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## Chioma Okezie-Okeh

**On August 20, 2019, when the naked body of a young woman was found stone-cold dead inside Room C4 in City Rock Hotel, Maraba, Nasarawa State, there was pandemonium, fear and uncertainty. All that was known was that the young man that lodged in the room the previous night brought her in to spend the night with him. By morning he had vanished, leaving the management of the hotel in a quandary. Unravelling the mystery of the dead body in the hotel room, therefore, was a job for detectives.**

Enter the IRT operatives. In time, the pieces were glued together. The dead body was identified as 22-year-old Favour Edoh, an alleged sex worker; the suspect, 27-year-old Augustine Ohimai, a member of the National Youth Service Corps, was tracked down to Benin City where he was arrested on January 17, 2020; and from his confession, detectives tied up the loose ends. What emerged is a story of illicit sex gone awry.

For the young man, his poor and immoral decision to pick a prostitute from the street came back to haunt him. Now he has to face the nightmare: when sex ends in death, punishment is inescapable.

### Led to doom by his libido

A tearful Augustine Ohimai soberly recounted the story of the night his life turned upside down, the moment what he thought would be brief hours of enjoyment became a tragedy.

Up till that fateful evening, his life was in order: a young man from Benin City who has successfully completed his education at Auchi Polytechnic where he studied Computer Science, en route to Bauchi for his National Youth Service.

“On my way to Bauchi, I stopped at Maraba in Nasarawa State because the journey was very far. I asked a commercial motorcycle driver to take me to an affordable hotel. He took me to City Rock Hotel. Because I had only a few hours before boarding another bus to Bauchi, the receptionist agreed to collect N2, 500 from me. After I checked into a room, I went out to look for water and something to eat. Some prostitutes hustling in the vicinity of the hotel approached me and asked if I’d need their service and I was interested. They asked for N5, 000, but one of them, who later told me her name was Favour, agreed to take N2, 000 for the night. She said that there was no customer and the day was already over.”

Having paid the sex worker, she followed him to his hotel room.

“I took my bath and we started making love, I was still on the first round when I discovered that her body was no longer moving. I checked her and I realized she was gone,” he recounted.

“I was scared. I moved her severally to see if she would wake. I decided to run away because I knew no one would believe my story.”

At 6:30 am, he sneaked out of the hotel premises and took the first bus out of the city.

After three weeks at the NYSC orientation camp in Bauchi, he thought the tragedy was behind him. Redeployed to Delta State, he began his service to his fatherland. Every weekend, he’d travel to Benin and stay in his sister’s house, at Eme-Ora West Road, Evboriaria. That was where police arrested him on January 17, 2020.

Now he must account for the crime that happened inside a hotel room in Nasarawa on the night of August 19, 2019.

On why he succumbed to the lure of paid sex that night, Ohimai could only offer a lame excuse: “I have never slept with a prostitute before. Although, I have a fiancée who I am planning to marry at the end of my NYSC programme, I wanted to know the difference; I wanted to have a taste of sex with a prostitute.”

Still trying to make a sense of what happened, he claimed neither he nor his partner took sex drugs. “I am sure she was sick because I did not do much before she died,” he said. “I do not take drugs or alcohol. I ran away only because I was terrified.”

The suspect debunked the insinuation that he killed the victim for ritual. “I do not do Yahoo Yahoo. I am a dedicated child of God. You can go to my church and ask about me. I did not take anything from her, even the money that I gave her was still in her purse when I left,” he claimed.

He concluded his story on a pleading note: “I want to use this opportunity to beg her family to forgive me. The devil took advantage of my weakness to put me in trouble. If God save me from this problem, I promise to be a pastor and serve God all the days of my life.”

### **The case of missing bra and panties**

The manager of the hotel, Emmanuel Paul Agbocheni, who spoke with *Saturday Sun* over the phone, refuted some aspects of the suspect’s story.

For instance, he alleged that the deceased was discovered stark naked with her clothes, including undies, missing.

“He came to our hotel on that day at about 11 pm. He was alone and requested for a room. After filling the data form, he paid N2, 500, the price for the cheapest room. We asked him if he was staying alone and he told us his

girlfriend would soon join him. As a matter of policy, we do not allow two men to sleep in a room for fear that they might plan and execute bad thing from there” Agbocheni narrated.

According to him, the guest returned a few minutes later with a young lady. The next morning, there was a heavy rainfall from 4 am till 9 am, delaying the cleaning of the rooms. When the housekeeper decided to clean the empty rooms and discovered that Room C4 was locked, she assumed the occupant was yet to check out. She found the room still locked at 12:30 pm, which was past check out time and promptly drew the attention of the receptionist to it. They took a spare key, opened the door and to their horror discovered the naked body of a woman on the bed. They raised an alarm and the hotel management subsequently alerted the police at the Maraba station.

The hotel manager claimed the victim’s belongings—cloth, pant, bra, money and phones—were missing.

“It was only her makeup kit that was seen inside a green purse that we assumed belonged to her,” he affirmed.

He could hardly hide his relief at the arrest of the suspect. “We are grateful to God that police have found that young man,” he said. “This will prove to the world that we had no hand or knowledge of the incident.”

Detectives are currently rounding off their work on the case. They are awaiting the outcome of an autopsy to ascertain the cause of death which could either corroborate or contradict suspect’s claim that the victim died naturally during their sex romp.