

The story of domestic violence and the way I ended the one in my family

A portrait of a woman with dark skin, wearing a black hat with a small decorative element on the side. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a black top with a white floral pattern on the sleeves and a necklace with a large, ornate pendant. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Late Mrs. Osinachhi

Murdered by her husband

Late Sis Osinachi's Death

The story of domestic violence and the way I ended the
one in my family

Promise Ikpe

Domestic violence is not only from men, my uncle's wife use to beat my uncle

My uncle's wife is far younger than my uncle.

My uncle is a tall slim and weak-looking man, the last born from the family of my father, he is the son of my granny's old age, he was pampered by my granny and his siblings protected him growing up.

He never needed to fight for anything or against anything because his brothers got his back and they were 7 of them, meanwhile his wife, she is a

plump chocolate-skinned lady, who grew up in the ghettos of Aba where only the fittest survives.

She is physically built and looks very strong and agile, she is the first daughter of a polygamous home where everyone has to fight for whatsoever they'll ever have from childhood.

She started hawking in childhood in the ghettos of Aba, where she face bullying and where you have to be a bully to survive.

The poor lover man won't raise his finger against the woman he dearly loves either because he isn't used to fighting or because of his love for her, we can never truly ascertain why he isn't physically with his wife whenever she is with him.

Because he won't fight back, she took advantage of this weakness to bully him physically.

She would use his belt on him, slap him and sometimes wrestle him to the ground and give him the beating of his life even in the presence of

their children.

These kids grew up seeing their mother beat their father. They could only watch while this happens.

Neighbors would mock my uncle for being a weakling and allowing a woman to beat him like that, this made my uncle stop calling out for help whenever his wife beats him

He'll cry in secret and lie about the wounds his wife inflicted on him.

Sometimes he'll say he suffered a domestic accident that's why he sustained the injuries inflicted on him by his wife.

Too ashamed to report to anybody or confirm the news to any of his friends when they hear it as rumors and asked him, he suffered in silence, however, the rumors got stronger.

I heard it when one day, my mum called me, it was too much; she has witnessed the beating several times when my uncle and his wife came to the family house. She told me what she has been witnessing since my uncle and his wife came to stay in the family house, however, I still considered it a rumor and I told myself, any day my uncle reports his wife to me, I'll take action.

All these is happening despite my uncle being the sole bread winner of his family. The wife does nothing. She couldn't go to school, she couldn't learn sewing and she couldn't manage the business they set up for her. She sits idle at home everyday, making demands from her husband and beating him up if he couldn't meet her demand.

I thought about the actions to take. I can't instigate driving his wife away; he'll go beg her to come back.

When the marriage was new, my uncle's wife was severally accused of infidelity and my uncle drove her out but after a few weeks, he'll go bring her back.

The issue of adultery will surface again and he'll drive her out and after some weeks, he'll go and bring her back without her showing any remorse or signs of repentance

So I knew if I instigate that my Uncle drives his wife away, that he'll go bring her back and the beating will continue. Just like the infidelity

continued despite him driving her back over and over again and bringing her back before she becomes remorseful and repented.

But I can beat her on his behalf though it's taboo to beat another man's wife.

Once a woman is married in my community, it's taboo for another person to beat her up; the community women would sanction the person who beats another man's wife. It's called 'Iri Iwu'.

Once the report gets to them from the woman that was beaten, the

person who beats the woman would face the wrath of the community women.

No man would want to face the wrath of these women therefore the beating of another man's wife is a very rare occurrence in my community.

I risk being sanctioned by my community women if I beat her

However, I will rather be sanctioned than bury my young uncle when I can actually save him by beating his wife for him.

These community women haven't done anything about my uncle's wife-

beating her husband may be because the man is too ashamed to report the issue to them. The thought of this fuelled me to risk their wrath and face my uncle's wife before I lost my uncle because she was getting too violent with him.

So one day I traveled to the village and noticed my uncle was crying in secret, his wife has just dealt with him again.

The rumor I heard has just been confirmed; I heard it was a daily occurrence.

He cleaned his tears immediately he

heard my voice and tried not to give away his mood.

I noticed his mood and knew if I should engage him in a talk, he'll burst out in tears so I walked away to my dad's room while praying in my mind, and saying "God, if you want me to deal with this issue the way I have planned, let this man come report his wife to me"

After a few minutes, he came to me and reports his wife. He must have said to himself that if he doesn't report her now that he may soon be

murdered by her 'She just beat me again, she has been beating me' he said with tears rolling down to his cheek. He could no longer hold his tears.

I have never seen my Uncle cry in my entire life, it was a strange sight to me, his face looked funny and on his face, lays deep sorrow and fear for his life in his house.

It was in the afternoon, and the intensity of the sun was still strong. My blood was already boiling, whether it was the hotness of the day that was heating me up or the fact that I had just confirmed that my

Uncle's wife has the guts to beat my Uncle in our family house, I do not know.

I walked up to his wife where she was washing and asked her, 'did you beat uncle again?' She didn't reply and I repeatedly asked her

Then she said, 'and so, what would you do?' Stretching forth her face towards me and asked, 'do you want to beat me?'

In my heart, my response was, 'yes, I want to beat you?'

But not a word, came out of my mouth, however, with a slap and then

followed up with blows I answered her question.

I knew she was going to be very violent so I made sure I aimed my blows at the right places to disarm her.

It took me less than 2 minutes to beat her up and I was satisfied that I did.

Her sons were there, 4 of them; however, none of them defended their mother. They were probably tired of seeing their beloved father suffer physical abuse at the hands of their mother.

My community women didn't sanction me though the report got to them, instead, they promised to come and drive my Uncle's wife out of the community, they have been hearing about the physical abuse but because it hasn't come to them officially, they couldn't take any official step.

My uncle was so proud that day, I heard him boasting to his wife, 'you see, my brothers won't allow you to beat me and go free'

The next day, my uncle's wife ran out of the house, the fear of what the community women may do to her

made her run away.

And when some of her friends tried to raise the issue of me being sanctioned by the community women for beating up a married woman, nobody supported her and so the matter died.

When she came back with her people, she promised never to hit the man again

Till today, they quarrel, but none ever raises their hands against each other

Sometimes you end violence by being violent

Jesus at a point ended the bad habit of buying and selling in the house of God by the use of violence. Some bad habits sometimes can be corrected by the use of violence.

Some people need to taste what they are dishing out before they will understand that what they are doing is wrong and hurtful.

If in the name of marriage you beat any of my sisters, I won't drop my Bible to beat you, I'll use the Bible to beat you

And yes, I am a pastor.

If the late sis Osinachi was my sister,

the husband will die before her if he doesn't run away for his life.

I do pray for self-control but in this, I will controllably beat anyone who touches any of my relations in the name of marriage

When your relative is being physically abused in their marriage, it's you who is his/her relative that should act.

Most times they can't fight for themselves, they can't report their spouses because they'll want to protect his/her image and sometimes it's the guilt that they chose wrongly that'll disarm them

from putting up a fight. So, whether they are in support of you fighting for them or not, go and fight for them

If you don't, you'll soon be mourning their demise.