



Peter, male, 29 years old, born in Nigeria

Italy, December 2019

I am 29 years old and I come from Anambra State, in Nigeria. My family is very poor, we did not have any money or job. My father died when I was young. My elder brother also died. My other brother never recovered from that, he had mental issues and could not help raising money. My sister got pregnant when she was 17, but the father of the child did not want to recognize his son. My mother and I still had to push my sister to go and stay with this man anyway, as we could not afford to support her and her child. When my mother died, I was lost. I had other three siblings to feed and did not know what to do.

A well-known man in my village, somebody respected, with money, came and told me he could help. I knew him very well, as everybody else in the village, and he knew about my situation. He told me he would bring me to Europe, where I could get a good job and pay him back. He said he would take care of everything.

One day he came to see me and said: "tomorrow we will go, get ready". I prepared a bag with few clothes and my phone. It was February, 2015. When we left Nigeria, I did not know where we were going, he just told me we would go to Europe, by plane. I had no documents. I thought the man from my village would arrange everything at a certain point, when we would get the plane. I did not have to pay. The man from my village paid everything.

We left together, me and the man from my village. He came with me all along the journey, across Nigeria and Niger, until we reached Libya. When we got to Libya, the man from my village had contacts, knew people, had a business there. He owned a car washing. In Libya, he gave me to another Nigerian man. He told me I had to work if I wanted to eat, until he organizes the last leg of the journey. This is the man who finally organized the journey to cross the Mediterranean sea. He gave me to another man, an Arab. I had to work for him, and he would feed me. I was starved and tortured. That is where I understood there was no plane.

When I got to Libya I was scared. I was very far from home and did not know what to do. I thought that if I came back, the man from my village could hurt me, maybe kill me. So I decided to obey to this other Nigerian man I was given to, and work for whoever he wanted me to work for. I stayed in Libya for two years. From there I crossed the sea to Italy.

When I arrived in Italy, I contacted the man from my village. He asked me for money, he said I had to pay him back, I had to pay my debt. He told me I must give him 10,000 euros. So, I started sending him whatever I had, you know, the pocket money you get here from the reception centre here in Italy. He said he would find me a job. A good job. He told me to



wait. One day he called me and explained me that I was going to work in the drug business. I did not want to, but he threatened me, saying he would kill me if I didn't do it. He would send people;

I was scared. Then I thought, I should say this to the people who work here, at the reception centre. Maybe they can help. And in fact, they did.