

The Pastor's Daughter

By Mabel Briggs

Dedicated to all the misunderstood kids out there

You know how they say pastors' kids are the worst, I guess they were right.

“Here lies Mary Jane Okafor, aged 19, Daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Johnson Okafor. Born August 10th 2004, Died November 1st 2023”

Mary would have preferred her tombstone to say she was someone who loved to dance or how her presence could brighten up any room, how creative she was or how she cared and loved everyone around her but maybe that was too much to ask. Her family was too ashamed to care. Her father didn't attend her burial service and Mary's mother stood in black with a veil around her and her head hung low, you couldn't even tell if she was crying or not. Her sister Evelyn was sent to a country abroad to study. They couldn't risk the second because their first daughter was a failure. Her younger brother John was left with a sitter and only a few friends were in attendance. Some weren't allowed because their parents wouldn't want them associated with her. It causes you to wonder, how did she get here 6 feet under at the age of 19?

Mary's upbringing was typical of any Christian home. She was a model child. Respectful to elders and everyone around, attended every church service and was knowledgeable about the bible. At age 11, she was once called to the principal's office with her parents for allegedly sending love letters to a boy in her class, and as a prestigious Christian school in Nigeria, it was a serious offence. She would never forget the look of disappointment on her parent's faces that day in the principal's office even though she tried to explain to them what happened.

She was in the process of reading a note that was passed to her when the teacher snatched it and read it aloud to the whole class “Mary, I think you're very beautiful and smart. I like you a lot. Do you want to be my girlfriend? Love, Henry”

“Ah ah, you've started keeping boyfriends eh at your age? Is it because you have started growing small breasts and shaking Yansh up and down? Don't worry you'll learn your lesson today stupid girl.”

Later at home, Mary was flogged till tears stopped coming out of her eyes and she got tired of begging her father to stop while her mom kept talking about how Mary wanted to be a spoilt child and embarrass the family after they tried their best to bring her up in the way of the Lord.

Even though the world felt like it would end that day for Mary, after taking a first position and winning most of the awards at the end-of-year ceremony her parents felt proud of her again and for a while, things were good.

Two years had passed and Mary had turned 13. She went next door to visit her friend Chioma. They were in the living room watching a show on TV when her mother called her to the kitchen to help with the cooking and at Chioma's request, Mary waited for her.

Not long after Chioma left, her father Mr. Peterson walked in and sat on the sofa next to Mary. They did the usual greeting "Ah ah Mary is that you, See how big you are now" he said while staring at her breasts. Mary noticed and felt uncomfortable. She adjusted her top and dragged her skirt to her knees. It wasn't the first time she had gotten stares like that from men. They would often whistle at her on the street and undress her with their eyes. She was quite beautiful and thanks to puberty she was curvy too.

"How are you and how is school?" Mr. Peterson asked her "School is fine sir, thank you." Mary replied and hoped it would end there but Mr. Peterson had other plans. He moved closer to Mary and put an arm on her shoulder. "Mary, do you know you're a fine girl? See your fine skin, you look like a grown woman, your breasts are so big" He said while touching her exposed knee and slowly moving upwards.

"Sir please stop, I don't like it" Mary pleaded and tried to distance herself from him. He ignored her and held her even closer. "You know I can make you feel like a real woman eh? Fine girl" he said while touching her protruding chest. Mary was still struggling to get out of his grasp when Mrs. Peterson walked in from the kitchen and all hell broke loose. The colour drained from Mary's face; she knew it was too late at that point.

"Mary, what are you doing? So, this is what your mother taught you eh? To seduce people's husbands? Prostitute. Today I will show you" She immediately slapped Mary.

"No ma, you don't understand, it wasn't me, please, I'm not a bad girl" Mary pleaded but they fell on deaf ears. Mr Peterson was nowhere to be found, 'coward' Mary thought. But right now, she had to worry about herself. Mrs. Peterson dragged Mary to her house and started shouting. "Everybody come and see o! Mrs. Okafor has raised a harlot." Mary's parents came out and Mrs.

Peterson told them they trained a prostitute that would try to steal her husband. She went on to insult Mary's parents and Mary begged for their understanding.

"Mommy it's not true o Mr. Peterson was touching me and I was begging him to stop" she pleaded with tears falling on her face.

"Madam, you know your husband is a womanizer, How many times have you caught him with other women? Who can say he wasn't the one touching my daughter?" Mrs. Okafor spoke.

"Is that your excuse for your daughters' actions? Look at what she's wearing. Why is all her breast outside, look at her legs, everything is exposed." Mrs. Peterson answered "I don't blame you. Like mother like daughter. I'm sha warning you. I don't want to see your daughter anywhere around my house or else!"

She turned around and left their compound. Mary looked at her parents and saw the anger and disappointment on their faces.

"Are you seeing your daughter?" Mr Okafor told her mother as he hissed and entered the house. "Mommy I swear I didn't do it, it was.." Mary didn't get to finish her sentence when her mother slapped her. It was so hard that her face immediately swelled. "Shut up stupid girl, see what you're wearing. Just bringing us embarrassment everywhere. What will people say when they hear this? You know that woman never shuts up, Don't worry, I know what I will do to you" She hissed and walked inside leaving Mary on the floor crying.

A few months after the Incident, Mr. Peterson had eloped with his mistress and Mrs. Peterson and Chioma moved away.

Mary was starting senior secondary school and her parents had enrolled her in an all-girls boarding school. She hated it at first and felt like her parents were trying to get rid of her but soon enough she made friends and school felt more bearable and at a point, she even preferred staying in school to being at home. She hated being at home mainly because of the sexual harassment she often got from men. One time, a man on the streets slapped her ass and kissed her on the cheek without her consent and even in Church a 'brother' once asked to date her and after she refused, he started spreading nasty rumours about her. Mary wished she could talk to her parents about these

experiences she had, She desperately wanted someone to tell her she's not what they say and it's not her fault these things were happening but she knew that wasn't going to happen.

Soon enough, Mary graduated from secondary school. She came in first at the end of every term, not because she was the smartest in her class but because she worked hard because that was the only time her parents looked proud of her. A few months after graduation, Mary turned 17 and a few months later, she went to the university. She had applied to the University of Lagos and she got in. It may not have been the best university around but it was far from home in Port-Harcourt and that alone was good enough for her, plus A few friends from school were attending so it was going to be fun.

In the second semester of Mary's first year, she went with some friends to the club and while they were having fun partying and drinking, one of her friends took a video of Mary and posted it on her Snapchat story of course with Mary's luck, her cousin viewed it and it didn't take long for her mother to see it too and once again Mary was scolded. Her parents went as far as telling her not to come home and this hurt Mary. At first, she felt guilt for her actions but that day, something in Mary snapped. She had had enough. All her life she lived it trying to please her parents and meet the expectations they had for her but time after time her effort only backfired. Maybe she was cursed Mary thought, but at this point, she didn't care anymore. If the world wanted to label her as a bad child then so be it.

Mary didn't go home that holiday and when the next semester came, she had turned a new leaf. "Good girl gone bad" was what her peers called her but she didn't care. She cat-walked in her new outfits that exposed more than it covered, she fixed 4-inch nails and wore the longest lashes she could find. She partied, drank and occasionally smoked weed. Despite her frivolous new lifestyle, Mary still attended classes and passed all the courses. She knew that this was the only way that her parents would pay her fees, or at least that's what she told herself. Deep down, some part of her still wanted to make her parents proud and be the daughter they had dreamed of. She only spoke to her parents when she needed money for school or her upkeep.

It was October 30th 2023 when Mary got an invite to a Halloween party hosted by the school's bad boy Ayo. He was her crush and they had been chatting for some time now so she was excited when she got an invite, 'maybe he wants to take it to the next step' she thought to herself and even though

she knew he wasn't good for her, she didn't care. "There's something about bad boys that attracts me" Mary would say to her friend Dami when she warned her about Ayo.

On October 31st 2023, Mary attended the party with her friend Dami and it was already in full swing. Music was blasting through the speakers and people were dancing to the rhythm. A few minutes after their arrival, Ayo approached Mary and Dami saw her cue to go elsewhere. She whispered to Mary "Be careful and call me if you need me". Mary and Ayo were left alone and after a little convo, the pair went to the dance floor. They danced and rocked for what felt like hours as the sexual tension between them worsened. "You're so fucking sexy" Ayo told Mary and she knew he wanted her. His erection had been pressing her backside for the last 10 minutes. "Come let's go upstairs," he told her. Mary texted Dami about her whereabouts and they both went upstairs. They entered a bedroom and Ayo locked the door behind them.

"Let me get us something to drink," said Ayo. Mary only nodded and a minute later, he came back with two cups filled with Pepsi. She took one and drank. She had been exhausted from dancing and this was what she needed. "Thank you," she told Ayo, he smiled and Mary continued, "You know I like you and I want to kiss you but we can't have sex" she told Ayo. Despite what many people thought, she was a virgin and she wanted to wait until marriage or at least till she found someone worthy.

"That's okay," Ayo said with a devious smile on his face as he closed the distance between them and pressed their lips against each other. They kissed and made their way to the bed, Ayo's hands were roaming through Mary's body, squeezing her breasts and feeling the curve of her ass. Mary enjoyed it until she felt Ayo's hands trying to unbuckle her shorts, She tried to speak and noticed her voice was low and she tried to move but she couldn't, That's when it dawned on her, He drugged her.

Mary felt Ayo removing her shorts and she tried to scream, move, plead anything, but her efforts were useless. Slowly, her vision began to fade as she felt tears drop from her eyes as she entered a deep sleep. After a few minutes Mary woke up, She looked around and noticed she was alone and naked. She tried to move and she felt sore in her private parts. She saw blood on the bedsheet and she couldn't deny it anymore, as much as she prayed and hoped that it was all a bad dream, she had to accept the reality and immediately she threw up. She felt disgusted that such a thing had happened to her. She felt empty, used, regretful and most of all, she felt shame. She quickly put

on her clothes and was about to leave the room when Ayo walked in, he looked at her, smiled and said “Who would’ve thought that the Mary Magdalene of Unilag was a virgin?” he laughed. Mary couldn’t believe he dared to laugh and make jokes to her face after what he did so she mustered up a little courage and spoke

“I wonder if you’ll laugh this much in jail, I’m reporting you to the police”

“And you think I’ll just let you do that?” He showed Mary his phone “I have your nude photos and videos from tonight. I won’t hesitate to post it” She ran out of the room and quickly made her way downstairs. She made it out of the house and started running. She wasn’t being pursued but she kept running, her eyes were crying and her mind was racing. She felt violated and she felt rage. ‘Maybe people were right about me’ she thought to herself, I’ve been nothing but a shame to my parents, maybe I should’ve never been born. With her thoughts swirling in her head, Mary ran into the road Unknowingly and all that was heard was a horn and a loud thud.

Mary had been hit by a car and she died on the spot.