one that prevented us from enjoying our marriage?" Pauline reportedly asked Theresa.

For now, the fear of another attack on the family has prompted her to relocate her three other siblings and two children to the village, even as she has equally vacated her Mangoro home. She is currently taking refuge in a church.

Meanwhile, Udame is on the run, as homicide operatives from the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Panti, Yaba, Lagos, have been hunting for him.

It was gathered that when the operatives called at his duty post at Area 'B' Police Command Headquarters, Apapa, he was said to be on casual leave. Similar effort to arrest him at his other home proved abortive, as no one seems to know his whereabouts.

Though detectives confirmed they had spread their dragnet for his arrest, they are yet to record any breakthrough.