

# How my wife died on day of our traditional wedding

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MATTHEW DIKE

**Tears have not ceased to flow from the eyes of the children of Mrs Vero German, since mid-February, each time her name came up in discussion amongst her near kin.**

The reason is that February was a day Vero, aged 47, and her husband of 20 years, Ow honigha German, had set aside to mark a milestone in their union that produced six children and two grandchildren.

The couple had been living together happily without any problem. But then the husband decided to meet the full traditional marital requirements so that Vero could be fully recognized as a married woman. German resolved the traditional wedding between him and Vero would be done with pomp and ceremony.

But unknown to them, death was lurking around the corner on February 16, 2018, which was the day for the ceremony.

Incidentally, a day earlier, one of their four daughters, Vivian, delivered a baby girl, in Jesse in Delta State, which was another good tiding for the family.

It was in this mood of double celebration that the evil claws of death came and snatched Vero, the grandmother.

On the fateful day, every one in the family was in high spirits in anticipation of the ceremony. German bought two cattle, which were slaughtered. But around 6pm as his heartthrob was dressing up to look beautiful for the occasion, she slumped and was rushed to a nearby hospital but she gave up the ghost on the way to the hospital.

People were said to have wept uncontrollably. The cattle that were slaughtered, rice and other foods cooked for the occasion were used for her burial instead of marriage ceremony.

When *Sunday Sun* visited the bereaved man at his residence in Ajegunle area of Lagos State, German said it was unbelievable the way the incident occurred. He said both members of family Jesse and people from Mosagor village in Delta State, where the wife came from, were still mourning her death but confused.

German said: "We had been living together for the past 20 years. God blessed us with six children – four daughters and two sons. We were also blessed with two grandchildren. We had decided to do our traditional marriage in her village according to our customs. We travelled to the village and were full of hope and happiness that on February 24, 2018, we would do our marriage and fulfill all traditional marriage rites. We never envisaged that things would turn out that way. My colleagues from GMT Nigeria Limited were present on the good day that turned sad. They had killed the two cows in her Ugbede family house around 6pm. She was dressing up for the occasion about 6pm when she slumped and was rushed to the hospital. Unfortunately she died on the way. Our daughter delivered a baby girl on Thursday, she died on Friday and was buried on Sunday. We had to quickly bury her but her wake keep would come up in Lagos on March 24, 2018 in Ajegunle area of Lagos State."

The bereaved man recalled what his wife told him the day he bought two cows for the occasion: "The day I bought the cows she told me that she was very happy and that after everything God would reward me abundantly. I was very happy to hear that.

Continuing, German said: "Immediately she died, it was as if a full bucket of water was poured on me. I was sweating. I couldn't eat or sleep. It was a heavy blow for me. I have not been myself since her death. My wife was a businesswoman who travelled to Delta State to buy foodstuff and distribute in Lagos. She was very hard working. I will remember a lot of things about her goodness. She was very caring and a good cook. She loves me so much and would go to any length to make me happy. Everybody was shocked over her death. Our first son, Nathaniel, is married and he is a final year student of Abraka University, Delta State."

On the story making the rounds that witchcraft attack may have caused the death of Vero, her husband, German said: "Many people told me that three people confessed to have killed her. What will I do? She is dead. Whether they were saying the truth or not, I don't know. She had complained about people who built a structure on top of her mother's grave. She said it would not be better for them. Those people were not happy over that comment."