

HORROR OF BRIT

EXCLUSIVE

by **Antonia Hoyle**

A BRITISH girl has told how she was forced to become a sex slave in Italy by her evil boyfriend.

Salesgirl Sophie Hayes was just 18 when an illegal immigrant lured her to the Mediterranean nation by convincing her it was a holiday.

But once she was there, the Albanian – known only as Kastriot – forced her to have sex with up to 30 men a night.

If she failed to make enough cash Sophie – believed to be the first British female trafficked out of the UK in modern times – was beaten at gunpoint. And Kastriot warned her he'd kill her youngest brother if she disobeyed.

Sophie's prostitution nightmare lasted six agonising months before she managed to escape.

But it took another five years before she felt safe enough to open her heart – when he was sent back to Albania after a UK jail sentence.

Sophie, 29, has also spoken out in a book, *Trafficked*, due out this month. But she has changed all the names – including the pimp's – to protect her and her family from reprisals.

Sophie said: "He is evil – the things he made me do were sick. I'm still too terrified to press charges and face him in court."

Broken

"But helping others and writing my book has helped me by giving back my freedom and a sense of justice."

Sophie first met the 6ft 2in man she calls Kas at a Leeds nightclub. She was 18, he was 19.

She recalled: "He told me he was an IT consultant. He said I was beautiful and made me laugh. We became friends."

Kas moved to northern Italy but the pair kept in touch by phone. Four years later, Kas invited her to come for a holiday.

Sophie said: "I'd broken up with my first serious boyfriend and Kas was funny and charming. I was flattered by the attention, so I agreed."

Sophie had fun at first. She said: "We spent the night together and I began to see him as a boyfriend."

But on the third day he said he wasn't in IT but was a drug trader with a fake passport who owed £100,000 over a bungled deal.

He told Sophie he'd brought her to northern Italy so she could sell her body to pay off his debts.

He bragged he'd made other girls do this but said Sophie was a "gold mine" because she was a Brit.

He then took her passport and said there was no point trying to flee as he had links to the police.

Sophie said: "When I protested he punched me in the head. His eyes filled with hate. He was terrifying."

Kas made her call mum Melanie and stepdad Steve.

Sophie said: "As his hand gripped my wrist I told them I'd decided to stay in Italy with Kas. My voice was

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MY ESCAPE FROM HELL

Sophie still has to hide identity to stop brute taking revenge



shaking and Mum sounded surprised. She told me if I ever got into trouble I should ask her how Aunt Linda was. She said it could be our code for help."

The following night Kas dressed Sophie in knee-boots and stockings.

She was to charge from £50 for sex and was expected to earn at least £1,000 a night. Sophie recalled: "The first man asked for oral sex. I cried as I did it but he made me carry on."

"I'd only had a handful of boyfriends and found it repulsive."

Screwdriver

"By the end of that night I'd slept with eight men – more than I'd been with in the rest of my life."

Sophie sometimes had to have sex with 30 men a night. She said: "We'd do it in their cars or in nearby woods."

"They ranged from their 20s to their 60s but didn't care how upset I was. One threatened me with a gun, another a screwdriver and another smashed my head against the car window."

But none terrified her as much as Kas. Sophie said: "If I fell short of my

target he'd accuse me of stealing. He'd crack my shoulder, hold a gun to my head or tell me to choose between having a knife stuck into me or being beaten with a stick."

"He led me to a lake and said I'd end up dead at the bottom of it if I didn't do what I was told. He also said he knew where my brothers lived and would kill them."

In public, he made her cover her bruises with scarves. And once a week he told her to call her mother.

Sophie said: "It broke my heart to hear her voice and pretend to be cheerful. But I thought I was protecting my family."

Sophie's health deteriorated. She said: "I lost 3st and every time I had sex it felt like a hot poker was tearing me apart."

Six months later she had pneumonia and had crippling stomach pains. She went to hospital when Kas refused to help, then phoned her mum – and tearfully asked after Aunt Linda.

As Melanie and company director Steve flew to Italy, Kas traced her to

GIRL SEX TRAFFICKED TO ITALY

Forced into sex THIRTY times a day

It still makes me sick to think of what I was made to do

My pimp would hold a gun to my head

the hospital – but agreed she could go to the UK for more treatment. It was four days before Sophie told her mum the shocking truth about her life as a sex slave. A friend put her in touch with a cop called Robin who worked in the police's human trafficking division. Sophie told him everything and Kastriot was quickly linked to a shooting in Leeds four years earlier.

Robin urged her to press charges but she said: "I was too terrified." Instead, she contacted the anti-slavery charity Stop The Traffik and pledged to support their work. She

said: "Speaking to people who understood and had been through the same things was a huge help."

A year later Sophie went to Vienna with the charity and its patron Cherie Blair – the human rights lawyer wife of ex-PM Tony Blair – to deliver a campaign petition to the UN, who define trafficking as forced exploitation, not just people-smuggling. Sophie, now a business consultant, said: "It was emotional but I was incredibly proud of what I'd achieved. I realised it could be happening to anyone. I was an ordinary girl from a close-knit family with a good education – this kind of thing didn't happen to girls like me."

She went on: "Everywhere I went I thought I saw Kas. I knew he wouldn't just give up on me." Sophie was right. Days after she got home she was shopping in Leeds when he

tapped her on the shoulder. Sophie said: "My heart skipped but I agreed to go for a coffee with him. He was annoyed I hadn't gone back to Italy but said I could stay in Britain and prostitute myself from here."

"He said he'd break every bone in my body if I didn't, so I went along with it to keep him calm. I knew this was my one opportunity to help police catch him."

After he left she rang cops – and two days later Kas was arrested over the Leeds shooting. He was deported to Albania after eight months in jail.

Sophie, meanwhile, became an adviser to the police, launched her own anti-trafficking charity The Sophie Hayes Foundation and produced her book.

To make a donation visit www.sophie-hayesfoundation.org. She said: "I want other victims to know they're not alone. I can't have suffered for nothing."

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■ Trafficked by Sophie Hayes is published by HarperCollins on January 19, price £6.99.



JAILED: Bogdan M.

4,000 SLAVES ORDERED

by Lewis Panth

SOPHIE was trafficked leaving the UK – 4,000 foreigner girls trafficked in to this sex slaves.

One Albanian £1million by smuggled east European women as hookers in London, Bedford and Reading.

The vice ring was in 2003 when Luan was caged for 23 years.

A year ago, Nejlloveanu, 51, and 23, were caged in Italy for selling five Romanian women into sex slavery.

Marius got 21 years for being convicted of including four rapists got six years.

Even British girls forced into prostitution in their own country by traffickers.

In one of the worst cases revealed by The Sunday Times in 2010 – two 13-year-olds forced to become prostitutes for Asian men in Lancashire.

The pair were arrested when they found the clutches of Zulfar Hussain and Qaiser Navroze.

The men were charged with trying to stab the girls but they refused sex.

The girls were rescued from their hell ended by the anti-trafficking abusers were arrested.

But it was the inner city women who were themselves kept in slavery.

Last year, Anastassios was jailed for five years for trafficking upper-crust clients in Oxfordshire.

His henchman, Cochrane, 49, was jailed for five years.

Det Insp Simon Papas of Thames Valley Police said: "He told us they were going to be put in a box and something he did."

"He was forcing me to be raped every day."

Pictures: NEWSPICS

