



Emeka and Anurika...
when the going was good



Emeka before
his death

ABOUT seven months ago, a Kano-based business man, Emeka, travelled to Anambra State for his wedding to his heartthrob, Anurika. As a typical Igbo man, it was an occasion he had longed and prepared for. His bride was based in her Enugu Uku village, in the South East area of the country. She waited patiently for her big day, expecting her husband-to-be and his family members for the big event.

The wedding was well-attended with Emeka's friends and relatives, including some of his neighbours in Kano gracing the occasion. For his neighbours, their presence at the wedding was a compulsory obligation, simply because of the love they had for Emeka's late father from whom he took over the business of book selling.

After the wedding, Emeka came back to his abode at No 54, Middle Road in Sabon Gari area of Kano but for some reasons the bride decided to stay back at her home town for about four months. Later, she felt it was time to finally relocate and join her husband in Kano.

When she arrived in Kano and being new in the city she often went with her husband to Church Road, the location of her husband's bookshop, so that she would not be bored staying at home all day long.

However, a source who preferred anonymity disclosed that last Monday night, Emeka had bought some food items and other things to celebrate Democracy Day on his way back home, unfortunately a tragedy was lurking around the corner for the couple.

There were conflicting reports on what actually transpired that fateful day. One report said that there was an argument between the new bride and her husband.

A source told Sunday Tribune that the woman alleged-

ly accused her husband of infidelity shortly after eavesdropping on a phone conversation between him and an unidentified lady, who called him at about 12 midnight.

Allegedly emotionally disturbed by the tone of the conversation between her husband and the unknown lady, she reportedly reached for a keg of petrol within reach and lit a match, which eventually exploded and engulfed their entire home.

As of the time of the incident, the bride was said to be pregnant. She died in the inferno but Emeka did not die immediately as he escaped to a neighbour's house through his front balcony. He was rushed to a nearby hospital. He however died sometimes later due to the extent of severe burns on his body.

Sunday Tribune spoke with some of Emeka's neighbours. One of them who witnessed the tragedy, Okechukwu Moses, disclosed that the new bride was burnt beyond recognition and died instantly at the scene of the incident. He disclosed that Emeka was first rushed to Fortress Hospital in the area where he received first aid treatment, but had to be transferred to another hospital.

Another co-tenant, Mr Emmanuel Okorie who revealed that the couple hailed from Anambra State, corroborated Okechukwu's story and also narrated the events leading to the tragedy.

"Before the tragic death of the newly-wed, they went for their wedding at their village about seven months ago. The woman, said to be carrying a seven-month pregnancy joined the husband in Kano four months after their wedding," he said.

Okorie could not establish whether it was the alleged

phone conversation that led to the tragedy. He, however, disclosed that Emeka confided in him that his mother imposed the woman on him.

Another version of the story said the late Emeka, before his wedding to Anurika allegedly had another lady he was set to marry. The unconfirmed report also alleged that Anurika was imposed on Emeka adding that right from the time the new bride joined her husband in Kano, both were allegedly living like cat and mouse.

The source further alleged that Emeka came back home around 11 pm and started beating his wife, which got the woman angry and forced her to take the desperate step of setting herself and her husband ablaze.

A neighbour popularly known as Nwa chief said he lost all his property to the inferno.

My family lost all we had « he said, putting the cost of his entire loss at over N2 million, explaining that the only thing left for his family are the clothes on their bodies. He also urged other single men to learn lessons from what happened to Emeka.

However, many residents of the area were of the view that there was more to the tragedy than meets the eye insinuating that 'remote control from the village' might be involved as 'many may not be happy that Emeka inherited his late father's business.

A source who preferred anonymity from No man's land Police Division said the couple's remains have been deposited at an undisclosed mortuary.

When contacted, the Police Public Relation Officer, DSP Musa Magaji Majiya, said detectives from the Command had commenced investigation into the cause of the tragedy.