



## Lidia's Story

I'd like to tell you about one particular person – an 18 year-old girl called Lidia\* – whom I met through my work in Albanian prisons. Lidia was arrested for the murder of two children, a crime which she told me she did not commit.

She was on the beach with some friends when a group of boys came up to her and one of them asked her to go out with him. She refused and walked away. The boy was annoyed and his pride had been hurt. The gang of boys therefore decided to kidnap Lidia and take her secretly to Italy. She was abused by all the gang members and then put on the streets as a prostitute. She was beaten if she did not make enough money.

Lidia was desperate to get back to her family and she found some men who agreed to help her escape and return to Albania. While she was traveling back home, the boys from whom she had escaped returned to her village, looking for her. They shot her brother and injured her father. When Lidia heard what had happened she was devastated.

The gang also took revenge on the men who helped her escape; they put a bomb through the letterbox of one of these men's houses and his two daughters were killed. It was for these murders that Lidia was arrested.

We saw Lidia the day before she went to court. She asked us to pray with her. We were unsure how to pray – but we prayed that she would be strong and that God's will be done.

When we returned to the prison later, we expected to see Lidia but were told she had been found not guilty and had been released. She had stood up in court and said, "Praise Jesus Christ, He has set me free".

*\*Name has been changed*

**NOT FOR SALE Sunday is an initiative of CHASTE.**

All funds raised will help CHASTE to take forward its work and vision to end trafficking for sexual exploitation. CHASTE is a Registered Charity No. 1106353 [www.chaste.org.uk](http://www.chaste.org.uk)