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My Voice against Violence: Unfolding Realities of Change And Courage

Violence, the act of causing physical harm or damage to a person or their belongings. Violence can as well be psychological; the whispers of mockery, derived from envy and self-hatred, taunts and insults that deal more damage than a knife ever could, or even something as little as a word spoken with a paying much mind to it.

It's things like those that break a soul, that ruin the lives of many. For my Aunt, Ranti, it wasn't just taunts and mockery, not just jabs at her self esteem; it was something more unexpected, yet even more cruel.

I had heard the story from my mother, when we last visited Aunt Ranti. My aunt was about 14 years old ^{at the time}, an illiterate girl hawking banana and plantain on the streets of Lagos. Her youngest brother, my uncle, had just received admission to primary school with the money she earned from hawking. Such was the case of my mother as well, and two sisters would have been as thick as thieves if they weren't so different in opinions.

Aunt Ranti used to hawk in the evenings, strategically near bars and clubs. Nothing about those places felt right to my mother, so she didn't want to go there. Aunt Ranti would greet each customer of the clubs as if they were her own customers, and eventually had people not only buying from her, but also giving her gifts in the form of sweets or spare change.

One day, she met a rich young man who called himself "Maestro", who gave her a hefty sum of \$3000 ~~notes~~ in 100-dollar bill notes without making a single purchase. It was the first of many gifts from Maestro, who in turn only asked to hold his hand.

My mother scorned the idea, understandably so, but Aunt Ranti wasn't one to listen. By the time Maestro started asking for more than just holding her hand, my aunt couldn't refute him. Conscience kills, after all.

Eventually, my aunt became pregnant, and Maestro ran off like a thief in the

- night, leaving her with a pregnancy no one had wished for.

The trust she had placed in Maestro was traded with an unsheathed dagger, sharp and poisoned with lies and deceit. The rumors began to roam of aunty Ranti's alleged promiscuity, at such a young age at that. No one wanted to buy banana from a pregnant minor, fearing for their own reputation and appearance; and aunty Ranti became all but a stronger person from the experience, now quiet and hollow, weeping through the night for a mistake caused by the cruelty of another.

The sexual grooming my aunty faced is now more common than ever before, breeding into a new form called "E-grooming", where an older individual pretends to be younger to prey on minors with the intent of sexually exploiting them.

It's high-time to put a stop it, to nip it in the bud before it ever blossoms.

The generation we live in is as dangerous as it is innovative, which is why we must stand together, as one; with voices so loud that we're bound to make a change. My aunt and my mother were divided because of their differences, but with tolerance and patience, anything is possible.

So let us make that change, and let us do so now. With all the courage in our hearts.

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My Voice Against Violence: Unfolding Realities of Change And Courage

Violence, the act of harming or causing damage to a person or their belongings intentionally. Quite frankly, violence is a common occurrence despite its awful nature. It happens anywhere and everywhere; in school, in offices, at home, in public, etc. Violence comes in different shapes and sizes, in different, more horrific forms.

A type of violence, common to youth is called "physical violence", mainly categorized into "Bullying" or "Domestic abuse". In adults, sexual

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