

Manna's* Story

IJM SOUTH ASIA – Manna lived with her brother and was beaten by him on several occasions. When she was 14, she decided running away was her best option. Passing through the clutter and scuffle of a train station, a young woman noticed Manna crying and offered to help. She listened to Manna and won her trust, promising a job selling fabric. The woman led Manna to a place to rest and slept beside her that first night, but when Manna woke the woman was gone and another woman warned that her life was no longer her own. She would not sell fabric but her body.

Manna refused her first three customers, but the brothel keeper pulled her hair, punched her and beat her repeatedly until she gave in to the men who had come to rape her. She tried to run away and even begged the men who raped her to rescue her or call the police.

The nightmare continued for two years until another girl whom IJM had rescued led IJM operatives back to rescue more girls hidden in a soundproof dungeon. Manna was one of four young girls rescued from that dark place. She now lives in the freedom of an aftercare home that provides love, safety and schooling where she studies to become a social worker. IJM helped build a case against her brothel keepers. They were both convicted and sentenced in 2004 to five years rigorous imprisonment.

With a smile that filled the room like sunlight Manna said, “I came to prison, but I am not alone. God took me from that place to here. I am requesting to God that like IJM saved me they will save even more. What is impossible for men is possible for God.”



Manna is thriving in the aftercare home where she now lives without the fear of being raped and beaten. IJM staff members met with Manna and asked if they could tell her story and protect her identity as they do other victims of sexual exploitation. Manna explained that she wanted others to know her story and was adamant that her identity not be concealed. She wanted people to realize who she was and hopes by sharing what happened to her that she can help prevent other girls from being exploited.

** In order to protect the individuals IJM serves and those who carry out the work, faces of sex abuse victims and particular IJM investigators have been blurred. To further conceal the identities of victims and safeguard ongoing IJM casework, pseudonyms have been used though the accounts are real. Actual names and casework documentation are on file with IJM.*