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Filename:       **MICHAEL011228**  
Diarist:         Michael Wayson

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**28<sup>th</sup> Dec 2001**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2001, after being bored at home for not having anything to do, I went to V\_\_\_ Magistrate Court to attend the hearing of some cases. There were a lot of cases that were heard on that day but on average, there were more divorce cases as compared to any other cases. The reasons ranged from dishonesty of husbands, may be selling all the harvests and spend money on booze to unfaithfulness of spouses; either being caught red handed or through rumours.

Now, the divorce case that attracted my attention was about Mr. Jawadu Lobeni who owns a shop at V\_\_\_ Trading Centre who was divorcing his wife for allegedly going out with a Mr. Yusufu who once suffered from Shingles. The whole story, according to the way he explained in court was like this. At first, the man never noticed anything and they were living very happily but after staying for about 18 years while on marriage, the husband started noticing some changes in his wife like going out without permission, sometimes behaving very rudely or even sometimes being found in possession of money that the husband did not know where the money came from.

Now, this other day, the man just heard as a rumour from somebody, whom he did not mention in court, that his wife was going out with a Mr. Yusufu who works at V\_\_\_ Parish mission. After hearing this, the man said, did not have a peace of mind since he linked these rumours with the way how his wife behaved. On a certain day, when he was coming from the shop, the man found the wife with money that she tied at the tip of her *chitenje* which the man suspected of where it came from. And when he asked he where the money came from, he was convinced that the money was not hers, she was only keeping it safe for their daughter. But Mr. Jawadu said that even though he was convinced, still deep down his heart, he was suspicious. Usually, when the man went to the shop, he never went back home, at M\_\_\_, to have lunch. But on a certain day, after being told by friends that they had seen his wife in M\_\_\_ Village with a man on a bicycle, decided to follow. In fact, he said he did not know where to start, and what he did, he said he just went home to prove whether she was indeed away or not. And true to his friend's words, the wife was not at home. Now after noticing that, Mr Jawadu said, he just stayed there at home waiting for her. An hour later, the wife came carry firewood. When he asked her where she had been, the woman said that she went to fetch firewood, an answer which Mr. Jawadu knew that it was just a scapegoat. After hearing this while knowing that the wife was lying to him, Mr. Jawadu said that, he felt cheated and wanted to beat her but just reversed his mind and instead, he just slept and never went back to the shop after being disturbed in mind.

And after this incident, Mr. Jawadu never lived a normal life as he did in the past. Sometimes he said, he would sleep at his shop. What he wanted was to pay her a surprise visit may be at the middle of the night with an intention that he will catch the wife red handed with her partner but it never paid. Now, this other day, when Mr. Jawadu was about to leave for his shop, he said that he found his wife's pant and a petticoat, all stained with vaginal fluids. He said that he was surprised as to why those things were being found under the mattress and not in the wardrobe as she always do. (The things were produced in court by the man as evidence) And when he asked the wife about the things, she said that it was normal for women to produce those things, an answer which Mr. Jawadu said was very provocative because he said he was taken like a kid that he never knew anything about women. Mr. Jawadu himself said that he believed that all the things were stained after wiping the genitals after having sexual intercourse. And after that, he took the things to both counselors (*ankhoswe*) who also confirmed that the things got stained after having sexual intercourse. Then from there, Mr Jawadu summoned the wife to the court to file a divorce.

Now, after hearing all these, the magistrate, before saying judgement, asked the wife about what she felt about the husband's decision. The wife, without answering anything started weeping and was silenced by the court messenger. She then said that she was so sorry that this happened and requested the husband to forgive her. And the magistrate asked her if it was true that she had a partner, the woman refused and after further questioning, the wife accepted that, Mr Yusufu was her partner before but are no longer partners. Then the magistrate said that his duties is not to encourage divorce, no, but to reunite couples. He only felt sorry that even married people are not taking heed of the AIDS messages by continuing to have sex outside marriage which he said can not help to control the disease AIDS. And before passing judgement, he once again asked the couple about what they felt about their marriage? First to answer was the husband and he said that he can't continue sleeping together with a woman who was going out with a man who had once suffered from Shingles, which he said is associated with AIDS. And turning to the wife again, she repeated the same statement that she should be forgotten [forgiven? Her behavior forgotten?] and the magistrate said that since one spouse is no longer interested with the other, he said that there was no marriage and ordered the couple to share their belongings equally and the court messenger was sent to act as a witness. After hearing this, the wife came out of court weeping that made other women who were present at the court to laugh. After the judgement was passed, there were a lot of comments that the people made. Others said that, the wife was a prostitute despite being on marriage. She had been going out with so many men and not Mr. Yusufu only. Others said that Mr. Jawadu was stupid to divorce his wife at that time because if he feared Aids, the he already has it, so there was no point of divorcing the wife while you're already infected. And the case was the last of the day, I just left for home.

### **18<sup>th</sup> January 2002**

Timu, a veteran prostitute at V\_\_\_ trading Centre commonly known as (TIMU MPAMBA LITAKO)- Yao Phrase meaning that Timu only relies on her buttocks for daily living – has finally moved from V\_\_\_ Trading Centre to her home C\_\_\_ about 8-9 kms away from the Centre because she said that she is now grown up and just wanted to go home to retire. But according to what Antony Wile said, I learnt that she just decided to go home because men were no longer interested in her the way they used to do in the past when she was fat and attractive. Therefore after seeing that she was not making business, that's why she decided to go home. I heard all these, when I and Antony, this other day, were passing by the trading Centre when he shouted *Chemwah, nakusowatu* Yao – meaning that, Sister, longtime no see. In fact I saw the woman whom he was talking to but I did not figure out who she was and I asked him. And before he answered, he laughed and again asked me, don't you know her? I said yes. He then told me that she was TIMU. I was surprised because I last saw Timu during Cecilia's survey and she wasn't the way she looked at that time. She had slimmed completely and I then asked Antony as to why she was so scarce. Its when I learnt that she is based at her home, C\_\_\_, and said that she is married to a disabled man. But though Antony called her Sister, they are not related. And Antony further continued that, before Timu left, she had been saying, who ever drunk water from her well should know that he drunk poisoned water and that sooner or later will die. He said that she meant that he, whoever had sex with her should know that he is infected. Antony said, he came to know her very well like the way he did during the time when he came from South Africa with his friend Likagwa. Likagwa was the one who was going out with her, and that's why they knew each other.

### **18<sup>th</sup> January 2001**

Supporting to the story above is about a Mr. Mofolo who ran away from his wife because she was coughing a lot and had severe Malaria only to come back after the wife had recovered and gained weight. According to my Aunt who was narrating the story said that when the man came from M\_\_\_ where he stayed for a year, he found his wife sick. And during the short time that he stayed at the wife's home, she said the husband even requested the wife to sleep separately lest he be infected with the cough. And after seeing that the illness showed no progress, the man just decided to run away and went to N\_\_\_ Bay where he stayed for a long time. As soon as he left, his relatives came to collect his clothes at the wife's home and it was rumoured that by the time when the husband was leaving, he left a message to his relatives to go and collect the clothes. The wife's mother struggled to look after her as she did not have enough resources such

as money but due to God's grace, the woman felt better and finally recovered. After the recovery, she borrowed money from her sister and started doing business of baking doughnuts and the business was very successful and within a short time, the woman gained weight and her body was normal. It is rumoured that the man heard that his wife was okay and was doing business. The man then came and apologized to the wife that he was not coming because of how lousy he was with his new job. It is after the wife accepted the husband's apology that she fell at loggerheads with her mother who said that she was stupid to accept the man back who was spreading the news that she was to die of Aids. But still the daughter did not change her mind but continue living with her husband. My Aunt said she heard all these after seeing the husband at a funeral of the wife's relative and she was surprised since she said she was also among the people who heard that the man had run away because the wife was to die of Aids.

### **21<sup>st</sup> January 2002**

A certain woman in C\_\_\_, Mrs. Kennedy, had been saying that people were saying that the death of her husband was due to Aids. The husband passed away in 1994, but the woman said that she was surprised that if the husband died of Aids, why then was she not developing the Aids signs. I learnt about this story from my friend Shawn Lemson who he said had been hearing her talk about that with his Aunt, Mrs. Makwenda. He said that since the death of her husband, the woman had never got married again and was only running a minibus that her husband left. After selling the minibus, the woman started going to South Africa where she bought things that she sold in Malawi. And when she started losing weight, people thought that it was because she was not used to the business that involved a lot of concentration. But later, she started coughing and has been admitted at N\_\_\_ hospital after being found with TB. And according to Shawn Lemson, he said, he did not believe that a woman would stay for about 6-7 years without getting married, he further said that, may be men were scared about the husband's death and now that she has been diagnosed with TB.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> January 2002.**

On 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2002 when I was leaving home to C\_\_\_ to start Schooling, I learnt that, from the conversation I heard in the minibus, that a certain man, carpenter by profession has poisoned himself by drinking tea pesticide Termic after hearing that his partner, whom he has been going out with for a long time has died of Pnuemonia, and that his health was also deteriorating. I heard about this story when the mini bus I boarded in arrived N\_\_\_ boma. A certain man boarded unto the bus and exchanged greetings with a man who sat next to me. They then asked each other how their families were. In fact it was during that conversation that I learnt that the man who sat next to me was also from N\_\_\_ boma and from the same village with the man only that he was based at M\_\_\_ for business.

Now, the man who boarded the bus at N\_\_\_ said that he was going to A\_\_\_. He further said that he could have gone much earlier but was busy looking for transport (a car) for hire to take the carpenter to the hospital after poisoning himself because he was getting sick now and again and that his long time partner had passed away of Pnuemonia after a long illness. He said, that partner was the one that has been causing confusion in the carpenter's marriage, and the man next to me agreed showing that he was aware of the carpenters background. But what surprised people most was the response that the man next to us gave. He asked the man why he bothered to look for transport to take a man who was tired with life, the man who wanted to kill himself deliberately? He continued by saying that by looking [for] a car to take him to the hospital, it means that he did things against the carpenters will, and he could if the person gets better, he will sue him for not letting him die. When the people heard that, they, instead of feeling ashamed, started to laugh and even I myself, I did not except a person to answer in the way he did after hearing that sad story. Then after having joked the way he did, he then [became] serious [illegible] [he] said it is bad that a lot of people are killing themselves because of suspecting that they have Aids which he said is very bad. He further said that God has a purpose for every thing, therefore its not good to kill oneself.

**19<sup>th</sup> February '02**

This other day, when we sat outside our lecture theatre hall, Julius Redson, a new friend that I have just made at school asked me a question; Michael do you know that Aids has come to stay? Before I answered, [I] also asked him as to why he asked me that question. In his response, he then told me that, since he arrived at the school, all the girls that he see look very beautiful and that these days, there are more beautiful girls than it was in the past. So, I asked him that why does he link beautiful girls with Aids? He then said that these girls are like bait, just the same way a fisherman does when he want to hook fish. He first of all puts bait at his hook so that fish should be attracted with the bait without knowing that it will be hooked. So he said these girls these days are like bait so that when a man gets attracted, he is in for Aids. And he further said that to a normal man who is reproductively health, its not possible to abstain from sex, all what the government should intensify is the use of condoms.

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2002**

And a story that also caught my interest is the one that I heard on a radio about a man in M\_\_\_ who has vowed to go for prostitutes for sexual partnership apart from his wife. He said its good to go for prostitutes because he said with them, its obviously known that they have Aids and when you want to have sex with them, you can not risk to have sex with them plain without using condoms thereby reducing the rate of transmission. But if you think of going out with a woman like school girls or married women, you can be fooled that they are free from diseases and get attempted [tempted] to have sex with them without putting on a condom thereby risking yourself to HIV/Aids. And the comments that Makeba made whom I was together with when we were hearing the news said, the man's decision was right because he said with prostitutes, you can not even attempt to have a deep kiss with her. When you want to have sex with her, you can just go straight to a condom without doing any holding and hugging.

**FACTS/POINTS**

-Malawi Parliament is to discuss a bill whereby prostitutes will be prisoned for 14 years if found in the streets during the night. In my village, three people have died of Aids, two of them men and all of them were based in M\_\_\_ and one is a woman.