MY BIO IS A GREAT WEIGHT OFF MY SHOULDERS

Tracing my path from

heartbreak to daybreak

I CAN REPORT ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THIS NEW YEAR: the book I’ve been

promising is finally out. My biography is mostly about my personal journey from

childhood to when I found out I was HIV-infected.

I vowed to have this book out after I was involved in a car accident. Were it not

for God’s grace, I would be a goner and my memory faded from most people. Isn’t

that what happens after most burials? As they say, life goes on.

After the accident, I realised I was taking too much for granted. I refocused on

accomplishing the items on my to-do lists, which stretched for as long as I could

remember: one of them was penning my bio.

**The other side of Asunta**

I had another reason to have this book out. People associate me with Aids. Most

times, my name is mentioned in the same breath with the word “Aids”. I want to let

people know – more so my kids – that Aids just gatecrashed later in life. I want them

to know that their mother was born like other children and brought up in the village.

I actually had a “normal” childhood.

I want folks to know the other side of Asunta. That I was your typical adolescent.

Never mind that this is where things started happening. I had attended very strict

schools and didn’t know what to do with all the freedom in college.

In the city, nobody cared what I did or didn’t do outside class. And there was peer

pressure. I wanted to fit in the “college girl class”, which dictated that I drop my

country bumpkin mentality and adapt to certain lifestyles.

**Sex and life education**

I can’t say I wasn’t cautioned by my parents; they always told me to be careful

with men, that men are “not good”. But they failed to tell me that my George – the

boyfriend who infected me – would approach me differently. I felt lost.

For the first time, someone told me I was beautiful. I didn’t care whether this was

true or not; I just wanted to hear it over and over again. George appreciated me; all I

had known before were reprimands and criticism. Before long, he was saying how he

longed for me to complete college so we could settle down. He talked about a good

house and having as many children as we could support: that was music to my ears.

With all these promises, everything inside me melted. I forgot about my parents’

caution. Obviously, I thought, they had not referred to this kind man.

George was a good man. He was different. For starters, he didn’t look sick. He

was handsome and had a car and money. He had everything a woman would want

in a man. The only hitch – which I can came to know about after the horse had

bolted – was that he was HIV-positive.

**This far God has brought me**

In the book, I have detailed my post-traumatic experience. I want to clarify here

that I have no hard feelings against anyone; I’ve forgiven and moved on. But I have

to be truthful because that’s the meaning of this whole thing.

What I didn’t tell the publisher was that when I was given the final copy to proofread

and approve, I broke down and cried many times. I cried because I realised

how far I’ve come, in fact, how far God has brought me. I’m human, and there were

times I took offence and wanted to confront some people and ask them why they

mistreated me this way. Why they mistreated Peter when I was on my deathbed

and weighing about 35 kilogrammes. Why?

I felt like I wanted to turn back the hands of time and get to the bottom of some

issues. Then I realised that, at times, it’s easy to drown when the only thing you’re

trying to do is get to the bottom of things. So I let bygones be bygones.

This book is another achievement. I feel at peace that finally this weight is off my

chest. I appreciate those who have been pushing and asking me when the book will

be out. I share with you the pride and the joy.

The book is titled *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* and is now on sale.

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This is the diary of Asunta Wagura, a mother-of-three who tested HIV-positive

23 years ago. She is the executive director of the Kenya Network of Women

with Aids (KENWA). Email: asuntawagura@hotmail.com