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Robbers snatch grandpa's vehicle, kill him after demanding for N1m

JANUARY 31, 2015 BY KUNLE FALAYI ■ 11 COMMENTS

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Jimoh and the stolen vehicle

Sixty-five-old grandfather, Alhaji Ganiyu Jimoh, never failed to visit his aged mother at Mushin area of Lagos on daily basis. But that predictable routine might have cost him his life.

Without goodbyes to his wife, Risikat, without an inkling of what was about to befall him, Jimoh had set off from his house in Ikotun, around 5pm on Thursday, January 22, 2015, the usual time of his visit to Mushin.

But he was not located until the morning of Saturday, January 24. By that time, it was

too late. His corpse was found in front of a newly constructed estate at the old National Youth Service Corps camp ground on the Isheri-Igando Road, Lagos

According to Jimoh's widow, her husband, who was an accommodating man, never liked refusing a stranger a lift in his Lexus RX 300 SUV with registration number LND 740 CU.

She said this might have been how he was 'trapped,' by his assailants, who killed him after robbing him of the vehicle.

When our correspondent visited the deceased's home at Ikotun, on Monday, the same day he was buried, the widow, who was surrounded by sympathisers, told our correspondent that she did not have an inkling that her husband of 36 years would die in the hands of armed robbers or kidnappers.

Fighting back tears, she told our correspondent how her husband left home on Thursday.

"There was nothing unusual about him leaving home around 5pm every evening. We all knew that when he did, it meant he was going to visit his mother at Mushin.

"But that day, he said he was going to collect his voter's card at Alausa before heading to Mushin. Usually, when it was about 9pm, I called to ask whether he was on his way.

"That was what I did that day and he picked the phone to tell me that he was around the Jakande Estate gate at Isolo. That was his usual route and I estimated that in less than 15 minutes, he would have been home. I did not know that call to him was the last time I would hear his voice."

When the deceased had not got home by 10pm, his wife called his line again, which rang without being answered. When she called 30 minutes later, it was switched off.

"I tried every 30 minutes after that and I got no reply. I had started becoming unsettled because I knew it could not be that his battery was flat since he had a charger in his car," the widow said.

But when it was midnight and her husband's number was still switched off, she alerted a next-door neighbour

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and called the deceased's older children to inform them about what was happening.

Risikat, who was sighing frequently and shaking her head in sadness during the interview, could not say much as grief overtook her.

N1m ransom demanded

But one of the deceased's sons, Moshood, said when he received a call from Risikat (his step-mother) around 12am that day, he also called his father's line many times which remained switched off until he tried again around 1am and it rang.

"Someone picked the call and immediately I heard the voice, I knew that was not my father. It was a baritone voice that bore no resemblance to my father's.

"I said, 'Daddy, where are you?' and the person replied, 'I am with my girlfriend.' When I asked him where he was, he said Iyana-Iba (along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway). I decided to disconnect the call at that point and informed the family what I heard."

Another member of the deceased's family decided to call after that and got a more terrifying answer.

"When one of my siblings called the line again, someone with the same baritone voice picked the call and said, 'If you want to see this man again, you'd better come to Iyana-Iba with N1m.' That was when we realised that the matter had gone beyond what we could handle alone. We then informed the police," Moshood said.

Saturday PUNCH learnt the police at the Ikotun Police Station where the matter was reported, radioed other police formations about the missing man.

The following day, Saturday, the Igando Police Division, which had received the same alert, contacted the Ikotun station. A body had been found. The family would later visit the mortuary where the body was taken to and identified it as that of Alhaji Jimoh.

The deceased was not shot, he had no physical injury. He had been strangled, the police said.

Suspected killers' accomplice in custody

Moshood told our correspondent that two weeks before the incident, his late father had come home after his usual visit to his mother at Mushin and told Risikat about his encounter with a young woman he gave a lift in his vehicle.

Moshood said, "My father did not know how to say no when people waved to him while driving and asked for a lift. Also, he never kept a secret. He always came home to tell his wife whatever happened while he was away from home.

"Two weeks before he went missing, he told mama – my step-mother – that he gave a young woman a lift on his way back from Mushin and they spoke at length. He went as far as even saying that they exchanged numbers.

"Mama was angry when he told her that the lady even asked about how much he bought his car and he said he ordered it from the US for N1.6m. Mama had to call our younger siblings in the house to report to them that their father gave too much details about his life to strangers."

The day he went missing, *Saturday PUNCH* learnt that the young woman, whose name the police have yet to release, called the deceased on the phone and told him to pick her up if he was going to pass through her route around Jakande Estate, where they had first met.

The woman, who is now in police custody, told investigators that she wanted him to give her a lift to church.

Moshood said he believed the woman had been in touch with his father ever since the first day he gave her a lift.

A police source told our correspondent that the woman was apprehended through information they found in a bible at the scene where Jimoh's body was dumped.

When she was arrested, the woman said she only saw the men who took the deceased away but denied being an accomplice.

"She told us that she called the deceased on the phone to pick her up on Thursday and that they were both going to church. But that is suspicious because the family said the man was a staunch Muslim.

"The suspect said on their way to church, she told the deceased to stop the car so that she could buy fruit.

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Columnists



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But that by the time she got back to the car, she saw two men holding the deceased at gunpoint. She said when she made to intervene, the men told her they had no business with her and drove the deceased away in his own car."

The suspect could not give an answer as to why she did not report the incident to the police until she was tracked to the white-garment church where she was apprehended on Saturday.

The police said her name and that of the church was found in the bible.

Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr. Kenneth Nwosu, said the suspect had been transferred to the Department of Criminal Investigation for further investigation.

"The family mounted pressure on the divisional police officer to release the body and have buried it without autopsy. But that would not stop our investigation. We will do our job and track down other suspects in the case," Nwosu said.

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