

Decomposing body of pregnant woman found in her apartment

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The deceased, Rita Onyebuchi Atansi

By Evelyn Usman

Had anyone told Rita Onyebuchi Atansi, that her meticulous care at choosing Ikechukwu Atansi, as a life partner, among several other men who sought her hand in marriage, would end up in regrets, perhaps, she would have given such person a scrutinizing stare.

This is because aside being older than other suitors who came flaunting their wealth before her, she also considered him a better choice because she claimed she knew his source of income, unlike others.

With this conviction, both set out for their traditional marriage rites on January 10, 2020. She was quick at advertising her husband's good sides to those close to her.

One of such was his pampering, such that he would prepare the meal before she returned from work, as he came home before her.

But that was short-lived! This is because as you read this piece, the remains of 31-year-old pregnant Rita, lies in the morgue.

Her decomposing body was found in the pool of her blood last Thursday, March 26, 2020, inside her husband's apartment at Chimas House Ezimezi, Amawbia in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, with flies hovering all over the premises.

All fingers are pointing at her husband as the alleged culprit. Information at Crime Guard disposal had it that he was found right inside the apartment, when policemen from Central Police, Awka, who were alerted, broke into the room.

Apprehension

One of her brothers, Onyebuchi JohnPaul, who spoke on behalf of the bereaved family, explained that he and his late sister, worked with Philip Smith Security Limited, in Awka, the Anambra state capital.

Apprehension according to him, set in on March 24, 2020, when his elder sister did not show up at work, an act he described as unusual of her.

He said he attempted to reach her on her mobile telephone to ascertain why she was absent but could not as the phone rang without response.

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He said, "After close of work that day, I went to her house but it was under lock and key and her husband's car was not in the compound. I banged at the door but there was no response.

I headed home and requested for her husband number. When dialed, I discovered it was switched off”.

Tension heightens

Next day, being Wednesday, March 25,2020, Johnpaul , reported to work as usual but, again, did not see his sister.

Tension, at that time heightened . He said he dialed her number again and that as the previous time, it rang but there was no response.

He called her husband’s line but it was still switched off.

He could however not check on her that day because he said he closed late from work.

On reaching home, he informed his mother who also said she had been trying to reach her daughter and son-in-law on the phone to no avail.

The unexpected

Determined to know the exact cause for her sister’s absence from work, Johnpaul said he decided to stop by her place , on his way to work last Thursday.

But the sight that greeted him at the entrance of her building signaled unpalatable findings.

He said, “ On reaching the compound I saw policemen and a crowd gathered. When the Special Crime Unit of the Police arrived,

I was taken to my sister’s room , only to find her lifeless body in its decomposing state, in the pool of her blood. The whole place was smelling and there was blood all over the bedroom. I was too shocked to speak.

“I could not tell my mother who also came to know why her daughter wasn’t answering her calls because she is suffering from high blood pressure. I had to tell some people to take her away from the scene”.

Arrest

Explaining how the Police got wind of the happenings, spokesman for the Anambra State Police Command, SP Haruna Mohammed, said,

"On March 26, 2020, a distress call was received by the Central Police Station Awka, by 8.30 am, that an unusual odour was perceived by neighbours, from the room of one Ikechukwu Atansi.



The house the body of the deceased, Rita Onyebuchi Atansin, was found

Following the report, police patrol team led by the Divisional Police Officer, CSP Chucks Nwoke, rushed to the scene, opened the door and discovered a decomposing body of a woman who was later identified as Mrs Rita Uchechi Atansi of Enugwu-Agidi, lying lifeless in the room. After careful analysis of the scene by police detectives, marks of violence was observed on the body of the victim and blood spilled all over the room.

"Consequently, photographs of the victim, as well as the scene, were taken and the corpse removed and deposited at Amaku General hospital mortuary for autopsy after it was confirmed dead by a medical doctor.

"Surprisingly, the deceased husband, one Mr Ikechukwu Atansi, of Umudum village in Isuanochia, was right inside the room with the deceased when the door was opened and could not give a satisfactory account of what actually transpired.

Instead, the husband claimed that he was injected with a substance by unknown persons who according to him must have killed his wife.

The husband was subsequently arrested and he is assisting the Police with useful information to unravel the circumstances surrounding the incident”.

Indictment

Commissioner of Police, Anambra State Police Command, CP John Abang, directed that the case be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, SCIID for further investigation.

At the SCIID, detectives in the Homicide Department and some members of the deceased's family paid a visit to the crime scene, to examine it by using systematic search and evidence-based method, as part of their investigation.

But to the dismay of all, it was discovered that the entire apartment had been cleaned up, thereby tampering with the evidences which include blood, body fluid, fingerprints and the weapon used to hack the pregnant woman to death.

Crime Guard reliably gathered that when the suspect was arrested last Thursday, the crime scene was locked up by the police and the key handed over to the IPO from the Central Police station, Awka..

But the key was alleged to have been given to the suspect who in-turn gave it to a relative, who was alleged to have cleaned up the mess and also took the deceased's phone away from the scene.

Three persons said to have been involved in the clean-up have been subsequently arrested.

Owens up?

Sources at the Homicide department told Crime Guard that the suspect later owned up to the crime, describing his action as a mistake. He was said to have told the detectives that he did not know what came over him.

Call for justice

The bereaved family is however, insinuating that the suspect could have murdered their daughter for ritual purpose.

It also expressed joy that justice which the family was clamoring for, was on its way, following the arrest of some key persons.

A spokesman for the family, John Paul, was however quick to add that: "Action by the IPO at CPS has shown that he was trying to obstruct justice here which is against the law.

The Police IPO has violated the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria by obstructing justice and has gone against the Nigeria Police Code of Conduct. It was observed that the day the IPO at CPS Awka handed over the case files to the Criminal Investigation Department, the key of the crime scene was not handed over to the CID".

On the desired justice, he said, "It is by the grace of God that we are able to get to this stage in our quest for justice.

"We have nothing much to say but to inform that everyone involved in this case has been arrested and cases have been filed against them. I'm happy to inform you that justice has started".