

Though buried, my wife's death still a dream — Husband of lady allegedly killed by fleeing Edo Yahooboy's car

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When Grace Obajaja left her home at the Ogheghe Quarters, Bye Pass area on the outskirts of Benin City, Edo State on Friday, August 21, 2020, she hoped for a good day at the firm where she worked on Airport Road.

Her Husband, Frank, who always dropped her off at work hoped that he and his wife, preparing for their second wedding anniversary, would be home to have a good time together. If only she had a premonition of what was to happen later that day, she would have stayed indoors.

However, after much prompting from his wife, Frank took her to work before leaving for his place of work. He was settling down for the day's work when his wife called him that she was going to make her hair and would take her baby along. But a few minutes later, he got an anonymous call that his wife was involved in an accident along Airport Road and in a critical condition.

A Toyota Camry 2012 model was said to have hit a Nissan Murano car used for a ride-hailing service. The driver was also unconscious, while the impact was so much that Grace's baby was reportedly flung out of the car window and lay on the road with a bruised head and fractured limb. The baby was lucky to be picked up by a reverend father who took him to a hospital. It was learnt that the driver of the Toyota Camry, said to be a suspected internet fraudster (*Yahoo boy*) sustained no injury as he was being allegedly chased by some cops in an Audi car (light brown colour).

Frank raced to the hospital where his wife was rushed to after the accident and was heartbroken when he saw her condition. Grace was referred to the University of Benin Hospital where she was said to have died on Tuesday.

People wore long faces at the residence of the Obajajas when our correspondent visited on Friday. The baby, oblivious of what had happened to her mother, played with everyone after returning from the hospital with Plaster of Paris on his right leg.

However, some of the family members who spoke with *Sunday PUNCH* said that the statement the person who drove the Camry car made at the police station didn't indicate that he was being chased by the police.

'My wife's death still a dream'

Frank hopes the incident is a bad dream and would soon disappear. He stated, "I believe in God that she will come back. It's still a dream. We are still going to call you to share the good news with you. The way you people broadcast her death is the same you will broadcast how great my God is. I am not sad. I am not sorrowful and I am not crying. I can never mourn because my God has assured me of that. I trust God to do something great in my life and I will surely call you back to share my testimony with you." However, the lady was buried on Friday.

Frank added, “But the driver of the Toyota Camry that rammed into the car my wife was in told people that a carton colour Audi was used to chase the guy while he was trying to escape from them. I wasn’t there but that was what they told me. They said the vehicle used by the police fled the moment the cops saw what happened.

“My wife and I were best friends and we always played together. On the morning of the day of the accident, I was not ready to go to work. I was reluctant but she urged me to stand up so we could go to work. After a while, she called from work that she was going to make her hair somewhere around my office. We exchanged banters. I told her she should come that her husband had money to pay for her hairdo and she responded by calling me poor and we both laughed. The next thing I heard was that a vehicle rammed into the car my wife was in.”

Frank stated that he was not shocked when he heard that the suspected killer driver made no reference to the involvement of the police in the case. He added, “It is expected because the boy must have been threatened. You wouldn’t blame the boy. These things happen in the country every day and I don’t blame the boy.”

Despite the loss, Frank said he wasn’t ready to press charges against the driver that killed his wife. “I am not pressing charges against the boy. I want peace and I will not press charges against him. But if there is a way the police can be brought to book, it will be okay because if the boy wasn’t chased, my wife would still be alive.”

I lost a confidant and friend, says Grace’s sister-in-law

Frank’s elder sister identified only as Pastor Eunice said Grace was more than a confidant to her, adding that she had lost a confidant and a friend.

She said, “She was not just a sister-in-law, she was like a sister to me. To show you how close we were, my picture was the last one on her *WhatsApp* status before the sad incident. She had a heart of gold. Her baby is just a year and five months old. I am still in shock.”

‘I’m lucky to be alive’

Nosa Precious who drove the car the late lady was in said he was lucky to be alive. He stated, “On that day, I picked a passenger from St Paul along Airport Road, who said she was going to Mission Road. So as a car-hailing driver, I asked her the questions I needed to and I started the trip. I just came out from St Paul; a double lane way and I indicated that I wanted to join the other lane so I could make a turn into the Vegetable Market Road. As I was waiting to join the street, I saw a Blue Camry 2012 model on speed towards my car, a Nissan Murano car. I knew he couldn’t stop at that point.

“I tried to move out of the way but it was too late and the next thing I heard was a big bang. The impact was huge. That was the last thing I remembered. When I opened my eyes, I saw people gathered around me, trying to bring us out of the car. After that, I was taken to a clinic where I was treated and given some injections. I slept off and when I woke up, I was told that the passenger had been transferred to the UBTH.

“At that point, my blood pressure shot up and I had to do an X-ray twice to be sure my right hand hadn’t been affected. My blood pressure steadied but as soon as I heard that the lady died on August 25 when we went to the police station with the family of the person who hit my car, my BP rose from 140 to 170.”

Precious said when he woke up in the hospital, he heard people around him blaming the police for the accident.

He said, “When I woke up in the hospital, I was told that the police were chasing the car that rammed into mine. After the accident happened, I told the eyewitnesses what happened and they searched the boy’s vehicle and he told them that it was police that chased him. But I am surprised now that the statement he made was different.”

He further said that he was unhappy that his passenger died, noting that the development left him emotionally, psychologically and physically drained.

However, a human rights activist, Dickson Johnson, called by Precious when the incident happened, said the matter shouldn’t be swept under the carpet to get justice for the late Grace.

He said, “That Friday at 11am, I left the magistrates’ court after pursuing a case of a defiled six-year-old girl. After the judgement, I returned to my office and as I was about to settle down, I received a call from my brother asking that I should come to his aid and that he was involved in an accident at the Airport Road. That was the last thing I heard from him.

“I tried calling him back but I didn’t get through so I called my colleague, Godwin Esosa, and explained what happened to him. He accompanied me to the scene of the accident. When we got there, I saw blood in my brother’s car and the fuel which spilt on the road.

“It was later that we learnt that some armed policemen in Audi (carton colour) were chasing a suspected *Yahoo boy*. Out of fear, he rammed into my brother’s car who was conveying a passenger to her destination.

“The woman and her baby were badly injured. A reverend father saw the baby on the road and took her to a hospital. It was said that when the police saw what they caused, they left them to die.”

We’re investigation the matter — Police

The spokesperson for the state police command, Chris Nwabuzor, said on August 22, 2020, the Divisional Police Officer, Aideyea divisional headquarters, Benin City, received a report of a fatal motor accident.

He said, “According to the report, a woman, Grace Obajaja and her son – about a year and six months old – were in a vehicle along Airport Road by St Paul’s Junction when a vehicle ran into them, hit the side where the woman was sitting with her son and they were injured.”

Nwabuzor said with the help of the Aideyea divisional headquarters, the victims were rushed to a hospital where they gave them attention before transferring the woman to the UBTH while the baby was taken to another hospital.

He noted, “Not quite long, the woman was reported dead. The baby is receiving treatment as an outpatient because the wound has not healed. I am not saying that it has nothing to do with our men but it was alleged that some policemen were chasing him; the alibi created by the offender. And

while the police were investigating, they gave him the opportunity to explain and describe the vehicle the policemen used but up till now he has not done that.

“The only thing he said was that the policemen wore black long sleeves. I must tell you that I am not defending anybody but with that description, our black uniform has short sleeves and not long sleeves. It's the same with our blue shirt. It is short-sleeved, not long-sleeved. But investigation is still ongoing on the matter.”