

Lady's mysterious death lands boyfriend in trouble

♦Family alleges ritual killing

FROM TUNDE RAHEEM AKURE

The journey to the great beyond of a 24-year-old lady, Funke Awolumat, started on February 4, 2014, when she bade her relations goodbye. She told them she was on her way to Ibadan, Oyo State, when instead she travelled to Akure, Ondo State, to visit her boyfriend.

Her corpse was eventually discovered at the morgue of Ondo State Specialists Hospital, Akure, after a search for her when she did not return to Lagos, her base on the fourth day as expected.

Awolumat was a teacher at a private nursery and primary school in Lagos State. She had told her eldest brother, Muiyiwa, with whom she lived that she was travelling to Ibadan, to visit a friend and that she would be spending four days there. Funke, however, did not travel to Ibadan, but went to Akure to visit her boyfriend.

The embattled boyfriend, Kehinde (other name withheld), a cab operator, was said to have met Funke about five years ago in Akure when she was staying with her brother before she relocated to Lagos.

Narrating the incident to SWM, Funke's immediate elder brother, Tope, said he was in his shop located at Saint Luke's Anglican Church, Akure, when someone who rode on a motorbike came and told him that his sister had put his friend in a problem. That he should follow him immediately to the State Specialist Hospital to rescue his dying sister. On getting there, he met the boyfriend guarded by the police and the corpse of Funke lying in the hospital morgue.

First information report obtained at the Homicide Section of the State Police Command headquarters indicated that Kehinde claimed that Funke committed suicide in his residence on Ijoka Road and was rushed to the hospital.

She was first taken to a nearby private hospital from where the medical director detailed one of the nurses to accompany the boyfriend and the body, which was brought in dead to the state hospital. Doctors subsequently invited the police from the 'B' division and handed over the lover boy to detectives while the corpse was taken to the mortuary.

Tope confirmed that Kehinde had been going out with his sister for over five years now, before she left for Lagos. He alleged that the suspect used his sister for rituals. According to him, there were two deep cuts on the corpse, one on her neck and the other on her wrist which pointed to the fact that she was slaughtered. He said the boyfriend left the house he was living with his wife and children and took Funke to a new apartment where she died before he took her corpse to the hospital, three hours later.

Tope said Funke had earlier had an encounter with the same man sometime last year before she was cured which led to her relocation to Lagos. He disclosed that a friend of the boyfriend had equally been arrested for having a hand in the killing and that both of them were still assisting the police in their investigations.

SWM learnt that the family had concluded an arrangement to hire a pathologist to join the police team in carrying out an autopsy on the body to avoid any possible cover up. Her relations expressed displeasure on the way the police were handling the matter.

But, the principal suspect insisted that the deceased committed suicide and that he only assisted her to the hospital to see if she could be revived.

The state Public Relations Officer, Mr. Wole Ogodo, confirmed that two suspects were being held in connection with the death of the deceased and gave assurances that facts behind the incident would be unravelled.

We 'll run vandals aground - Abo