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Evil unlimited

Our Reporter

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NBSIF2013

- 6 women butchered for rituals
- Wife murders husband, pours acid on him
- Two ladies forced to marry deity
- Women protest killings, cry, 'Enough is enough'

FROM ALOYSIUS ATTAH (princemmy@yahoo.com)

If the dead could talk and **late Mabel Udaya** was asked to say what life meant to her, her answer would probably echo the remarks of Thomas Hobbes: "wicked, nasty, brutish and short." Until she was **brutally murdered at the age of 24**, life had not been fair to Mabel at all. Poverty drove her into marriage at a tender age and she gave birth to two in quick succession. Unfortunately, the second pregnancy was problematic as she experienced prolonged labour and eventually delivered the baby with the legs coming out first. This caused serious damage to her reproductive system, resulting in her developing Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF), a terrible medical condition that makes the victim constantly leak urine.

Due primarily to this, Mabel's husband abandoned her to fate. Not long after, the two children also died in mysterious circumstances. Though devastated at the initial stage, she later picked up the pieces of her life and adjusted to life in her father's compound in **Okpo village, Enugu-Ezike, Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, near Nsukka, Enugu State.**

Mabel soon started a provision store in the local market in her village. Not quite long, fortune smiled on her and she acquired a motorcycle, which she used to run around in the area. She regained her bounce such that people never knew she bore secret pains.

But Mabel's tragic end came on the night of September 26, 2013, when she was waylaid and murdered by suspected ritualists as she was returning home at the end of the business day. Vital parts of her body were cut off: tongue, breasts, eyes and clitoris. Her corpse was discovered the next morning by people who were going for morning mass at the Catholic

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Church parish in the village. Her motorcycle, the purse containing the sales proceeds for the day and a loaf of bread tied to the motorcycle were left intact.

In another horrific incident, the wife of Christopher Eya, a bicycle repairer and native of Ikpamodo, Okpo, also in Enugu-Ezike, murdered him with the connivance of her new lover. The chain of events that led to Christopher's gruesome murder began when the wife suddenly became a spiritualist and priestess of a river goddess. Being a devout Catholic, the man vehemently kicked against such practice in his home but the wife remained adamant. To make matters worse, the wife began to date another man and even took to flaunting her new man in the presence of the husband.

After failing to find amicable solution to the challenge in the family, he resorted to prayers. This added more fuel to the smoldering situation as the wife claimed that the man's prayer was damaging many things for her in the spiritual realm. Unable to persuade the man stop his prayers, she decided to end it all faster. One night, the wife with the collaboration of her new male partner allegedly murdered the husband in cold blood and poured acid on him before fleeing the compound. Villagers who visited the scene after the incident burnt down the six-bedroom bungalow the woman erected in the compound and declared a manhunt for her.

As *Sunday Sun* gathered, she had made prior attempts to poison the husband to the extent of once serving soup mixed with acid but the man suspected foul play and rejected the food, which she refused to taste when the man demanded that.

Still in Enugu and in a tale of the incredible happening in 21st century Nigeria, two young ladies, Victoria Ugwuanyi and Rosemary Ugwuanyi were allegedly forced to marry a deity called Iyakpala Ugbaiké in Amachala and Ugbaiké, which are villages close to Enugu-Ezike. The chief priest of the dreaded deity was alleged to have forced the daughter of a deceased man to marry him, claiming that the same deity killed the father of the girl. The girl's elder brother had earlier died of complications of HIV virus as confirmed by a medical report obtained by the reporter but the worshippers of the deity invaded the compound and packed the dead man's belongings and took them to the shrine, claiming that it was the deity that killed him.

Sunday Sun gathered that prior to these evil acts, three ladies and two women had been murdered and their vital body parts taken away in Inyi, another village in the Enugu-Ezike town.

Christian women rise in protest

While the catalogue of evil acts (ritual killings, murder and kidnapping) reigned supreme in the Enugu community, the people seemed to have been overwhelmed and helpless over the situation until the women rose up in protest.

Spearheaded by Rev. Sister Martina Oforka, a mystic nun from Anambra State based in Umuagbedo Agu, Amachala community, Enugu Ezike, female Catholic faithful in the area mobilized and declared days of prayer and fasting.

Beyond the prayer warfare against evildoers in the area, Sister Martina rallied over 500 women who marched through the streets of the community before proceeding to Enugu State Government House on a peaceful protest to register their grievances. The women were dressed in all black with tender palm fronds tied on their heads. At the Government House, they presented a petition addressed to Governor Sullivan Chime entitled, "An appeal by the women of Okpo, Inyi and Igogoro Autonomous communities to the State Government to look into the brutal murder of innocent citizens and the activities of juju priests and deities against women in Igbo-Eze North LGA of Enugu State." The women appealed to the governor to unravel and stop the brutal murder of innocent citizens from different villages in the local government.

The petitioners represented by 10 signatories listed the names of those murdered in Inyi community for suspected ritual purposes to include Miss Abugu Eucharía, Miss Ugwoke Gloria,

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Mrs. Mamah Caroline, Miss Onuh Ijeoma and Mrs. Onuh Mary. They also recalled that in Amaja community, a boy named Eze Ntadimma was killed on November 24, 2012 and his body dumped on top of a palm tree. *

They appealed to the governor to look into the gruesome murder of their innocent children by unknown assailants by directing all relevant security agencies to carry out in-depth and thorough investigation into the cases with the aim of uncovering the perpetrators and bringing them to book.

They also called for the outright banning of any deity in Enugu State that is forcefully demanding for marriage of their women as such violates section 34 (1), 35 (1) and 42 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.

Protest generates instant results

Immediately after the women's prayers and their return from the protest march to the Government House, the Enugu State Police Command made a major breakthrough in some criminal activities ravaging the area. The police smashed a gang and recovered the decomposed body of 84-year-old Madam Adiza Ogbo, wife of the traditional ruler of Abba-Igogoro community who was kidnapped on September 14, 2013, more than three months before the protest. The leader of the kidnap gang, Paschal Onah was arrested alongside a native doctor and seven other members. He confessed that the woman died in their custody and was buried in a shallow grave dug in his compound for dead kidnap victims.

More breakthroughs happened as the principal suspect alleged to be involved in the murder of Mabel was also arrested by the police in Enugu. Emboldened by these outcomes, the women of Okpo and with the backing of Sister Martina and their traditional ruler, Igwe Patrick Okenyi also embarked on house-to-house cleansing and destruction of all deadly charms and shrines in the community as part of the spiritual revolution in the community.

Confirming the development to *Sunday Sun*, the image maker of Enugu State Police, Ebere Amarizu described the arrest of the kidnap gang as fulfillment of the adage: "Everyday is for the thief but one day is for the owner of the house." He said that the Anti-Kidnapping and Anti-Robbery Squad has been fortified for effective operations and surveillance in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area while the suspect connected with the murder of Mabel would soon be charged to court when the police conclude their investigations.

The traditional ruler of Okpo community, Igwe Patrick Okenyi and the Chairman Okpo Abroad Union, Gabriel Abonyi said the community would never sleep until evil was rooted out of the place and justice dispensed.

During the burial ceremony of the late kidnap victim, Adiza Ogbo, Mabel's mother, Agnes Udaya was spotted still wailing for her dead daughter. She told *Sunday Sun* that she would never stop wearing black and neither stop carrying the cross of Jesus Christ until the killer of her daughter had kissed the dust too.

At Madam Ogbo's funeral, Sister Martina also made an earth-shaking speech, challenging the men of the community to stand up against evil and fight for truth and justice. She warned criminals and evildoers to repent or face divine wrath.

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