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SATURDAY *life*

How adopted couple died 2 weeks to wedding

From LINUS OOTA, Lafia

Cruel fate sums up their story. They were both rejected and thrown to the dogs to eat them up at birth by their biological parents. What however appeared to be their first encounter with luck came their way when they were picked and adopted by different families who had waited for years to have their own babies, all to no avail.

How it began

Mr Francis Obe, 66, is an indigene of Gitata district of Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State and a Political Science graduate of Ahmadu Bello University, ABU and had worked with the Arewa Textile Industries in Kaduna before setting up a consultancy firm with offices in Lafia and Karu areas of the state. He got married to Maryam, 58, who hails from Akwanga Local Government Area of the state. For the couple who got married 32 years ago without a child; life has been very unbearable as their in-laws have scorned them endlessly due to their inability to have a child after 32 years of marriage.

After years of fertility treatment that always failed, they went through endless vetting for adoption, and were eventually given the baby of their dreams.

According to Mrs Obe "I and my husband have been certified fit to have children but have not been blessed to have one, life has been very difficult as even friends see my situation as a source of fun and scornful remarks. I was really in a confused state and have on several occasions thought of opting out of the marriage

"But after a long time of waiting without any result, my husband suggested to me in 1995 the idea of adopting a child while we still keep faith with the almighty God, and we both agreed on a baby girl. We applied at the FCT social welfare department and within a short time, a baby girl was delivered to us and we named her Emmanuela, we nurtured her and gave her our best"

Emmauella was enrolled at Glory Science Academy Primary and Secondary School Karu where she completed her primary and secondary education in 2003 and 2011 respectively and proceeded to Nasarawa State University Keffi where she read and obtained a degree in Mass Communication. She observed her service year during the 2016/2017 batch A service in Ondo State.

Sharing same fate

On the other hand, Mr Thomas Orhena, 63, hails from Logo Local Government Area of Benue State, he is a retired staff of National Electricity Power Authority (NEPA) in Jos, Plateau State, got married to his wife Ngunan Sende from Katsina Ala Local Government Area of Benue State who also worked with the then Nasco Company in Jos and for 30 years, their marriage did not also produce a child.

After several efforts both medically and traditionally to ensure she was pregnant failed, they both agreed to adopt a child, they applied and were given a baby boy in Abuja. The boy was named Emmanuel Orhena.

According to Mr Orhena "I have been married for 30 years, but somehow my wife was not able to conceive, we tried medically but there was no fault found, and collectively we decided to adopt a male child, we needed a child to disturb us at home, our belief was that if we adopt a child, it does not mean that we will never have our own later in life, but it never came and we collectively trained him"

Emmanuel attended Glory Capital Academy where he completed his primary and secondary education in Abuja where his foster parents had settled down to practice commercial farming. He got admission at the Nasarawa State University, Keffi to study public administration where and graduated same year with Emmanuela and both of them were posted to serve in Ondo state.

Emmanuel and Emmanuela

Both Emmanuela and Emmanuel met in Keffi, a week after they were admitted in the university during the registration processes, little did they know that they did have a sweet story to tell later in future, they settled for love and their relationship continued from there;

four years in the university, they were together, one year of national youth service in Ondo state, they were together.

Sad twist

The two lovers had planned to get married on November 18, 2017, but on October 28, they lost their lives in a motor accident on their way to Abuja from Akure where they had travelled to extend wedding invitations to some good friends they met in the state during the period of their national youth service.

Speaking to our correspondent, mother of late Emmanuel, Mrs Orhena who could not hold her tears said the couple met while in the university.

"Emmanuel and Emmanuella met in 2012 in the university, he used to tell me that Emmanuella was one of the most quiet and easy going girl he has met in his life. Their love story is one of fate, finding God and then finding the right person, they were colleagues in the university days, they were both adopted children", Mrs Orhena said.

Also speaking, Mrs Obe, mother of Emmanuella said her daughter met her heartthrob in her first week in school and their closeness began that very day until two years ago when they had their first introduction in my house, my daughter told me how Emmanuel had in February 2015 during their final year studies looked straight into her eyes and said 'Emmanuella, please marry me' and she replied passionately with tears dropping off her eyes 'yes I will' and both agreed to be together till death do them apart.

For Mr Obe, father of the late Emmanuella, he revealed in an emotion-laden voice that his daughter died mysteriously and he suspected it is not ordinary, noting that her growing up was very eventful. "Anytime she was home for the holidays, she washed our clothes, kept the house clean and prepared food for us even when the mother will opt to assist her, she will plead with her to rest that it was her duty to do it, she was quite a decent girl, I will miss her dearly.

"I know her death and that of her husband came too early and it happened in ways I don't like to talk about, it's not a thing that makes me happy, where do I move from here, my only daughter who I suffered to train up to the university, I have lost my joy, her memories will never go off my mind", he said.



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