# You can't be Ugandan and also live in fear

The problem with living in fear is that you do not really live; you hold back, miss out on life's joys, and stop yourself from truly experiencing anything.



**Just Saying** *with* **Janet Napio**

I must admit that the circumstances surrounding the death of Uganda Christian University Director of Students Affairs Pamela Tumwebaze got me a bit afraid and jumpy. The day the news broke, I checked the windows and doors three times just to make sure. Then checked under all the beds and behind curtains and any probable hiding place to make sure no evil was hiding in the shadows. Her story was chilling to say the least. It could have been any one of us. And many of us are not even half as nice as the deceased was if we are to go by the tributes from her friends and family.

The thing is, not even the news of the apprehension of her killer a few days later makes it lighter. In fact, it just brings a sudden dampening finality to it all. He was caught, he confessed, but she is still gone. It cannot be undone.

In the movies, especially fantasy movies, a loved character could be brought back to life by some magic charm that undoes the evil that brought about the death. Because '*star tafa*'.

Remember the time when famous, loved celebrities would die and some fans, rather than accept their demise would insist that the celebrity in question had decided to escape public life by faking his death. There were imagined sightings of people such as Michael Jackson and Tupac Shakur. Did you ever hear of those stories? Well, if only.

The front page newspaper photo of Pamela's children looking into her grave was a painful sight. How do you comfort a 13 and nine-year-old who just lost their mum, who most probably saw her lifeless body in the bedroom on the cold night she was murdered? How?

When such things happen, it is easy to live in fear and paranoia wondering which one of the people around you has the highest potential to end your life.

The problem with living in fear is that you do not really live at all. Let us say you give in to fear's bidding. You will probably not hire house help, in fact shamba boys will be an abomination. Why, because who knows when they will decide to sneak into your bedroom and strangle you to death.

You will not drive a car lest it kills you in a grisly accident, you will not walk on the roads lest you fall in an uncovered manhole, let alone cross it, lest a red eyed juvenile boda boda rider knocks you down or grabs your bag and God forbid, your life. You will not eat vegetables from the market because you might ingest toxic pesticides.

If you fall in love, your lover's father might beat you to death when he catches you delivering Valentine's Day flowers. If you marry, the woman might cheat on you with someone half your age and net worth and height.

You will not have children, lest you die in the labour ward because there are no medics or because you might bleed out on the operating table or because the surgeon might be a high level illuminati priest who wants to drink you and your baby's blood. Or after a DNA test, it might turn out that the children were never yours.

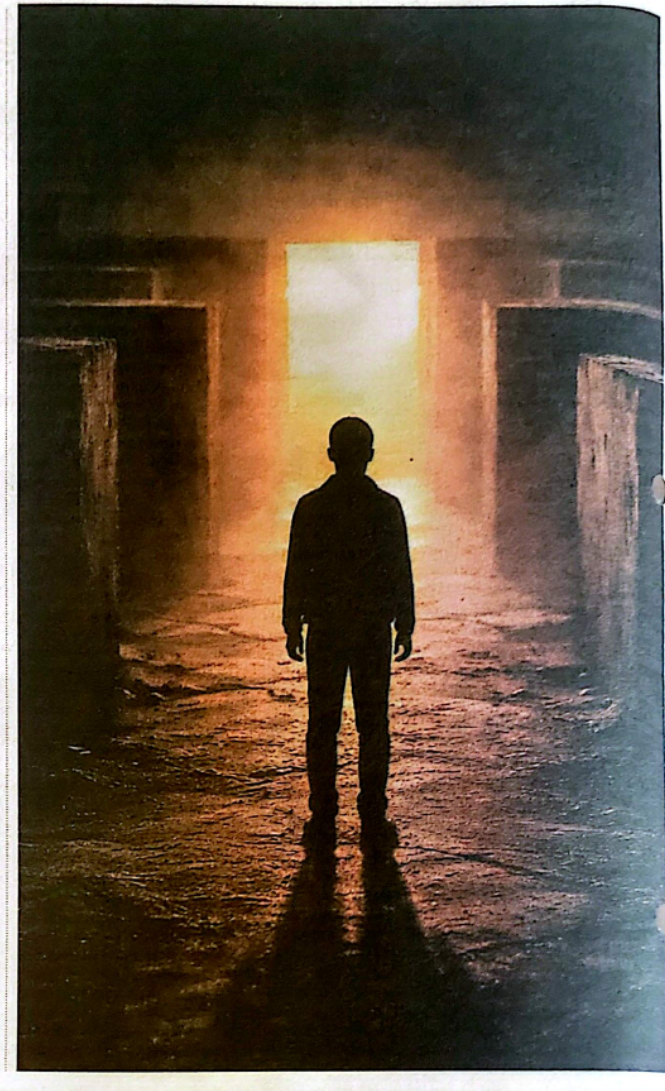
If you give birth successfully, the children might bankrupt you with their school fees demands and endless, ridiculous requirements. If they grow up, they might kill you just so they can take over your land and other property.

You will not save, because the institution you save with might steal all your hard-earned cash.

You would never participate in politics because your constituents might stab you in the back by voting for your opponent, even after you have supported their children's education by paying school fees and providing bursaries, ensured their homes are well lit by installing a power transformer, kept their communities clean by providing trucks to collect their smelly garbage, and bought tractors to repair their roads. You might go all out and give your very best, yet still suffer unrequited political love, so fear says no to politics.

Basically, you will do nothing and be nothing. Rest in peace Pamela. May God comfort your little ones. For the rest of us, Aluta Continua. We refuse to live in fear.

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FREE CHILDREN'S