

Sidney: I was raised a girl, but I'm a man

By Standard reporter



Sidney remembers that night in 2001 when neighbours in Western Kenya viciously attacked him.

Sidney was born with both sex organs but his parents chose to name and socialize him as a girl. Sidney has striking female facial features, but that is where it ends. Everything else about him says he is a man.

The girlish face masks the thread of pain and torment he has endured.

He has had a stormy relationship with his parents and family, has attempted suicide and is now trying to live a normal life as a young man. It has not been easy.

Sidney was born August 1990 in Mumias. He knew he was different because of the way he interacted with other children.

“I was raised a girl, and had to wear skirts which I really hated. My mother would scold and beat me every time I refused to wear skirts. I started wearing shorts and never looked back,” he told The Standard on Sunday in an exclusive interview in Nairobi.

His condition was a constant source of conflict in their rural home. Sidney acknowledges he was treated different by his parents. “My father worked in Nairobi so I did not have a close relationship with him. My mother vented her anger on me and I rebelled as I did not want to be raised a girl.”

Sidney recalls he was not allowed to interact with other village children. He would head straight from school to the house, do his homework and house chores and would rarely be allowed to play outside.

But he found his boyhood in school. He loved playing and kicking a football despite being called Beatrice, the name he was given by his parents. He hated the name.

“I knew I was very different when I went through puberty. At thirteen, I started developing this unusual attraction to my Kiswahili teacher. I would tell her how much I loved her and wanted to be with her,” he says. The world around him looked very strange and was evolving in a way he could not understand. Sidney’s biggest problem was that he had no one to share his experience with.

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