

I was the one assaulted, not the deceased —Murderer suspect

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Contrary to the report that one Igor Jabless (24), arrested in connection with the death of a ticketing official, Sodiq, on Tuesday, March 1, threw a deadly punch that sent the deceased to an early grave, the suspect has sworn that he did not touch the official, saying that it was a role reversal, as the deceased was the one who assaulted him before he fell and died.

It will be recalled that Sodiq lost his life after he was allegedly punched by Jabless over the issuance of ticket at okada park at NNPC area of Apata, Ibadan.

Jabless, who belonged to the okada arm of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), had insisted that he could not purchase a ticket from Sodiq, who belonged to the Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Owners and Riders' Association of Nigeria (ACOMMORAN).

Jabless, who had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Iyaganku, Ibadan, also told Crime Reports that he didn't wear a ring on the day of the incident, not to talk of a charmed one. His statement was as a result of the belief in some quarters that only a charmed ring could have been potent enough to have such a fatal effect.

According to Jabless, "I am an okada rider. I came to Ibadan, about six months ago. On Tuesday, March 1, I woke up to search for fuel around 7.00 a.m. because I could not get the previous days. After buying fuel, I picked a passenger at Kuola area and headed towards NNPC area, Apata.

“As I parked for the passenger to disembark, the deceased, who was a ticketing official for ACOMMORAN, came to issue me a ticket, asking me to pay. I replied him that I was usually issued ticket by an elderly man who is a member of the NURTW. I also belong to NURTW.

“The elderly man was even close by. When he insisted I should pay, I left my motorcycle for him and went to the NURTW official to obtain my ticket with the N50 I collected from the passenger that just disembarked from my bike.

“By the time I returned to where the deceased was, he had already used a chain to lock my motorcycle. I told him to release my bike since I had already paid, but he insisted I must purchase a ticket from him also.

“I went to the elderly NURTW official to explain things to him so that he would speak to Sodiq on my behalf. I was with the man, backing Sodiq when he just slapped me. The suddenness made me fall into a gutter. Before I stood up, people came and restrained him from further assaulting me, taking him to the other side of the road.

“I continued speaking with Baba to help me collect my motorcycle from the man since I had already purchased my ticket. To my surprise, the deceased ran from the other side of the road and slapped me the second time. People came again and started restraining him the second time, asking him to leave me since I did not retaliate. They started pushing him away from me. It was then he fell down.”

When asked whether he used a charmed ring on the deceased as believed by some people, the suspect spread his hands, saying: “I did not have a ring on my finger. I didn’t use any charm; I didn’t even touch him. People are saying all these because they are all Yoruba people. I did not have anybody there. But God is my witness.”

The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Adekunle Ajisebutu, however, said that investigations into the case would continue, after which the suspect would be arraigned in court.