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I don't know how to tell my sick mother that my brother is dead –Sibling of man killed by stray bullet

JULY 19, 2014 BY GBENRO ADEOYE 1 COMMENT



Samson Olawepo

The phone call Samson Olawepo received at 3.45pm on Wednesday was the worst he had answered in his 34 years on earth.

Olawepo, a teacher in a private school, had just closed for the day when his pastor's call came through. But little did he know that it was a call that would turn his life upside down.

Olawepo's pastor had called to inform him that his youngest sibling, Oluwajuwon, 23, had been killed after being hit by a stray bullet.

Oluwajuwon, a barber, had a shop at Abule-Ado area, Satellite Town, Lagos. Unfortunately, the area was where an armed gang allegedly chose to unleash

terror on community members over a land dispute.

Speaking with teary eyes, Olawepo said, "Obviously, someone had called my pastor, so he and I rushed to Agboju police station where Oluwajuwon's body was reportedly taken following the incident. When we got there, I saw Oluwajuwon's body on the floor. The bullet had hit him in the chest and his clothe was soaked with blood. I learnt that he was trying to hide when the gang was shooting sporadically.

"I never imagined that Oluwajuwon, my youngest brother, could die before me. He was a very good person. I'm living now by the grace of God because life has been unbearable. The news shocked me to my bone marrow."

Although Olawepo had had bad moments in the past, like when his father died in 2002, he still struggled to come to terms with the events that took a second family member away from him.

Olawepo's mother, Funke, who is 64 years old, has been visually-impaired for five years after her eyes succumbed to cataract. Since then, she has also suffered from an undisclosed ailment that has kept her in bed most of the time.

Due to their mother's poor health condition, Olawepo and his other three siblings have kept news of Oluwajuwon's death from her.

"How could this have happened?" he asked with hopeless confusion written all over his face.

"Our mother loves him so much because he was the last child so we have not even told her because of her critical condition. I'm afraid that she would die if we tell her that Oluwajuwon is dead.

"God is all we have fighting on our behalf now. So I will inform our mother when the people responsible for Oluwajuwon's death have been appropriately dealt with. At that time, it would be easier to say this and that happened and that the people responsible for it have faced justice because God has dealt with them."

Following Oluwajuwon's death, Olawepo and two of his other siblings were detained at the Agboju Police

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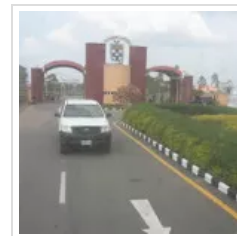


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Station for hours. After a few hours, Olawepo is released along with one of his brothers, Samuel, but one of them is yet to be released.

Puzzled, Olawepo asked, "How could the policemen detain us?"

"Instead of sympathising with us, police officers at Agboju Police Station detained us. We were not there when the incident happened. They detained us because they said we were making noise. Meanwhile, we were praying at the station, hoping that Oluwajuwon would somehow wake up. One of my brothers has still not been released."

Olawepo shared an apartment with Oluwajuwon at Irede village, a riverine community in Oriade Local Council Development Area of Lagos State before his death. However, Olawepo and Oluwajuwon did not see each other for about two weeks to his death.

He said Oluwajuwon sometimes slept in his shop or stayed with friends in Satellite Town because of the distance he would have to travel on water to get home.

Although, Olawepo had regular phone conversations with Oluwajuwon until a few days before his death, he wished he had seen more of his brother before his untimely death.

He said, "He had just recovered from an illness I suspected to be typhoid fever a few days before his death. He told me about it on the phone and I gave him a list of drugs to take. I also promised to prepare a herbal mixture for him but I won't have that opportunity again. I wish I could see him again."

Our correspondent learnt that the gang that allegedly killed Oluwajuwon was led by a dreaded tout known as Lateef Sadiku.

Meanwhile, Sadiku and some of his gang members had been arrested by officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, Ikeja.

Efforts to reach the Officer-in-Charge, SARS, Abba Kyari, were not successful as he was said to be in a meeting. He also did not respond to calls and text messages sent to his mobile phone.

However, a source at SARS who confirmed the incident, said a police officer was also shot by the gang in a shootout with the police.

The source said, "The officer he shot is still in a hospital. Lateef is a notorious criminal, indeed. He was only released from Ikoyi Prisons about two and half months ago after spending nine months in the cell for his involvement in a robbery incident. We have reports that he terrorises his community, New Oguntedo area in Satellite Town. He has been arrested by the police many times, but each time he is released, he goes back to terrorise people."

The spokesperson for the Lagos State Police Command, Ngozi Braide, said she was in a meeting and asked our correspondent to send her a text message when she was reached on her mobile phone for comments. However, she did not respond to the text message sent to her phone as at the time of going to press.

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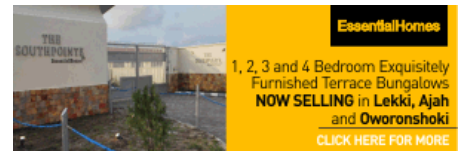
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