

SUNDAY FEATURES

Mum struggled to train us, now she won't reap the fruit of her labour — Son of drowned policewoman

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Emmanuel Obaseki with his late mum, Mary Adesoba

Emmanuel Obaseki is son of a policewoman, Mary Adesoba, who drowned in Lagos lagoon after a boat she was travelling in capsized. He talks with MOTUNRAYO JOEL about his late mother

Tell us about yourself.

I studied banking and finance at the Osun State College of Technology. I am also a recording artiste.

How come your mother bore Adesoba?

Adesoba was her maiden name.

How many children did she have?

She had five children. I am her first child and only son. I have four other siblings.

What happened on the day she died?

I learnt she was heading to work from Ikorodu to Lagos Island. Her office was at Zone 2, Onikan. Sadly, she was close to her place of work when the boat she was in capsized. It was around 9am. I also gathered that the boat collided with a faulty boat turned upside down. One of the men who work with the Lagos State Waterways Authorities said passengers on the boat told the skipper to stand while rowing the boat but he chose to sit.

That prevented him from sighting the boat lying dangerously on its path. Perhaps, if he was on his feet, he would have sighted the boat some metres away. I blame the Lagos State Waterways for my mother's death. Her death could have been avoided if they had done their job.

The neglected boat should have been removed. My step-dad was with my mother on the boat. Luckily, he survived. He sustained injuries on his chest.

How did you hear about her death?

I was on the way to Ikeja when I got a call from my sister. When I heard the news, I was in shock. She said she received an emergency call that our mother was involved in an accident. Till today, I still can't believe my mother is gone. She was a mother in deed.



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many people about how my mother was a blessing to them and that she affected their lives in many ways.

Did you have any conversation with your mother before her death?

I didn't live with her but we usually chatted on whastapp. She would ask me questions such as 'How are you and did you call your siblings?' But that particular morning, we didn't chat. I hoped to do so when I arrived in the studio. I could not do without speaking to her in a day. My mother had a wonderful personality. I wasn't the only one she had plans for. She treated other people's children as if they were hers. She used to tell me that

she couldn't wait for me to become big in the entertainment industry. She looked forward to being the mother of a popular musician. She knew how passionate I am about music. She supported me in every way possible.

What plans did you have for her as your mother?

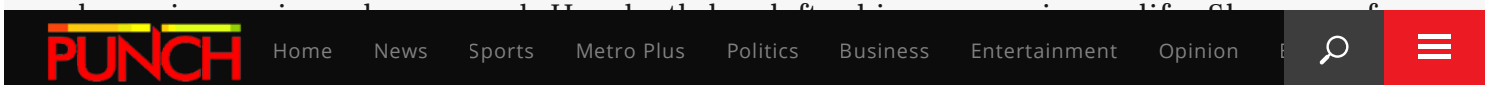
I cannot quantify what she meant to me. She was our mirror, speaking on behalf of my siblings and myself. She struggled to train us.

She was a wonderful mother. Since the news of her death broke, I have received over 100 phone calls. She loved to make friends. She believed anything is possible. She also believed in assisting others to actualise their dreams. I am not the only one that had great plans for her, my sisters had good plans for her too. She had sacrificed a lot for us. We yearned to make her proud as her children.

I am devastated and deeply pained. My mother did her best for us. She worked hard to ensure we have a bright future. Just when it was time for her to reap her reward, she died. It is like starting a race and not completing it. I had great plans for her. Words cannot express how I feel at the moment. How I wish she didn't have to go so soon. She didn't reap her reward.

What do you miss about her?

I know my life would not be the same again. Mere thinking about the fact that I won't hear



to be where we are today. I have a sister who studied abroad. My mother wanted the best for us. She could go the extra mile to provide whatever we asked her. Her mother (my grandmother) is currently ill. I have to be strong for her and my siblings.

When did she join the Force?

I cannot remember the exact year but I know she has been in the Force for close to 17 or 18 years.

Did she tell you why she joined the Force?

I believe she wanted to serve her nation. She also joined for us her children. Before she joined the force, she needed a stable job that would enable her train her children and give her best to her country.

What was her rank?

She was to be made an inspector.

How old was she?

She was in her late 40s.

Describe her personality?

My mother had a restlessness attitude. You could not catch her being idle. She loved to be busy. She loved to nurture and counsel people. Whenever anyone she knew was passing through any challenge, she would try her best to help the person. Sometimes, she carried other people's problems on her head. She easily made friends. She was an elegant woman who I would also describe as a man, in the sense that she was tough. My mother had a fearless attitude and she did whatever needed to be done without wasting time. She was strong-willed and her death is a great loss to my family and Nigeria. She constantly advised us to think big. She always said, "you can be who you want to be."

How are you and your siblings coping with her death?



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comfor ◀ ▶; a great woman with a wonderful personality. She was full of life. She had great plans for herself and her family. I wish there was something I could do to bring her back.

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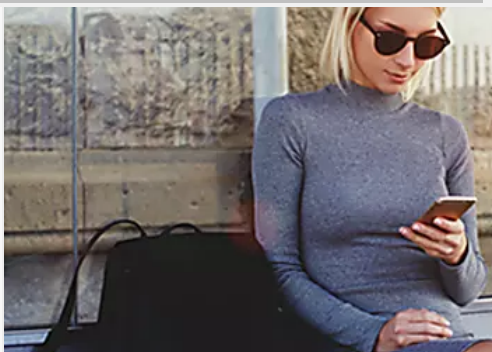
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