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**Interview with Nigisti and Alam Khsay (Friends of Lucia from Sudan days)**

Lina: What do you remember about my mother? Tell me something.

Nigisti: Your mother has many friends in the Sudan. The story you heard about is of how she was almost killed. This is the story of the Oromo woman in Damazine who needed someone to bail her and it was my mother took up the task andwent to Ethiopia and now her case up and judge wanted her to come back. He mother with his son to bring her. Lucia crossed to Assosa (Ethiopia) and one woman said that Lucia was a spy for EPLF and the authorities arrested her and was condemned to death.

She had houses in Damazin Sudan, where she hosted Oromo and other fighters from the field. The Sudanese army heard of this story and demanded that she be returned because at that time she was a Sudanese national. Lucia did not retell what they did to her. She forgave the Oromo woman.

To us all if we were sent to jail, she would bail us, telling the judge that they are sisters or a brother.

Nigisiti: Lucia **is a mother to us not a friend,** adena Lucia, but we called her aunti (**ammo**i or **hatinei**)

To her we were her brother’s or sister’s son or daughter. She used to have a friend who had twins, but could not feed them, she was going to kill burn them. Word reached mother, she ran to take them and at that time they were forty days old. The twins grow up with mother until they got married. Ammoi raised kids did not care from where they came from, Tigrai or Sudanese or any other place. She was for all.

Lina: what did it all mean for her to do all of the above good deeds? Was that being naïve?

Alam: These is said often by her family, but we do not complain of these people there. Lucia does not want us to complain in front of the kids she raised, she does not like it.

She does not even discriminate about religious differences or nationalities

Alam: Once the police came around and collected all of the Eritrean kids to send them to the refugee camp. Goffa (collecting) kids, Lucia would challenge the police that they were picking the wrong kids. She would go to the police station and called someone to tell them that they picked the wrong women and children. She knew a colonel there who helped her.

Alam: Nigisti lived for 20 years under Lucia’s roof. Lucia worked as a man, Mohamed wald, like a man

Judges asked me to whom the house belongs to; She replied that it belonged to the two kids. Who is responsible now, now Maakele represent her.

She was kicked out of the court could not be a witness, she made a mistake. She should have said that her children are the inheritors

Lina: How was your life then in the Sudan?

Alam and Nigisti: Ala hawa, free. We were untied and held a tight circle through our church and **sheikh farah**. We share festivals together with the Muslims

Lina: How different were you from the Sudanese?

ALam: we were good, we were then refugees and they did acknowledge that and they got us refugee identity.

Your cousin Hanisu was married to Tesfaalem in Lucia’s house and they got their travelling papers to leave the Sudan.

Nigisti recounts that Tesfaalem (Lina’s cousin) asked Nigisti at the funeral what was her connection with Lucia? She replied to him that she is her mother, aunt and friend, she died as a saint, and she died an angel’s death. She died but suffered a lot.

Nigisti said to him that Lucia had arranged his marriage three times and now why do you lie and not recognize the good she did to you?

Tesfaalem asked Nigisti what exactly did she do to her sister’s family? Instead, she helped those Eritrean refugees more than her people.

Nigisti: I did not see anything bad

that Lucia did to you, except good. I told him to get out of the house, because he was talking bad about Lucia who did him good. Tesfaalem said that he knows that Lucia had suffered a lot. Nigisti adds that she contradicted him and said that Lucia died a peaceful death. But she defied Tesfalaem and his lies.

Lina: These are sidra beit, or not??

Nigisti: Lucia spoilt him since he was the only son to his mother Zenebesh. They told me bad news, but she replied it is not only for me but all those people who were eating there.

Maakele: replied that he was the one to drive up to their village AderAda and supply them with monthly goods.

Lina: The bad is that all of her relatives ate and lived off her generosity

Nigisti: Hanisu and her sister came her to threaten Lina and Andrea using a retired colonel (tagalai). Since these two children of Lucia are foreigners, the house should not belong to these two kids the colonel had said to them, that they should leave the house.

This talk story did anger and upset her brother Berhane, who said that the rights to their mother’s property, are for her children. Even the husband of Lina has rights over the house.

Lina: Let me tell you my visit to uncle Gezai. I went to visit him on one of my visits to Asmara, but his daughter kicked me, saying that she dose not want me there, but my uncle asked me to come in and see him.

Nigisti: After the funeral we sat in a corner we got scared but Berhane saw us going away. He stopped us and insisted that we stay and have food and coffee. We were fearful of the Lucia’s relatives. The Sudanese friends were told to get out of the house by Tesfalem. But Berhane refused that and asked them to stay.

The **genseb** was Lucia’s so we stayed. Tesfaalem and his sisters did not want anyone around. Hanisu used to send money fifty for mother and fifty for the mortgage. So she claimed share in the house. Lies and lies

Like the uncomfortable feeling that ETHIOPIA MIGHT FEEL NOW, I want to say something. Berhane told the colonel I know who you are and will report you to the police.

Berhane adds, Ahwat addai - why do you Tesfalaem send them away??

Berhane told the colonel that he is fake; he is not martyr of the country.

Maakele: Money used to come for Zenebesh’s and for her Hanisu’s bank. Maakele used to deliver it and deposit in the back, he kept all the receipts. No money was deposited for Lucia nor for her house, not a penny Every moth he did so.

Hanisu did not trust her brother. Maakele tells the story of the money/deposit into accounts, since mother did not go to the bank, Money of Hanisu was deposited according to her wishes and Makele kept the receipts in the name of her husband Berhane.

Nigisti: One day she came to visit her, Elsa and her daughter. Nigisti”

told her I heard Lucia say “my daughter” because she raised you but we never heard that she gave birth to you. You got pregnant and left home; she was kicked out of the house by Berhane. Married and went to Saudia. Magda asked Nigisti to stop the conversation. She told Nigisti what we (L&A) did to you. Nigisti informs her that she knows that Lucia did not give birth to you. You destroyed yourself; you became pregnant and kicked her out of the house.

Her daughter told her she has no history. You are a loser left with nothing.

Maakele tells the story of my first day arrival for the funeral, half-hour I was asked to sell the house. Shocked I told Hanisu to stop; I came first to perform the funeral.

I asked Hanisu and sister why this house? Why not give your brother your house??  
He repeats the colonel’s story trying to disturb you, confront you with issues.

Nigsiti: When Lucia came back, she told them that she sold her house in Sudan and got gold. She wanted to give it to her son’s marriage. What you ate in this house only God knows; you ate more than all others from Lucia. She came from Sudan with gold.

Tesfalem asks what did Lucia loose. Nigisti replied only God knows. You will get it in heaven.

Maakle said that the family lost since the funeral and the mess that ensued. No money is forthcoming nowadays from Lina. Whoever takes other’s money will not succeed in life.

Nigisti we heard from her but did not see it. We have the receipt. We knew of it, but who knows.

All that we are talking about, about her relatives she would say never mind. She is blessed and will see no evil.

**She was our mother, always there when needed.**

Ethiopia chips in saying that Elsa has no zega with us. Even Zenebesh used to say that why are we concerned about Elsa SHE IS Not RELATIVE, WE HAVE NO ZEGA WITH US.