



I was born in Nigeria and my parents died when I was very young. I was raised by my mother's friend Mrs. Thomas but she couldn't afford to look after my little brother as well. We were separated, I never saw him again.



Mrs. Thomas was a woman with good values. I wanted to please her. I worked hard and passed all my exams at a university in Lagos. Then, when I was 20, I fell in love with Adam. He asked me to marry him.

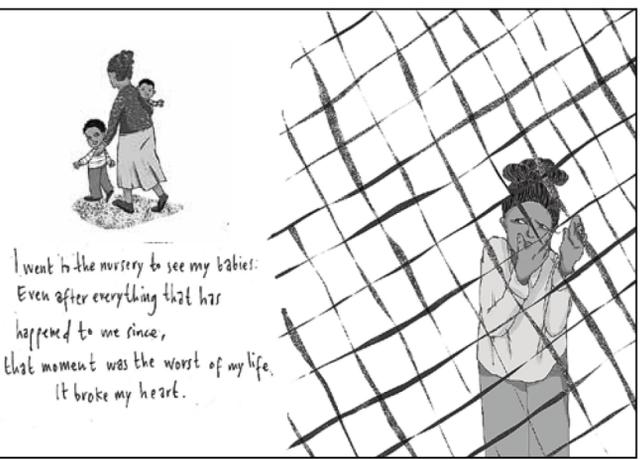
Oh Adam! You are a fine gentleman. You just take good care of her... You hear me? She is so precious.

I promise I will, Ma'am.



Adam worked in Europe, so I stayed with Mrs. Thomas. Soon after I had our second son, Mrs. Thomas died, so I moved in with Adam's mother and sister. They treated me very badly. One night they lost their temper and beat me. They threw me out of their house, but kept the children. They said they were Adam's - not mine.

We'll kill you if we ever see you again. You hear us?!



I went to the nursery to see my babies. Even after everything that has happened to me since, that moment was the worst of my life. It broke my heart.



I worked in a cafe in Lagos. An older woman, Mary, took an interest in me, and seemed very kind.

After my children were taken I felt so alone that I told her everything, my whole story.

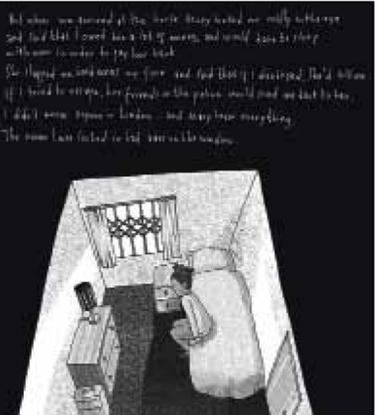
You poor child! That's terrible. Let me think how I can help you.



Mary persuaded me to work for her in London, as a nanny. She promised that after a few years I would have earned enough to get my babies returned, and start a new life. She arranged everything for me and one morning I stepped onto a flight to London.



Mary met me at the airport and took my passport for safe keeping. I was so excited to see the grand buildings of London through the window of the car. I'd never been out of my country and had never dreamed of seeing England. I was beginning my new life.



But when we returned at the night they had no money to pay me and I had to go to the police. I was so angry, but I didn't know what to do. I didn't know anyone in London... and Mary had everything. The room had locked to not let me see my babies.



Later that day Mary brought a man to my room.

You need to be good to him, Abide. David is a regular customer.

I will not do anything with this man. I will not do it.



Bitch, I'm paying a lot of money for this! I didn't come here to listen to you whining. Now turn over and shut up.

Get off me! Let me go!

You need to stop resisting or this will hurt! You're making it harder for yourself!

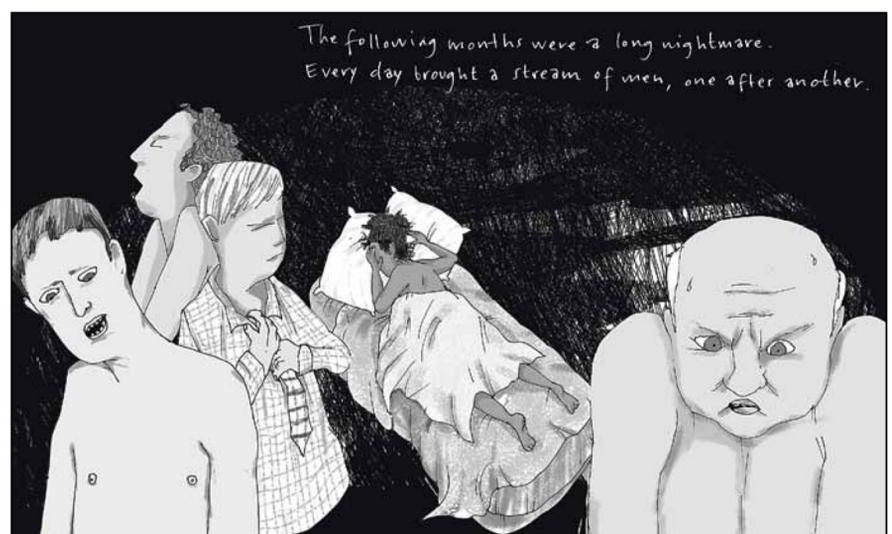


That man... he abused me.

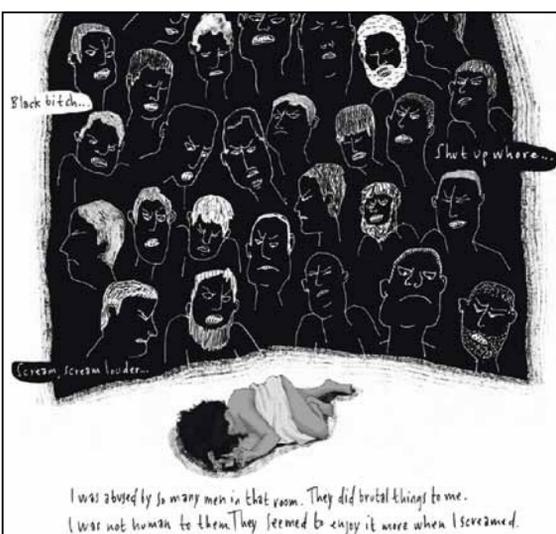


Take this pill. You will be in a lot of trouble if you fall pregnant - you understand? You owe me a lot of money.

Please Mary! Please don't make me do this. I will find another way to pay you back. I promise!



The following months were a long nightmare. Every day brought a stream of men, one after another.



Black bitch... Shut up where... Cries, scream louder...

I was abused by so many men in that room. They did brutal things to me. I was not human to them. They seemed to enjoy it more when I screamed.



But one day Mary forgot to take the toy from the backdoor of the house. I looked at it for a long time, terrified. I tried to think clearly but could only picture my children.



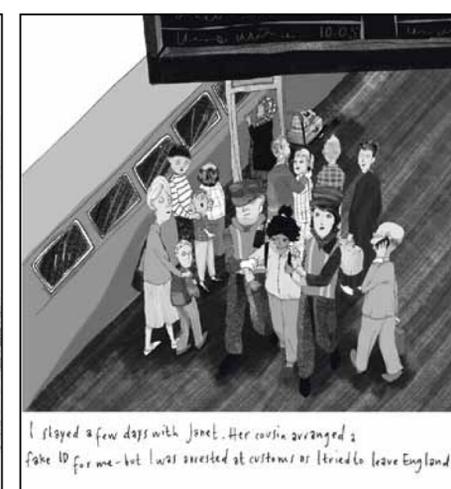
Then my legs made the decision for me. I bolted through the door. I ran and ran, not seeing, not feeling, just running.



I didn't know where to go. When I was far away, I stopped and collapsed. I slept in a doorway. I was so scared that Mary or her friends would find me and kill me... or worse, take me back to that house.

After a week on the street, a Nigerian lady called Janet approached me. I told her my story. She said she would help me try and leave the country to find my only hope, Adam.

Merciful Jesus! We must get you off these streets. Come quickly now... come home with me.



I stayed a few days with Janet. Her cousin arranged a fake ID for me - but I was arrested at customs or tried to leave England.



The judge sentenced me to 2 years in prison for the possession and attempted use of a counterfeit ID. Once again I was locked in a cell, but this time as a criminal.

How did I get here? How did this happen to my life, what did I do wrong? Oh God please.



After 3 months in prison, a nice lawyer visited me. She managed to get me out of prison and helped me file for asylum in the UK.

It is quite clear your honor that this is a case of trafficking. My client was brought to England under false pretences and has lived through horrendous experiences here. She was arrested trying to escape her jailers, and the state has imprisoned her yet again.

What concerns me is that a lot of energy is being spent on punishing my client for being trafficked, but no time is being spent on finding and prosecuting her trafficker.



All the horrors I lived through over the past years and the stress of going through the asylum process left me completely destroyed.



Finally after 2 years I was granted asylum and eventually reunited with my children. We are now living happily together in London. I don't talk about my experiences, but I know they will haunt me forever.