

How a prank by fellow student cost UNIZIK graduate her life



By Vincent Ujumadu, Awka

For five years, Miss Ifunanya Miracle from Abia State burnt the midnight oil to better her life and that of her family by rigorously pursuing her academic programme in Quantity Surveying at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, only to lose her life after completing the course.

While studying, Ifunanya also engaged in a small business of point of sale, POS, so she could meet some of her financial demands. But on this fateful day last week, Ifunanya's life pathetically ended abruptly.

Her colleagues in the university, who described her as the quiet type, said she was the light her family was expecting to shine in their lives as they looked forward to when she would be making the required impact on them.

Although the circumstances surrounding her death were initially hazy, the Chief Safety Officer, CSO, of UNIZIK, Chief Ken Chukwurah, while speaking with Saturday Vanguard, threw more light on what happened.

According to the CSO, the deceased Ifunanya and the other lady with her at the time of the incident, were all living off-campus, adding that what led to her death was not robbery as was earlier insinuated.

Chief Chukwurah said: “All the parties concerned are students. The two ladies went together and were already doing their clearance preparatory for their graduation.

“The boy, also a student, played a prank on the girls and this incident happened at 8.20 pm on that fateful day. The boy, who was sitting with them in the Keke, cracked a joke with them in the tricycle by saying ‘what if I collect your phones as you are moving about at this late hour’?.

“Out of fear, the girls jumped out of the tricycle and one of them, Miracle, hit her head on the tarred road. Her colleague was lucky as she sustained injuries and she is still being treated. By the time they got to the hospital, Miracle’s case was serious and after battling all night, she unfortunately gave up, while her colleague is yet to be discharged”.

Chukwurah said that to show that it was not a robbery case, it was the boy who took them to the University Medical Center first, from where they were taken to Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Teaching Hospital, Amaku where Miracle eventually died.

The CSO said the boy, whose name was not given, stayed in the hospital with them till the following day, adding that his action confirmed that it was not robbery, but an expensive joke he played on the girls.

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Chukwurah said further: “The boy was sorry about what happened because he didn’t run away when the incident happened and he participated in running around all through the night. The following day, he reported himself to the police at B Division on his father’s advice. And because it is a homicide matter, the case was transferred to the State CID.

“So we made contacts and the parents of the two parties came to my office and it was then they met face to face. The relations of the deceased girl said they did not want to pursue the matter and that all they wanted was for the family of the boy to shoulder the expenses of their daughter’s burial.

“There was also a ritual the parents of the deceased said they would perform, which would cost N61,000, while the cost of the burial was put at N450,000. “They did not want to exploit the family of the boy, having understood that it was an unfortunate incident. I was even surprised that they did not begin to call an exorbitant amount of money.

“What was pathetic about the whole situation was that the deceased was the only graduate in their family who they were hoping would uplift the family from poverty.”