

How I met my father lifeless

— son of policeman allegedly murdered by wife

By Onozure Dania

Precious Idehen, son of a retired Deputy Superintendent of Police, Joseph Idehen, allegedly murdered by his ex-wife, Taiwo Idehen, a Pastor with the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministry now facing trial with her three children, has told a Lagos High court sitting at Igboere, how he met his father's lifeless body, that fateful day.

The 22-year-old boy said he went to repair his phone on July 4, 2016, only to be greeted with a sober look on his sister's face on arrival. On enquiry, he was informed that his father whom he left hale and hearty, had died. His fears were confirmed when he rushed upstairs to behold the lifeless body of his father. The incident, truncated the bond he had anticipated to have with his father, having come to live with him, 11 months earlier. His father married many wives and Taiwo was one of them although they had divorced.

However, the deceased ex-wife was accused of having a hand in his death. Taiwo and her three children: Samuel, Michael and Ruth, were docked before Justice Adedayo Akintoye on charges bordering on conspiracy to murder, murder, stealing, use of false document and forgery by operatives of the Force Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Department, FCIID, Alagbon-Ikoyi, Lagos.

The Police prosecutor, Morufu Animashaun, who is the Legal Officer of the General Investigation Department of Force CIID, told the court that the defendants allegedly committed the offences at the deceased's residence located at 5, Odetola Street, off Merit Road, Alagbado, adding that Taiwo, who had divorced the deceased over 29 years ago, allegedly conspired with her three children to murder him under suspicious circumstances.

They were also alleged to have forged a death certificate from Otta General Hospital, Ogun State, which was used in conveying the deceased's corpse to Aragba in Delta State.

Animashaun, also alleged that the third defendant, Michael, fraudulently withdrew N286,000 from the deceased's bank account, adding that all the defendants fraudulently withdrew N2.1 million from the deceased's bank account.

According to the prosecutor, the offences are contrary to Sections 233, 365 (3)(d), 366 and 287 (5) of Criminal Law of Lagos State.

The arrest of the defendants was predicated on a petition dated August 2016, written to the Police by the Chambers of Milestone Partners, wherein the role played by each of the defendants leading to the death of the retired police officer was stated.

The prosecutor also told the court that upon receiving the petition, each of the defendants was invited for interrogation and that they all wrote confessional statements.

Narrating how he found his father's corpse, Precious said, "By the time I returned from where I went to repair my phone, I saw my half sister looking worried. I asked what the matter was, she murmured, 'daddy, daddy'. I ran up stairs and saw his lifeless body and started shouting for help. Tenants rushed my father to the hospital, with my sister Ruth, accompanying them".

He however, said he did not know the cause of his father's demise and could also not state the hospital he was rushed to. He said that before going out, his father had eaten *fufu* with *Ogbono* soup, prepared by the cook.

The witness also told the court that as at the time he was with his father, his half siblings, Samuel, Michael and Ruth, usually came to visit him.

Cross examination

The witness who was led in evidence by prosecuting counsel, Mr Morufu Animashaun, who is the Legal Officer of the General Investigation Department of Force CIID, Alagbon, told the court that he had not lived up to a year with his father, before he was allegedly killed.

He said that his father had seven wives and only six of them, had children for him. The last wife whom he said packed out of his father's house, didn't have any child for him.

When asked if the last wife was around when the incident happened, Precious said no, saying she had left the house then.

During cross examination by the defence counsel, Mr Kennedy Osunwa, who asked if the cook that served his father *fufu* and draw soup, was arrested, alongside the defendants, he said, he didn't know.

The defendants however, pleaded not guilty to the charges. Justice Akintoye, therefore, adjourned the case, till October 22, 2019, for continuation of trial.