

# She got angry that I sat on table she used for ponmo sales, I didn't touch her — Arrested murder suspect

By Oluwatoyin Malik

**A**N 18-year-old boy, Michael (surname withheld) who was arrested by detectives in Ogun State Police Command over the death of processed cowhide (ponmo) trader, Mrs Tope Owoade, has narrated the incident that occurred, saying that he never touched the woman and was even pleading with her when she was angry that he sat on the she was using to display her wares.

Michael was arrested when the police from Ogijo Division learnt that the woman, who was living in the same residence with Michael, died a day after the altercation she had with him over the table issue.

She was said to have started bleeding from her stomach down her private part, while the efforts she made to stop the flow of blood with the medications recommended to her failed.

**Nigerian Tribune** learnt that trouble started when Michael returned from the market where his father was selling used children clothes. He was said to have gone against the warning given by the neighbour on her table being used as a seat.

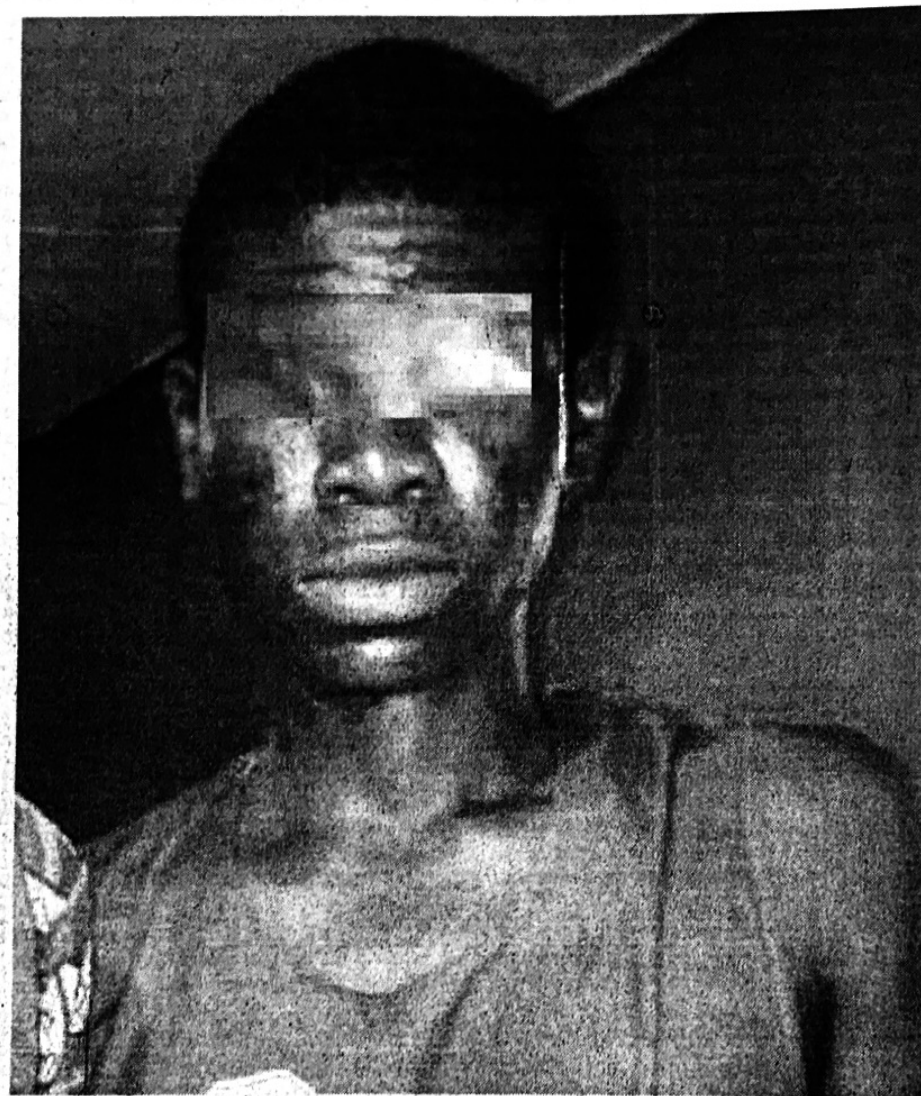
Before the day of the incident, the deceased, aged 43, was said to have expressed her displeasure the way people used to sit on the table she displayed ponmo on, and had warned several times against it, only for it to happen again on Thursday, March 28.

On the fateful day, she saw her neighbour's son, Michael, sitting in the table, which triggered anger in her.

According to the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Omolola, Odutola, the deceased's husband, Isiaka Owoade reported to the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Ogijo Division of how he learnt on his return from a journey that a quarrel ensued between his wife and neighbours during which they beat her up and inflicted injury on her.

The husband said that the injury resulted in her bleeding from the womb, leading to her being rushed to two private hospitals where she was rejected.

He further stated that his wife gave up the ghost while she was being taken to a gov-



ernment hospital.

"Immediately after the report, the Divisional Police Officer arrested the named suspect. The case has been transferred to State Criminal Investigation Department, Elewera, Abeokuta, for discreet investigation," the PPRO said.

It was learnt that Michael was initially arrested with his father who was later released

when it was discovered during preliminary investigation that he was not culpable.

In an interview with the suspect who was said to be 17 years old but gave his date of birth as July 15, 2005, he said: "I'm from Imo State but came to Ogijo Community in 2023 to join my father in his business of selling used children clothes. I wanted to gather some money to further my education. My

mother is in our village with my sisters.

"The deceased used to warn us not sit on the table she was using to sell ponmo, saying that if it's broken, the person responsible for it would repair it. On March 28, I left my father at the market and came home at about 8pm. I went to sit on the woman's wares table to await my father's return.

"As I sat, a securityman came to join me and sat beside me on the table. The woman had entered her room in the house we were living. I removed my shirt and singlet to enjoy the breeze while the securityman and I were discussing.

"Suddenly, I got a stinging slap on my back. I didn't know that the woman was coming from behind. I turned to her and asked why she slapped me, and she replied that she already told us not to sit on the table again.

"The securityman and I started begging her but she remained very angry. As she launched at me, aiming to beat me the more, I deftly moved aside to avoid her and she fell.

"At that time, my father got home from market, and when he saw what was happening, he dropped the load he was carrying. The woman got up from where she fell, took a stick and wanted to hit me with it, but it landed on the head of my father who was trying to appease her.

"She started cursing us, saying that if she wanted to cause trouble for me, she would just remain where she fell. The night went on like that until we all went to our apartments.

"I was surprised when I came back on Friday night, on March 29, and the landlord came to me, saying that the woman was bleeding. He told me that the woman called a nurse and had bought medications recommended to her.

"My father was late in coming back from the market that day, and when he came, I explained to him what I was told by the landlord. Later, we learnt that the woman fainted. She was taken to hospital where she was rejected. She was said to have died when efforts were being made to take her to another place. My father and I did not run away. We were later arrested by police."