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Man, 30, Kills 70-Year-Old Tenant

Weekly Trust (Abuja)

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Jos

It was a shocking experience for the people of Rankyeng Gyel in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, when at about midnight of Tuesday, September 4, 30-year-old Ayuba allegedly murdered his brother's 70-year-old tenant, Baba Nash.

People in the neighbourhood claimed there was no quarrel between the two before Ayuba allegedly descended on Baba Nash and purportedly killed him. Ayuba is a brother to the owner of the house where Nash lived as a tenant.

Though Ayuba resides in his father's house about a three-minute walk to his brother's house, he is said to be a frequent visitor to his brother's house. During such visits, Ayuba on a number of occasions allegedly threatened to kill some of the tenants. But anytime he made such threats people around feel he was not serious. Baba Nash in particular was said to have always calmed down the other tenants, allaying fears that Ayuba may only disturb them but cannot harm them.

Mrs. Helen Uwa, one of the tenants at the Ayuba brother's house, said on that Tuesday night they heard a knock at Baba Nash's door and suspected it was Ayuba.

Helen said she had received threats from Ayuba. "Normally he used to knock at our own door but that day he knocked this Baba's door. I woke my husband and said 'I heard a knock at Baba's door.' After a short while, we heard the knock again. My husband guessed it was Ayuba because that is what he used to do.

"So we assumed he had started his trouble again. Every time he did that, people would say it is how he used to do, so we should not bother ourselves that he would not do anything. Even the Baba would always say I should not disturb myself, that Ayuba cannot do anything to anyone, he cannot harm anyone, he would just come here and do his work and he would go and that I should be calm."

Helen said she was surprised that on that Tuesday, Ayuba broke into Baba Nash's room.

"That day I did not know what he used to break the door, we did not hear the time he opened the door, but I think he forced the door open. It was when we came out that we saw the door opened." She said after sometime, her husband decided to open their door and confront Ayuba.

"My husband carried one stick. He was very annoyed. He said this boy has been disturbing us for a very long time, and that he was going to beat him. I said no please don't do anything to him, just chase him away because if you do anything to him now, they would say you beat their son. My husband said I should not worry he would beat him so that tomorrow he would never come again."

But she said immediately they came out, they saw Ayuba coming from the direction that the late Baba's body was later found.

"My husband asked him 'why is it that you always want to disturb people like this, why are you disturbing this old man, why are you waking him up, what do you want him to do for you?' As Ayuba saw my husband with the stick he just ran away."

Helen said all the while they thought Baba was still inside his room but they wondered why he opened the door for Ayuba when he (the late Baba) was the one who always advised them that anytime Ayuba comes like that, they should not open their doors nor come out because nobody knows his intention.

However they decided to go and check Baba in his room. "So, we went inside his room. We didn't see anybody. My husband exclaimed 'Aaah! Baba has run away.' He started shouting 'Baba, Baba, Baba!' Immediately we came out we saw our neighbours from the other house. They were the first people to see Baba's body on the ground. So our neighbour ran to the station to call the police. Baba bled so much to death, it was terrible," Helen said.

Baba was alleged to have been beaten severely with a stick by Ayuba. Asked if there was any misunderstanding between the two, the neighbours said there was nothing. The neighbours said Ayuba was always saying he would kill somebody.

Helen said, "That's what he always say, even me, if he sees me like this, he would tell me that he would kill me. He has been coming and warning me that he would kill, he must kill, he has been saying that, and he always fought everybody who comes his way."

Weekly Trust learnt that when Ayuba ran away that Tuesday, a day after the incident he was seen at a house still within the Gyel area, where he was said to have allegedly ordered a boy he met sleeping to go out if not he would kill him. It was the boy who was said to have opened the door quietly, went out of the room, and went to report to Ayuba's aged father. Ayuba was subsequently arrested by the police.

Though nobody could tell whether Ayuba was under the influence of alcohol when he killed the Baba, people who know him confirmed he drinks too much.

His mother, amidst sobs, told Weekly Trust that she was at the Vom hospital with Ayuba's elder brother who was ill when the incident happened. Asked the type of child Ayuba is, what would have made him to take the life of a fellow human being, Ayuba's mother said he was not like this when he was younger but that not long ago he started exhibiting some weird behaviours. The distraught mother said, "I spent three months with him at a psychiatric hospital last year when he started misbehaving."

She said after Ayuba was discharged, he got married and now has a child.

Weekly Trust also met the wife to Ayuba's brother who owns the house in which Baba Nash was killed but lives in Zaria. The brother's wife came to Jos for condolence after they learnt about what happened. Ayuba had been living with his brother in Zaria before he returned to Jos about three years ago. The brother's wife told Weekly Trust that throughout the period he stayed with them, Ayuba did not display any abnormal behaviour.

Ayuba, the last of the six children of his parents, does iron bending for a living and is described by many as very good at his work.

The Plateau State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Hassan Anga, who confirmed the murder incident, said an arrest has been made and that the suspect admitted committing the act. He said the case was transferred from the Bukuru Divisional Police Office to the state Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

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