

Woman's tragic death stirs controversy in neighbourhood



• Madam Shade Shomuyiwa

ASCHOOL proprietor Kunle Folayan is at present telling policemen all he knows about the death of a middle-aged woman in his neighbourhood at Adeniji Street, Ayobo Ipaja, Lagos.

The victim, Madam Shade Shomuyiwa was clubbed to death on Thursday 22 March, 2007 with a construction site peg, following a disagreement over Mango fruit. Folayan was arrested by detectives from the nearby Ipaja Police Station before he was transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Pantti, Yaba for further interrogation.

The Nation gathered that trouble started on Monday March 19, 2007 when the youngest daughter of the deceased Ronke went to fetch water from a well located along Ashipa also in the same neighbourhood. She came back with a complaint that the

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younger brother to Folayan's last wife Ojo, threw her water away.

Not happy with the development, Madam Shomuyiwa allegedly told her daughter not to worry that she would report the incident to Ojo's brother-in-law.

However, while they were still waiting for the return of the teacher whom they did not know was already at home, Ojo and four daughters of Folayan's driver it was alleged, started throwing stone at Madam Shomuyiwa and her children as their houses were directly facing each other.

While this lasted, sources told The Nation that the late woman whose kids were also retaliating the action, was calling Folayan to come and caution his wards, but when he came out, instead of calling his children to order, he allegedly

warned the woman to hold her children or risk bearing the consequences.

According to the source who works on one of the construction sites around the area, Folayan who allegedly spoke angrily asked if the late woman did not know that he had some cars parked in his compound, adding that should anything be destroyed that he would not take it lightly.

The late woman who was disappointed by Folayan's remark cautioned him to put his house in order before accusing her. The statement reportedly irked Folayan who immediately landed her three hot slaps on the face.

At this point, the source alleged, the woman and her children held him and it was a free-for-all between the two families.

It was alleged that during the fight, Folayan picked the peg and began to hit the woman on all parts of her body until she passed out. He also ran after the woman's eldest daughter, Funmilayo but before he could hit her, she picked a broken bottle and stabbed him on his left hand forcing him to drop the peg.

However, it was alleged that a smart Folayan rushed to Ipaja Police Station to report the matter upon which the woman and her two daughters Ronke and Funmilayo were arrested and detained.

The Nation learnt from Funmilayo that "when the policemen saw the condition of our mother, they had to release her to my father for him to take her to the hospital while we were detained till the next day."

The source told The Nation that "when the children were released from police station that Tuesday, Folayan still came back to their house to threaten that he would kill at least four members of the Shomuyiwa's family. The girls had to abandon their home to take refuge at the home of one Alhaja who Folayan was also threatening to kill if she refused to release the girls to him. Most of us were thinking that the man must have gone mad the way he was behaving."

Throwing more light, Funmilayo's father, Oyewole Shomuyiwa said: "On Thursday, when the condition of my wife did not improve, I took her to Ark Hospital. She was finding it difficult to breathe. The hospital said it did not have oxygen to assist her and advised us to take her to the General Hospital, Ikeja. At that time, she was bleeding from the nose, ear and eyes. With the assistance of some people, I took her to Ikeja but before we got there, she was already dead."

However, there is a conflicting report about what actually happened.

According to Oyewole's account, "on Wednesday

morning, Folayan came to my wife and said some incantations and poured a large quantity of spittle on the face and told her that she would not survive the illness. People were there when he did that but nobody could do anything to him because of the kind of man he is. The man is evil and fetish, people are afraid of him in the neighbourhood."

On whether his family had any problem in the past with Folayan, Oyewole had this to say: "We didn't have any problem with him, the only time we had quarrel with him was sometime in December 2005, when he wanted to kidnap my daughter, Funmilayo."

According to Oyewole, this "was between 28 and 29 of December that year. I went to Ebute Metta with my wife and before we left, my wife sent Funmilayo to go and deliver some invitation cards to one of her friends. But while she was there, Folayan came in his car and told her that her mother asked him to bring her (Funmilayo) home. Apparently aware of his tricks, my daughter called him a kidnapper and told him to go and look for someone else as he would not be able to get her. He left."

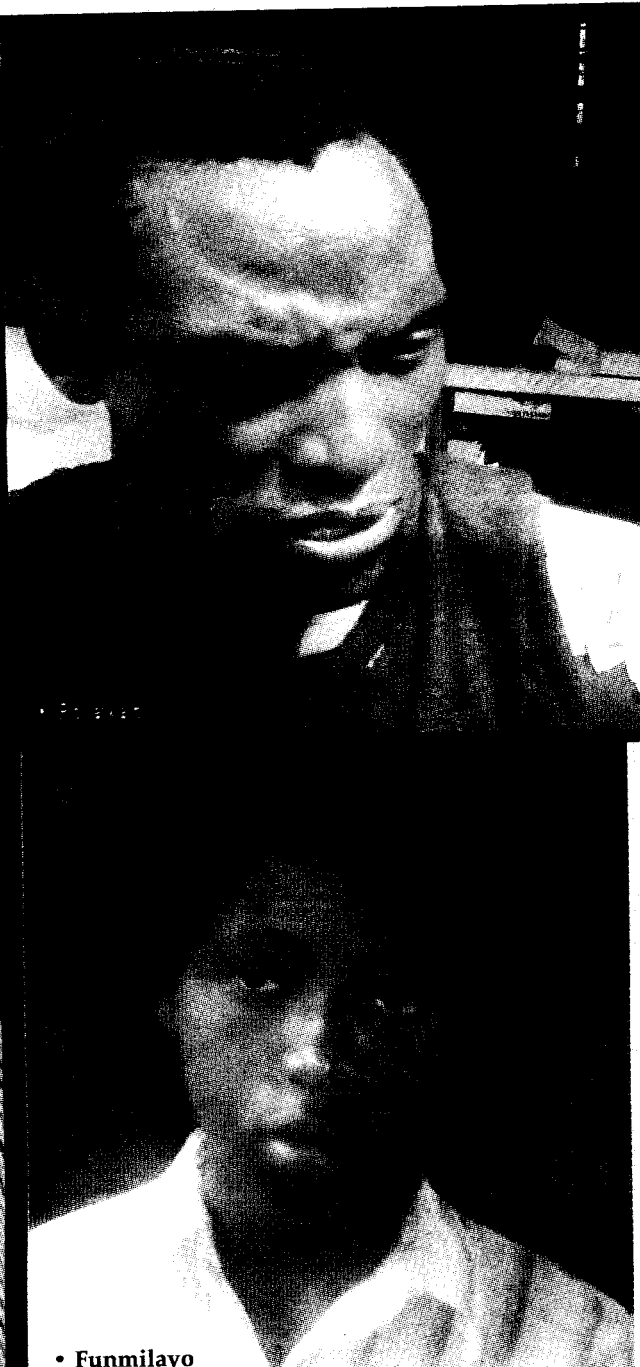
Oyewole said when they returned home in the evening, their daughter reported the matter to them and they confronted Folayan and ever since, he had not been happy with the family.

When The Nation met Folayan at the Ipaja Police Station before he was taken to Pantti, he broke down and said: "God knows that I don't have any hand in the woman's death. She has been sick and everybody knows this."

Folayan who said he is the proprietor of Meteorite Nursery and Primary College, Ayetoro via Ayobo, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State told The Nation that though there was a fight "but I did not touch her. People were holding me because they knew if I beat her she would die. I only came to tell her to control her kids and stop them from throwing stones into my house. How would I fight a woman when I only had wrapper on my waist."

However, The Nation gathered that the suspect who is claiming innocence of the murder allegedly attempted to bribe a policeman at Ikeja Police Station to help him convince the deceased family to settle out of court as he was prepared to take care of the burial expenses and also pay whatever compensation required.

On what caused the fight, Folayan told The Nation that his son-in-law, Ojo wanted to pluck Mango fruit from a tree in front of the Shomuyiwa's house but was not allowed by Funmilayo.



• Funmilayo



• Husband: Oyewole