

Case study from the POPPY Project

Lien, China

I was trafficked to the UK two years ago from China. I had tried to escape from my aunt, who had kept me as a prostitute in her house after my parents died when I was 13. Instead of looking after me she did not feed me properly and she kept me tied to a chair and beat me.

I lived like that for six years. I was very depressed. I thought about killing myself and I wanted to run away. Then one of the men who visited me at my aunt's house offered to help me escape. He said he felt sorry for me and wanted to take me somewhere safe.

He told my aunt he wanted to take me out for the day, and gave her some money. But instead he took me to the airport and brought me to England. He arranged my travel and told me that he had arranged immigration papers for me. He paid for everything too.

He was nice to me but that changed when we arrived here. He left me at a brothel while he went for a drink with a friend. He did not come back. He had sold me and gone back to China. I did not know where I was.

I was made to work as a prostitute again, with at least five other women. Only one other woman was Chinese; the rest were all white, but I don't know where they were from. They threatened me and kept me locked up.

I was kept there for several months and then I managed to escape in the middle of the night. I walked for three days before anybody helped me, and then a stranger called the police for me. The police locked me up overnight before they came with an interpreter and realised I had been trafficked.

I am very tired now, all the time, and I have very bad nightmares. I am still depressed. I think I always will be.

*This is not her real name.

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