

HOW SON FROM HELL MURDERED 83-YEAR-OLD DAD

- Dumps body in pit toilet, goes merrymaking
- It was a heartless revenge, kinsman alleges

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FOR Wilfred Ogbu, a native of Umuideanyi Aji community in Igbo Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, life had been cruel to him in his 83 years of sojourn on earth. Amidst health challenges, he toils daily, battling to put food on the table with his meager earning as a bicycle repairer.

His strength waned with each passing day just as he had been losing his sight gradually. But he was determined to survive, though in pain and sorrow occasioned by abject poverty and lack of a spouse to offer him care, love and support.

His wife, Caroline, died in 2018, three years after the demise of their first child, leaving behind Ejiofor, the second son. The octogenarian also has four female children who are married and living with their spouses, as well as another male child, Chisom, whom he had in his first marriage.

With all his female children married and Chisom living on his own, Wilfred, the oldest man in the Umu Urama Ajibo family lineage of Umuideanyi Aji, was left in the company of Ejiofor, aged 24, who at some point had become a deviant due to alleged consumption of psychotropic substances. Swayed, perhaps, by his indulgence, he abandoned his aged father and relocated elsewhere for a few years, but returned home after being rehabilitated.

His son's return was a pleasant homecoming for Wilfred, who had lived alone in his decrepit two-room apartment, waiting for the day he would pass on peacefully, without anguish. It turned out that he did not actualize his desire. Ejiofor had returned home on a homicidal mission and waited for an auspicious moment to execute his plot.

On Wednesday, November 11, he struck in the most horrendous manner with precision; and to demonstrate his heartlessness, he chose a day of merriment, on the Family Day celebration usually held at Umuideanyi Town Hall. He waited for everyone within the vicinity to leave their homes for the cultural gathering before perpetrating the act in solitude.

With a sharpened machete, Ejiofor butchered his octogenarian father on the head and watched him die in agony, with a faint, shrill cry for help which never came. Having accomplished his mission, he dragged the body and dumped it in an abandoned pit toilet at a plantain farm within the precincts of their home, and buried it. To erase any trace of the bizarre act, he planted cocoyam atop and spread plantain leaves on the spot. Thereafter, he left to join members of his family for the Family Day celebration where he feasted to his satisfaction.

While Wilfred commenced his tortuous journey to eternity, his absence at the cultural activity on the ill-fated day aroused curiosity. Alarmed, one of his daughters contacted her brother, Chisom, who rushed home and mobilized for a search of their missing father. When he was asked about the deceased's whereabouts, Ejiofor



•The decomposing body found in the shallow grave.



•The suspect, Ejiofor

for's response portrayed him as a son from the pit of hell. Seated calmly, he said his dad had gone to visit an ophthalmologist as well as to purchase some drugs. For two days, he told the same tale until the bubble burst.

His brother, Chisom, narrated how the octogenarian's decomposing body was found. "It was on the 11th November, 2020 that my sister came to my house and informed me that papa did not attend the Family Day celebration and he has not been seen since then. She told me she had asked Ejiofor who stays with him and he said papa went out to buy drugs. I rushed home immediately and met Ejiofor who repeated the same story that papa went to see the doctor, but has not returned. Ejiofor was so indifferent, but I never suspected anything.

"We started searching for him immediately and called the eye specialist who confirmed to us that our father never came to the clinic. We went to various places, but no one saw him. We then alerted the Neighbourhood Watch and after two days, my instinct led me to conduct a thorough search within the compound and the neighbourhood.

"It was in the course of my search that I stumbled on the abandoned pit toilet and discovered that fresh sand was used to fill up the space. There were also plantain leaves scattered there while fresh cocoyam was planted on top. I got worried about the discovery and I alerted my uncles



•The late Wilfred Ogbu

and elders, all of whom rushed to our house immediately to behold the stunning discovery.

"We sensed that something was buried inside as flies swarmed the area which oozed an unpleasant smell. We now alerted members of the Neighbourhood Watch and the traditional ruler of the community. They advised that we involved the police before digging up anything."

At about 10:00a.m on Friday, November 13, the deceased's younger brother, Desmond Ogbu and his son, Chisom, reported the incident to the police, which dispatched a team of operatives led by Inspector Romeo

Awodi to the scene. The spectacle was spine-chilling as the octogenarian's body was exhumed, while his killer son, Ejiofor, watched motionless with arms akimbo.

For the police, the circumstances of the crime was not puzzling as they promptly arrested him, while evacuating Wilfred's corpse to the morgue of the General Hospital, Ogrute Enugu Ezike, where it was deposited for autopsy. In the meantime, Ejiofor is being held at the Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) of the Enugu State police command.

In an interview with Sunday Sun, a distraught son of the deceased, Chisom, further spoke on the surreal crime allegedly committed by his step brother. "On arrival of the police, we summoned courage and dug up the place only to behold the corpse of our dad with deep machete cuts on the head. Ejiofor was still watching us unperturbed while we were doing this and even when loud cries rent the air after the corpse was discovered. The police picked him immediately, handcuffed him and took him away to the station while my father's corpse was wrapped with a thick nylon and taken to the mortuary. Few hours later, the police came back and told us to open Ejiofor's room so they could pick evidence. They told us he had owned up to killing our father and also disclosed to them where he

kept the cutlass he used in committing the act".

Controversy

However, Ejiofor's motive for committing the alleged sacrilege has become a subject of debate in the community, with some blaming the act as the fallout of an unsound mind he suffered some years ago. But others believe that he was mentally stable and the crime premeditated.

Hear his kinsman, Ejike Uramma: "Ejiofor and some of his female siblings have not been happy with their father. They said the man oppressed and maltreated their mother till her death and that he was even mocking their mother with the death of their first son who was based in Abuja, for which he had vowed to get revenge. It was a carefully planned act and he bided his time to actualize the plot. He was heartless to the father because he had always nursed serious grudges against him. He was angry with the dad for being poor and making them miserable. If it was not a planned act, why did he kill, bury the father and still had the mind to attend the Family Day celebration where he ate and drank to satisfaction?"

To be sure, the controversy over his mental state would be put to rest in the course of police investigations, which, a top officer at the state police command who confirmed the incident but does not want his name mentioned, said, will soon come to an end.

Family laments

While the family mourns the brutal death of their patriarch, they are also contending with how to cope with the burial expenses and how to provide logistic support for police investigations into the crime. Chisom, the deceased's eldest surviving son is a motorbike electrician who relocated to the village from Onitsha, Anambra State, when the government banned commercial cycling in the state. There is no one else in the family capable of shouldering the financial burden or offering assistance. Their wish, in the circumstances, is to be allowed to bury the dead while the law takes its course.

"The police said we are to sponsor their investigation team from Enugu to this village. We had been summoned to Enugu on Thursday while they are also asking us to pay for the autopsy which costs thousands of naira. Now, to raise N5, 000 here is a big challenge; how do we sponsor police trip from Enugu or pay for autopsy. We are appealing to them to allow us bury my brother since they are holding the suspect. We need assistance please", Desmond Ogbu lamented.



•Wilfred Ogbu's home where he was murdered.