



Mrs. Umeh, sister of the deceased

Late Ndubuisi Ugwaka

Gory story of agric graduate beheaded on farm

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By Molly Kilete

When Mr. Ndubuisi Uzoamaka Ugwaka left his sister's house at Iddo Village, along the Abuja/Gwagwalada road, on Saturday, November 26, 2016, little did she know that she would never see her brother again.

Ugwaka, a graduate of Agriculture from the University of Ilorin, had relocated to Abuja from Imo State to live with his younger sister, Mrs. Uzoamaka Umeh, and her family, following years of searching for a white-collar job after graduation.

The late Ugwaka, who had taken to farming, having failed to gain employment years after he graduated from the university, joined his younger sister in her farming business and even sought to acquire his own land to go into large-scale farming, but did not get any.

He took to small-scale farming after acquiring a piece of land along the Abuja Airport-Gwagwalada Road and was doing well before he was brutally murdered allegedly by Fulani herdsmen.

Narrating the sad incident, which has thrown the family into deep mourning, his sister, Mrs. Uzoamaka Umeh, a full-time farmer and housewife, told of how she began to express worry after her brother did not return at 6pm in the evening of the sad day. She told Daily Sun that she raised the alarm to her husband and children regarding her brother's absence because it was unusual.

After waiting until about 8pm, she asked her eldest son to accompany her to the farm where her brother had gone to work in the morning. On their way to the farm, they met her husband who inquired where they were going. He made efforts to persuade her to give up going to the farm at that late hour and wait till morning. He promised to accompany her to the farm, which was on the opposite side of the village, the next day.

She obeyed and went back home with her husband but she cried all through the night, as if she knew that her brother was dead.

As early as 5:30 in the morning, she woke her husband up and they headed to the farm.

On getting to the farm, which was in the other side of the expressway and quite a long distance from their house, she went straight to the tree under which her brother usually sat to take a rest but did not find him.

As they walked deeper into the farm, she began to see blood all over the place and immediately told her husband that they had killed her brother but he kept reassuring her that everything was fine as they continued to search for him.

A few moments later, she said they came upon the headless body of her brother on the ground.

Her husband who could not stand the gruesome sight, comforted her and quietly took her away from the scene and went straight to the Iddo Police Station to report the matter.

On receiving the report, the police dispatched one of its personnel to accompany her husband to the scene of the incident while Mrs. Umeh remained at the station.

The policeman who accompanied her husband saw the headless body and the sharp knife suspected to have been used to slaughter the deceased placed not too far from the body and went back to the station to report his findings.

The divisional police officer, then dispatched a police patrol vehicle and more policemen to recover the body and deposit it in the mortuary.

The news of the killing soon filtered into the busy town, raising tension of a reprisal attack, since the deceased was of the Igbo extraction.

But police prevailed on Igbo residents to keep the peace and not attack anybody. When Daily Sun visited the village, normalcy had returned as the head of the Igbo in the village and Igbo leaders in the Federal Capital Territory were able to calm the nerves of their kinsmen and restrain them from taking the law into their hands.

In an interview with Abuja Metro, Mrs. Umeh, an indigene of Abia State, related how her late brother had sometime ago complained that some Fulani herdsmen had overrun his farm with their cattle and destroyed everything he planted.

She said her brother also told her that he had confronted the Fulani herdsmen but that they later settled the matter.

The woman, who claimed that her brother was a peaceful and amiable man who would not go out of his way to provoke anybody, said she became suspicious that something terrible may have happened to her brother when he didn't show up at the usual time on the day he was killed.

Narrating how the sad incident occurred, Mrs. Umeh, said "My late brother left the house very early in the morning at about 5 O'clock to his farm on the day he was killed.

"He was a graduate of Agriculture from the University of Ilorin, he graduated in the '90s but because he was not gainfully employed, he decided to go into farming, which he was doing in the village before he relocated to Abuja to join me. And his reason for relocating was because he wanted to go into big-time farming, where he could get farming land on lease.

"Unfortunately, he was not able to get any and decided to be following me to my own farm before he saw another space to manage located around the expresway. There, he planted plantain, watermelon, yam, pepper and other vegetables.

"When we packed out of our former house, I decided to stop farming where we were farming before because of the distance but he said he would continue so he could harvest what he had planted.

"So when he failed to return on that fateful day that he went out up till 8 O'clock in the night, I became very worried and went inside. By the time I came out, it was after eleven and he had not returned. I went round everywhere I knew he used to seat but I did not see him, my brother had never stayed out this late since he came to stay with us.

"So I called my son and told him to follow me to the farm to look for him. My son asked where we were going, I said I didn't know but that lets just go and look for him. On our way, we met my husband, who inquired what we were doing at the hour of the night and I told him and he asked us to go back but I refused and he then asked my son to go back to the house; we started going but on getting to the primary school, he told me it was too risky for us to go to the farm and pleaded with to leave it till the next day and I agreed and went back to the house but I could not sleep all through the night.

"As early as 5am, I woke him up and we embarked on the search and on getting to the place where he usually farmed, I went straight to the pawpaw tree where he used to sit to rest. But before getting to the tree, I saw blood everywhere and shouted. I told my husband that they had killed my brother but he said I should calm down but I refused and started to cry. As he walked further into the farm, he spotted the body of my brother. They cut off the head, went away with it and left the body.

"We then ran to the police station to report the matter.

"My brother has been staying with me for the past seven years. He was about 50 years old. And, unfortunately, I did see him that morning when he was going out and he didn't tell me anything and so when I saw his body, it was really devastating and I am yet to come to terms with it as we speak.

"At the police station, my husband was given a policeman to accompany him to the farm and when they got there the police conducted a search and found a dagger stained with blood and brought it to the station, they now arranged for a vehicle to go and remove the body."

Suspicion of foul play .

Mrs. Umeh said, "I really do not know what to suspect, but I know that, sometime ago, he had complained severally to me that Fulani herdsmen were disturbing him on his farm. Then I asked him what he did to them and he told me that he had to call them to appeal to them stop their cattle from destroying his crops and even took the herdsmen round the farm to show them the level of destruction. He told me that after taking the herdsmen round, they apologised to him and promised to stop the destruction but never did until they killed him.

"I remember also telling him of how the Fulani herdsmen have been ravaging our farmland with their cattle and pleaded with him to take it easy with them, which he agreed, but perhaps they didn't like the way he confronted them.

"Apart from his confrontation with the Fulani herdsmen, my brother never told me that he had problems with anybody."



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