

# Cruel fate: Young widow impregnated by lover murdered

■ Her 3-month-old baby missing

BY NGOZI UWUJARE

**T**here is great lamentation in the Nzerem family of Umuaka, Njaba Local Government Area, Imo State, following the death of Chikaodiri Nzerem, a young widow who was nursing a three-month baby.

Until she was murdered in her room in her father's house in Umuaka, Njaba Local Government Area on April 3, 2014, Nzerem was still observing the mandatory one-year mourning period for her late husband who died in 2013.

Sometime last year, 32-year-old Chidi Egeolu, another native of the area struck up a relationship with Chikaodiri, ostensibly to console and 'comfort' the grieving young widow. As the relationship progressed, she got pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. Seeing that his love affair with Nzerem had produced a child, he reportedly expressed interest in marrying her, but was flatly rejected by the father of the lady as a prospective in-law. The rejection apparently caused the bile to rise in Egeolu.

In the ensuing misunderstanding, as *Sunday Sun* learnt from the Imo State Commissioner of Police, Mr Abdulmajid Ali, Egeolu allegedly murdered Nzerem in her room and also kidnapped the three-month baby boy with the help of some accomplices.

But nemesis caught up with Egeolu as his slippers were discovered in the room where the young widow was murdered. This prompted the community to arrest and hand him over to policemen at Umuaka Police Station, which immediately transferred the case to the homicide section of the State CID in Owerri.

Since he was taken in custody and interrogation commenced, Egeolu has had a difficult time convincing men of the State Criminal Investigation Department of the Imo State Police Command that he had no hand in the murder of his girlfriend, Chikaodiri Nzerem.

While expressing grief over the loss of his true in-law in 2013, the death of his daughter as well as the missing three-month baby of his late daughter, the distraught father of the deceased said: "I did not recognize the suspect, Egeolu as my son-in-law because he only impregnated my daughter, who lost her husband that she dearly loved and we are still mourning. I warned him that I had not given my daughter to him as a wife. I didn't collect any wine from them. Because of the misunderstanding, he conspired with his friends, came to my house, murdered my daughter right in her room and kidnapped her three-month-old baby boy."

Egeolu while acknowledging that



•Suspect

he had been in a relationship with deceased prior to her demise, however, denied committing the alleged murder.

He said: "I started dating Chikaodiri Nzerem since 2013. Later she became pregnant for me. I knew she had lost her husband in 2013 and was a widow. There was misunderstanding between me and her father because he didn't recognize me as his in-law, even though I had taken wine to him in the company of some of my family. He rejected the wine we brought. I don't know who killed my girlfriend. Somebody told me about it and I rushed to their house early in the morning. The community

suspected me because they discovered my slippers in the house where my girlfriend was murdered. I don't know who kidnapped my baby boy or who killed my girlfriend."

The Imo State Commissioner of Police gave assurance that Egeolu would have ample time to make his defence when he is eventually charged to court after the completion of investigations.

In the meantime, the Deputy Commissioner of Police in-charge of the State CID Owerri, Mr David Folawiyo disclosed that the police were still at work to discover the whereabouts of the baby boy.