

My mother died day after dad was abducted – Daughter

Twenty-nine-year-old launderer, Efe Agbeyiwa, speaks to **TEMITOPE ADETUNJI** about how her mother died a day after her father was kidnapped and how the situation is affecting the family

YOU said in a post that your father was kidnapped and you lost your mum as well; how did these happen?

On a particular day, my dad received a business call from an unknown person to come for a business transaction. He went and when he got there, it was a call to lure him to be kidnapped.

When did he receive the call?

My dad received the call on the 12th of January.

How did you feel about the whole situation?

I felt devastated and scared because it was the first time such a thing had happened in my family. The fear of whether it was just a kidnap or an assassination got me worried, as we didn't receive calls until the third day.

You said you received a call on the third day; what was the call about?

On the call from the kidnappers, they told us that they had my dad and we had to pay \$20m or they would kill him.

Did you pay the ransom?

We pleaded with them to reduce the price; we don't have much money anywhere, and my mum is dead because they kidnapped my dad. We ended up paying the ransom because we didn't want to lose both parents. The sum of N5m was finally collected.

How did you go about raising the money?

Please, understand that I can't give out all the details of the kidnapping. When we went to drop off the ransom, they warned us not to give information about what happened and what we saw to the police, or else they would come for us. Sapele is a very lawless town and kidnapping is an everyday business. There are rumours that some security operatives are behind it. They (security operatives) have never caught anyone.

For how long was your father with his captors before he was released?

My dad was kidnapped for a week; the kidnappers made contact three days later; maybe they were informed that my mum died from the shock.

When did you lose your mum?

She died on January 13, 2023. My mum died as a result of the tragic incident; she was at the hospital attending to my brother's wife who had just given birth. The day they got discharged from the hospital, they barely got home when a call came in from our neighbours that my dad had

been kidnapped. My mum heard it because the phone was on speaker. She was acting normal; she even went to the church to pray that evening and wrote a prayer request for my dad to be released.

She got home from church and was discussing it with some family members and friends when suddenly her condition changed. She was feeling restless and the people around her helped her to lie on the floor.

Not up to 10 minutes, she died. She was snoring with her mouth open and we thought she was sleeping.

My sister was calling her but there was no response from her (my mum). That was

when it dawned on us that she was dead. We

rushed her to three different hospitals

that night to be given oxygen. But the

doctors declared her dead on arrival. I saw

my mum die before my very eyes; it was

traumatising.

What was the reaction of the family

and friends when they heard that your

mother died?

It came as a rude shock to everyone

because my mum was healthy and full of life. Nobody

expected she would die from the shock of the news. They

didn't believe it and kept asking how it happened.

Do you have siblings?

Yes, I have five siblings. My siblings were all devastated; they ran helter-skelter to get the money for the ransom.

We ended up borrowing

What position do you hold in the family?

I'm the third child out of five girls and a boy.

How have you been coping?

It's not been easy; life is never easy without a mother. I've never imagined I would live without my mother; that thought has never crossed my mind because my mum



was everything to me. She was always around, tending to us.

She said we were her only siblings and she treated us like her younger ones. It's

so hard to live without her. I have not been able

to come out of the shock. I was hospitalised for

weeks and bedridden for a month and two weeks

because of depression. I've been on antidepressants.

That's how I've been coping. I take drugs every day to

be able to eat. God should please stop

taking people's mothers. We need them.

Has your father been released?

Yes, he was released seven days later after a ransom was paid.

Do you think that anyone has a hand in the situation?

I don't know, but if anyone has a hand in it, it's my

earnest prayer that the person should be exposed because

the pain they caused

my family is an everlasting one. I curse them all; they will

know no peace for the rest of their lives.

Did you at any point feel depressed over this issue?

Nobody will lose a loved one and remain normal. This is my

mom; she has never left us. Even when my dad was abusing her, she

stayed because of us and endured everything because she

always wanted to be with her children. I'm devastated and I

don't think I can come out of it any time soon. I'm trying to

cope because I know my mum is in heaven; she spent her

life serving God and working in his house. Even on her last

day, she went to church to pray. She's now free from my Dad's

torment

because she wouldn't have left the abusive marriage even if we forced her to. Now that she's resting with God, I'm happy for her.

What do you do for a living?

I own a laundry shop, but since the incident, I haven't had the strength or energy to come out of the house. The shop is locked.

How old was your mum when she passed away?

My mum just completed her 54th year in December 2022.

What about your dad?

My dad is 63 years old; he's a businessman and into the timber business. My mum did petty trading; she sold male and female clothes.

What has the situation taught you about life?

Since my mum died, life has become different for me. As we plan our lives, we have to plan for our deaths too, because no one knows when he or she will die. Know God and serve him diligently, so that we can make heaven. Then again, there's nothing worth killing ourselves for—it's all vanity. If we come empty, we shall return empty. My mum couldn't even take her most cherished clothes. It's sad.

What were the efforts you made to ensure your father was released by his captors?

We had no option but to borrow money to secure my dad's release. We are still in debt.

What was your father's reaction when he heard about your mother's death?

My Dad was shocked when he heard it directly from us because he thought we told him that our mum was dead as a ploy to trick the kidnappers into releasing him. That was the first time I saw him cry.

What kind of help and support did you get from your family and friends?

A few family members donated a token. Friends did as well. We didn't get up to a million from them. Everyone is struggling, which is understandable.

Has your mother been buried?

No, she's still in the mortuary. This is the sixth month and there is no money anywhere.

What are your plans concerning the burial?

My mum is a respected woman and deserves a befitting burial. We are doing all we can to lay her to rest.

What kind of help do you need?

We need financial assistance. I didn't lose my faith or hope in God. I know God is a way-maker; my mother taught us to always have faith in God because she's a believer. I know God will raise helpers for us. I need mental support as well; I need encouragement and friends to lean on. I feel so lonely.