

## **Short story**

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**Typed by Corinne Squire**

I love my village in Sudan.

I lived there for many years, and I have many friends there.

I went to school at six years. Our school classroom was made from grass and some pieces of wood. It was like a cottage. We just had to sit on stones because we had no seats.

When I was promoted to Class Six, I made up my mind to leave school because I had to take over caring for my family, as my father's salary was not enough to pay for us, and as we are five children; two of us are girls and the others are boys. So now, my childhood was getting worse. But then my uncle refused the idea of me leaving school, so I carried on my studies.

Finally, our country broke into war, and everything was changed now. Our lovely village became full of soldiers.

Then some people came to our village and made camps. They were very strange to us, because they were white people. I asked our uncle questions like, 'Where do these people come from, and what are they going to do here in our village?' My uncle would answer, 'These people are American and they are here because they are helping us, so don't be afraid of them any more'. I nodded, 'Yes', but in fact I was still a bit afraid of them. But they were very kind to us; they gave us sweets, clothes and many things, and they were very keen to talk to us, though unfortunately we didn't understand each other.

Then the Janjaweed came into our village and my family went to stay in the camp of the Americans; it was called UNICEF. I refused to join them. I tried to go to South Sudan because it was safe and on the other hand, I didn't want to sit in a camp.

So I went to South Sudan. I stayed there for two years.

Then there was another war, this time in South Sudan, and we left South Sudan and entered the bush, to avoid getting hurt. Some rebels followed us and killed many of us. So I tried to go to Libya But at the same time I didn't have money to travel there. I just had 2000 Sudanese pounds. So I gave all that money to the human trader and he said, 'Pay the rest when you reach there, and when you have got some money by working', and so we agreed.

We set off into the great desert, the Sahara. It was a deadly journey. Crossing that distance isn't easy. We struggled so much, and some of us died because we didn't have enough water. We were mixing water with fuel to drink. It took us six days to reach Libya.

After arriving there, we met a Libyan guy. He was tall, with white and grey coloured hair. His face was red. He said, 'Who didn't pay 8000 Sudanese pounds?' I put my hand up. I said, 'I have paid 2000 Sudanese pounds, but I will pay the rest soon, after I get a job. We agreed on that already in Sudan'. He said, 'No, you have to pay me my money now, otherwise I will put you in prison'. I said, 'I don't have any money left, so do as you like'. So I went to prison for one year. Finally, I was released.

After that, I crossed the sea to find freedom.

Now I'm in another Jungle, but it is different from the one in South Sudan, as that one kills.