

In Defense of The Immigrant's Wife

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One of the prevalent problems in most third world countries and in fact, all the developing economies of the world is unemployment. Young men and women who should be earning a living cannot secure employment, not for lack of requisite skill, educational or professional qualification but because their economies cannot afford them a job that will put a roof on their heads, food on their tables and even the cheapest clothes on their bodies. Those who are lucky to get a job cannot earn enough to cater for their basic needs. It is only few well connected individuals that get the scarcely available good jobs. This problem propels a lot of people within the working class to seek a greener pastures in the more developed countries, hence an inevitable separation from their immediate and extended family and their culture.

At the receiving end of all these is the immigrant's wife who of necessity will have to trade the consortium of her husband for a better living and the children most especially the younger ones who sacrifice the fatherly care for an opportunity to have a better education and decent living status.

Few years after, the honey will probably start dripping gradually and there will be enough to pay the children school fees and the house rent, life is becoming better for her and the children, the immigrant's wife can now afford some of the fineries she could not dare to price in the yester years. A new car is purchased and a piece of land acquired for their personal building project. If she is into trading, her business starts picking up, thanks to her husband's generosity and if she has a job, her employer, colleagues and clients will find working with her more pleasant. She is no more the touchy and irritable worker. Life becomes seemly rosy and beautiful.

As she migrates from poverty to affluence, her society counts her gains but she is the only one who cares enough to count her losses. Her first loss is the physical intimacy with her husband. Every night, she craves for the touch of a man, her husband, an immigrant millions of miles away, she longs to satisfy a need only her husband should meet, a need his daily calls, gifts

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and promises cannot satisfy. With most of her material needs met she lives with this recurring longing, suffering in silence.

The second problem the immigrant's wife is faced with is that of keeping other men off her matrimonial bed. Men in the neighborhood, her boss, colleagues and even her husband friends are all eyeing her, they know her Husband is not around and that she is sex starved. They mount pressure on her to let down her defenses. She is always engaged in a physical and emotional struggle, fighting temptations. If she wins, her husband will reward her with suspicion and accusation of infidelity. If she loses, she will not only be compelled to put up with is accusations but with a conscience that will forever prick her.

As if this is not enough, her husband's family engages are in a tug of war over her husband's newly found fortunes, her mother-in-law accuses her of bewitching their son the brother-in law accuses her of infidelity while her sisters-in-law launch physical and verbal assault at her. Most wives of immigrants have lost their husband to this problem. The husband buys the story of his family members and abandons his wife and children or his wife alone while the children start living with his relatives who will now be the sole beneficiaries of the immigrant's foreign currencies sent for the maintenance of his children.

Even if the immigrant's wife is fortunate to have more enlightened and accommodating family as in-laws, she has to contend with the problem of false accusation from the friends and Acquaintances of her husband, who assumes the role of un appointed detectives monitoring every move of the immigrant's wife, a lift by a colleague, a visit by an unknown male relative, or even other friends of the husband will be reported with exaggerated details.

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This is all in a bid to win the favour of the husband. The Husband who probably has been cheating on her wife finds it difficult to trust a woman she knows better than any other person, He buys the information hook, line, and sinker. The result is the tearing-apart of a family in a quest for a better standard of living.

Apart from these problems, the immigrant's wife is faced with challenges of bringing up the children alone, what should be the duty of two people becomes a burden on one. The situation

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is even worse where the Husband deserts his family or fails to communicate regularly, the emotional devastation weakens a woman and the children are left to bear the brunt of their father's betrayal and the emotional drippings of anguish and depression from the leaks in their mother's broken heart.

The final stroke that breaks the camel back, the Immigrant's wife may finally lose her married status to another woman abroad. She could be a foreigner whose citizenship status could earn her Husband a green card or citizenship or a woman of the same nationality with whom whose influence could secure the Immigrant's stay abroad. The Husband starts a new family abroad and neglects his wife and children at home or where he is 'kind' enough to keep maintaining his family, the wife's hope of ever seeing the white man's land and living there with her family has been dashed and she becomes her Husband's Mistress whom he sneaks in to cool-off with during his pretentious visit to the country on business or holiday.

The Luckier Legal Immigrant's wife who has been able to wade through this problem or whose Spouses are responsible enough to keep it home together against all odds

is left at the mercy of the foreign country's consulate in her home country, even where all requisite papers have been signed and sent, they always have 'readymade' excuses for not granting such visa applications { a good immigrant lawyer may be helpful in this regard}. Some actually give up the idea of joining their spouses abroad after they must have had series of unsuccessful visa interviews while the wives of illegal Immigrants either join their Husband illegally or make do with the once in ages visit of the Husband until the marriage goes into extinction.

Are we then saying that all Immigrant Husband should give up the quest and board a plane back home? No, but most of these problem can be avoided if an Immigrant Husband makes a conscious effort to keep his home by making sure that nobody, not even his mother comes between him and his immediate family, he needs to trust her wife absolutely and just like the saying that in a marriage the Husband should be blind while the wife should be deaf, there is an additional need for an Immigrant Husband to be deaf since his sight may not be of any use considering the distance, if he wants to keep his home intact. Moreover there is a need to maintain a close touch with his family most especially the wife, this will help her remain resolute in keeping herself for her Husband. Whenever he has the opportunity to travel back home, he should endeavour to spend a quality time with his immediate family and renew the bond between himself and his wife. He also must not relent in his effort to move his family over to his new domicile or come back to establish a business in his country, after all, There is no place like home.

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The questions on my mind is that who can we blame for all these? Is it the young married man who sought greener pastures abroad? or his wife who wanted a better life for her family? Or the developing economy of their home country? Or the US government whose immigration policies do not favour either individual or family immigration? Do men whose wives are immigrant suffer same fate?

See yah next month !