

# Passion, incest and death in Benin

• Anthony meets Helen in Edo State capital

IT is the stuff of a thriller – an incestuous relationship that lasted 18 years, end in the death of one of the secret partners.

Though the couple got married to different partners and one of them even relocated to a remote part of Benin-City to avoid the temptations of the evil affair, one thing led to the other and the relationship was ignited afresh until a murder made them part. JOHN MAYAKI investigated the incident.

IT was in the evening. The atmosphere was evidently warm. The weather was congenial. There was no sign of rainfall, even though it was the peak of the rainy season. Anthony had invited Helen to his house on the fateful day, Wednesday last week.

That day, the ancient city of Benin recorded another romance disaster, this time incest. Anthony Omoruyi, 37, a commercial motorcyclist (popularly called *okada* rider allegedly killed Helen, his 32-year-old cousin in an affair said to be laced with sinister criminal mission.

The lady's mother (who is Anthony's aunt) allegedly supported the amorous relationship of the duo. Helen was happy to be backed by her mother who always allegedly attended to Anthony with courtesy, speed and efficiency.

Helen and Anthony were not restrained by the sanctity of their various marriages, their condemnable love affair flowed for 18 years, till Anthony, now in police cell, killed her on September 13, 2006, in controversial circumstances. As far as they were concerned, they both had an agenda and wanted to execute it deftly with minimum risk.

Helen was reported to have always enjoyed every bit of the affair with the randy *Okada* rider.

The *Nation's* investigation showed that both lovers commenced the immoral act in 1988.

Anthony, told *The Nation*, he had to stab his cousin-lover to death to put an end to the incestuous relationship and also to break himself off the spell of impotence.

He indicted the late Helen saying, "she cast the spell on me." He said the scales of sin fell off his eyes when in 2003, he sought and got help from a pastor who spent days casting out the spell from him through prayers. He said when he realised that what they had been doing was evil and a taboo, "I called another of my cousins to plead with her for us to stop the relationship but Helen went and reported the matter to her mother."

"To my greatest surprise, my aunt called me and started encouraging me to continue the affair, saying she (aunt) has knowledge of it and that nothing was wrong with it. She said it has been happening in this Benin, and the effects of

which could be obviated through the performance of sacrifices."

He, however, said he rejected such entreaties and instead, decided to move out of the former compound at No. 32, Ovie Street, Off St. Savior Street, to rent a house far away at No. 1, Enabakhare Street, Upper Sokponba Street. His thought was that it would help him escape Helen's seductive eyes. But, Helen wouldn't see reasons with him, he said. She persisted in her visits and as a way of putting an end to her insistence on carrying on with the affair, Anthony said he immediately got married.

He added: "As a way of ensuring that they were both happily married, Helen's brother and I contributed money to take her to Ijebu Ode to seek solution to her complaints as the whole family was aware already of our affair.

"There in Ijebu Ode, we spent two days before we came back to Benin. Soon as we came back, Helen got a suitor and before long, they got married and that gave me respite.

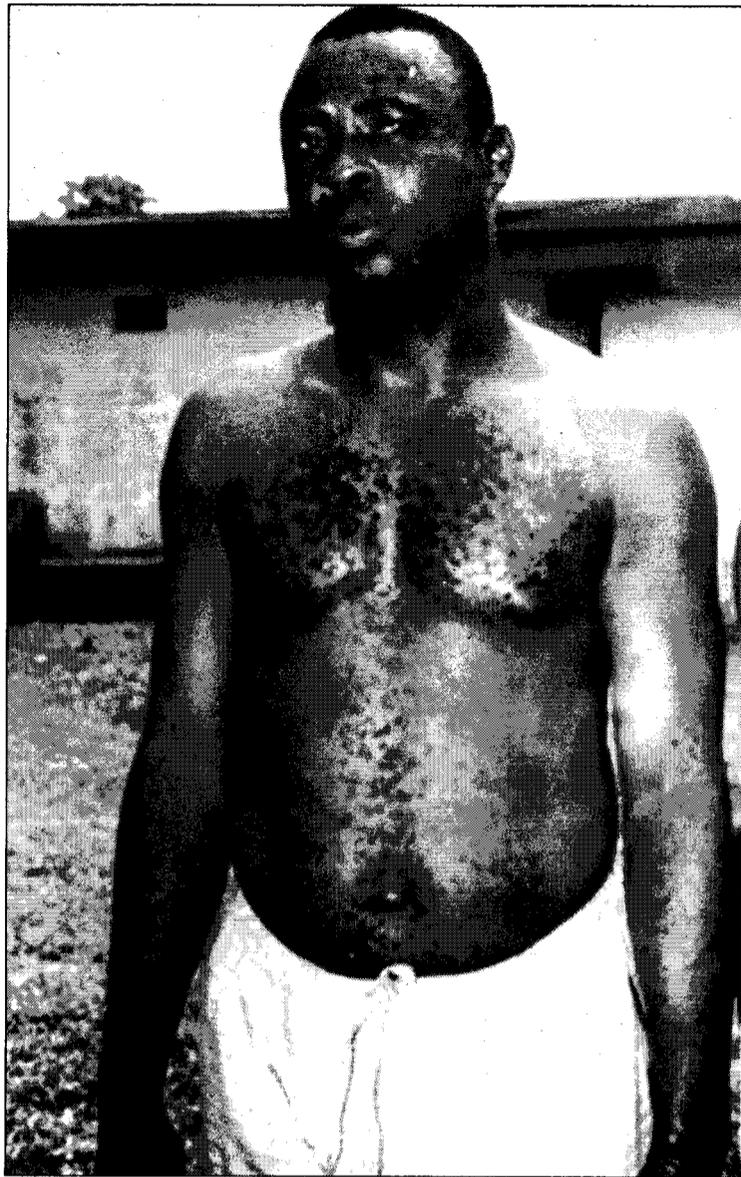
"But three months later, Helen came back to me again to say that she wasn't getting enough sexual satisfaction compared to when I was in charge." She later opted out of the marriage, it was learnt.

It was also learnt that things came to a head when she later visited Anthony, she was reported to have confessed to him that there was no way they could stop loving each other.

Helen was quoted to have said that "I already have the problem of unsettled life" and moreso, men had not been making advances to her.

Anthony said when he couldn't assure her of any hope of carrying on with the affair. Helen went further to allegedly told him that she had already cast a spell on him, and he wouldn't in his life time, have any child even as his manhood cannot function any more except on her only.

Anthony said he was stunned and disappointed at this confession. "Coupled with the fact that my manhood has actually started disappointing me anytime it was to be used and also knowing that Helen's mother is also spiritually tormenting me, all leading to an unsettled life, I took a knife from my room one day and stabbed her to death", he confessed.



• Anthony after his arrest

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Said Anthony: "I regret what I have done, but I want people to know that it wasn't deliberate as I was under serious spiritual torture and I also plead that government will be merciful on me."

But residents of the area have disagreed with Anthony. They say there is more to it than he claimed.

They alleged that events culminating in the murder of the woman who was five months pregnant, started when the alleged murderer expressed disappointment to a native doctor in the South-West part of the country over the inefficacy of the charm given him to make him wealthy.

The sources said that the native doctor promised to give him a charm on the condition that produced enough blood from a pregnant woman's foetus mixed with semen from his genital organ.

The sources noted that prior to the Helen's death, her husband, Mr Imasuen Agamwonyi, had always issued stern warnings to her against answering incessant questionable calls from Anthony to no avail.

It was learnt that after Helen was killed, Anthony invited Friday Eguavoen, a chemist who was alleged to have helped him in the collection of

the blood into a bucket.

Thereafter, they were said to have taken the body to a nearby church at St. Savior Street. Police have confirmed receiving a bucket filled with a substance suspected to be the blood of the deceased.

The *Odionwere* leader of the street, Chief Enobakhare said he was stupefied as to what entered into

Anthony's head to allegedly commit the crime. He described Anthony as a quiet and gentle man who often left home in the morning and returned very late at night; "he was a bike rider," he said.

Anthony claims Helen's killing was not ritual related.

The police have arrested Anthony and Friday Eguavoen. Edo Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Peter Ogboi, who confirmed the story, added that it was in an attempt to end the relationship especially when he discovered himself and felt the pain of he and Helen being cousins that the suspect (Anthony Omoruyi) invited Helen to his apartment and allegedly stabbed her to death.

"It was after he had stabbed the lady, the suspect, in panic, wanted to revive her and called in his patent medicine dealer and nurse, Friday Eguavoen, 37, who eventually

assisted him to take the body of the victim in a vehicle with which they allegedly dumped her in the bush.

"Omoruyi who moved into the apartment in March this year was apprehended by his landlord before the police was called in. Himself and his nurse friend who assisted him in dumping the victim's body have been arrested while the victim's body has been taken to the mortuary", he said.

Helen's husband, Agamwonyi is a heart-broken man. The aluminium technician who was born in Egbukur Village in Orhiomwon local Government Area of Edo State is also an *Okada* rider. He is 44.

While narrating his ordeal to *The Nation*, tears frequently dropped his eyes. "My wife was murdered on Wednesday last week. She was living with me and she was five months pregnant. I registered her at a clinic and I normally went along with her wherever she was going for her check-up.

Before the day she was murdered, I went along with her to the clinic and the Doctor gave her a note so she could go for ultra sound. Before then, I had complained about the frequent phone calls she got from Anthony Omoruyi, her so-called cousin.

"I cautioned her about such calls and reminded her that she was now a married woman. She said she couldn't stay away from her family just because she is married to me. I agreed with her. When the phone rang at the hospital on Wednesday last week, she left me alone with the doctor, to answer her call and I overheard their conversation.

"When she was through, she came to tell me that Anthony wanted her to come and see him that evening and that it was very urgent. I told her she shouldn't go and see anybody.

"Her immediate younger sister saw me at the market and told me that her mother was worried because up till that moment, her daughter hadn't come back to the market from Anthony's place. By 4 pm, her mummy, having waited in vain, left for church and before then, dropped a note for her at her shop stating that she had gone to the church because they were supposed to go together.

"At 6 pm when I normally pick her from her mother's place, I found out that she hadn't returned; my wife's younger brother (Monday) came and we narrated all that had happened to him. He then picked up his phone to call his sister only to be answered by a male voice.

"The person said Helen had gone with Anthony to see a pastor at Uselu. Thereafter, my in-law, Monday, called Anthony's line and when he answered, he said he was not yet back home. We then decided to go to his house without telling him.

"This time, Helen's mother had just returned from the church. We got there to meet Anthony mopping a pool of blood from the floor. When he saw us, he took to his heels. We chased him and caught him. We sat him down and asked what his problem was. He said he had killed Helen. We then took him to Ugbekun Police Station with the bucket of blood we found in his room.

"I must tell you, I am pained by my wife's death. In 2000, when my father died, I didn't shed tears but when I heard my wife had been murdered, I shed tears", he explained.