

He was quiet for few seconds and he confessed to me, sir, I killed my own daughter, my Jewel. It was my entire fault. She could have been alive today if I had insisted that she buckle up at the rear just like her mother and I did in the front seat. His self-confession hit me real deep beneath my cord. I barely managed to hold tears rolling down my cheek for fear that I might further break him down. I don't have a daughter but I do have sons whom, like every parent I love dearly with my whole life. I know the pain of losing a loved one; the kind of pain I felt when I lost my parents and brother; I therefore can imagine the pain of losing your cherished daughter through your own fault.

I listened captivated as he went on explaining how they set out on a journey to Ekiti from where they were billed to travel to Lagos for a Uk Visa. But every dream was cut short along this busy corridor where as they were driving at a speed he couldn't tell, there was a tyre burst and the car somersaulted severally and threw his pearl off. When the car finally came to a stop, he told me, he came out and rushed to his daughter; Pamela who had sustained severe head injuries and died immediately.

Although, he continued his journey after, but it, was without a ten-year old daughter who from our few minutes, discussion, he cherished and loved dearly. The second leg of the journey was done with him seated as a passenger as he was too heartbroken to drive. As they set out in a vehicle driven by his friend's driver, all my thoughts were on the trauma and pain and regrets he will go through for years. How does a father forgive himself for causing the death of his lovely daughter? It will take only God to heal his wounds and make him live again for his other children if there are others and other members of his family. But as I ponder on this tragedy, the question I keep asking is why do parents toy with the safety and life of their wards? Why do parents drive above the speed limit when they have precious family members with them? I say so because I know that Pamela could have been alive maybe with some bruises or fractures if only the speed at which the vehicle was going was common sense speed based on the high traffic volume, and the fact that every family member was in that vehicle? Why and why? Please forgive me because no matter the number of why and why I keep asking, nothing on earth can bring lovely ebony black Pamela back to life. I pray that other parents who read through this piece will pause and ponder on how safety conscious they truly are especially when driving with their family in the vehicle. They should equally ask themselves why they play lip-service to the use of seat belt by both front and rear seat passenger including the use of child restraints for children below twelve years.