

The Bottle Transcript

So, this is beautiful. It's my baby's bottle, yeah. What I do with this is, I put some water in here, if it needs water when we walk around, or we're out yeah, this is what I use for him. But, unfortunately... I just want you to know how important this is to me and my baby. I wouldn't know how much this bottle, how important it is, until I lose that previous one, because it took him [time], sorry and for me, to adjust to the new bottle. He's not used to the teat anymore, and all that, we had to take some times to do that. So, it's very important, my baby is so much loved, the bottle, yeah. This bottle, yeah. This...give me...I wouldn't know how to put it...I'm not an English person, but I'm just trying to say things that you [would] understand it.

I had an experience, it was my first time with a social services, I don't even know what that organisation means. I don't know what it is. I don't know what it stands for. In fact, when I just had my baby, it's normal that you have a visitor visiting you, and I thought I had scary stories about social services.

So, I had an issue of violence, in which the police directed me down to them. So, when I got there, I got there like...a day, which is not a working day. So, they put me in a place. The place is, I was scared, I will tell you I didn't sleep, because in this place I was, there was this...do you call it ant, or...cockroach. Yeah, I wouldn't know the name you call this, but I know it as cockroaches were all over my baby.

So, what I did, as a mother, who need to protect her child, I had to hold onto my baby, I sat through the night, just to be sure there's nothing crawling up my baby's nose, or ears. So, this was my first experience, and I will let you know what the connection he has with this bottle, when I lost this bottle. The next day, I went to the social services, which I was told that this is the social services. And the first thing they asked me is about my status, which I really didn't know what to say, because I just flee violence and I wasn't expecting it should be my status should be the first question. It should be about my wellbeing. How I'm feeling and why I'm there, and what help that I needed.

So, I got to the office, I told them about my status, and I let them know that my baby is British. In which they asked some questions about my home in Africa. I told them everything, but unfortunately for me they said, "no, you are lying". I let them understand that they can't tell my story better than I do, it is my story. My baby is what I'm protecting. Obviously they prejudge me, even before asking questions. Like, I've come to tell them lies, and all that. I was really traumatised, it was all over my face. And I am there so hungry, so really hungry. And somebody sitting down telling me, "Ok, you're child is British. You need to be here and we can take you out of the country if you so want."

And, I asked them, I thought this organisation is to save people, why are you troubling me? Why are you attacking me? Why are you asking me to go back to where I am coming from? Why do you want to take my baby from me?

And I told them, I need help, I'm hungry right now, even if you need to ask me more questions. I'm so, so hungry. From yesterday, I've not eaten anything. I don't know how to ask, I don't know who to ask, I don't want to bother people. But now I can't take it anymore, because it's obvious. They saw how my baby was crying, unsettled.

He wants food. I'm trying to feed him, but he's not getting enough milk from his mother, who has not eaten for over 18 hours.

I said, I'm not even in a state to say so many things. I've gone through a lot. Right now, I need to eat, in order to be able to do something. And they just tell me to my face that they are sorry, they can't get me anything.

So, I have to just drink my baby's milk. So, I took my milk right in front of the security, right in front of the receptionist, right in front of everyone. And, I was really surprised, no-one is asking me, "why you taking the milk"? Or like, some discretion would have told them that she's really hungry, she needs something. I was expecting someone would offer me, maybe bread, or something, but since it's not coming, I have to feed on my baby's milk.

I've told them, "wherever I've been coming from, I've been starving. Now I'm here and it's not helping. I thought people were supposed to help me. But, if you're not helping me, instead of taking my baby away from me, if I have to go out of the country, can I go with my baby? "

You wouldn't know, except you were in my shoes. You wouldn't know how much this really affected me.

But, I tell you, anytime I'm going towards the office, for interview, my heart beats a lot. Like, I'm so scared, like they actually noticed this in the hospital, as well. They saw the crying, you know when you have tears on your face and it's dried? It's doing this because you not doing it for anybody, it was just you, pushing your buggy on the street, crying and how this, how, how you have to go through all this, and no one is coming to help you, or something. No one is ready to listen to your story, have it, um, validated.

And it's worse when you don't have no one to talk to. When you have no one to talk to. So, I do this on the street, most of the time. Crying.

I'm so, so strong. I told them at the social services, "I just wanna work, get something to put on table, do my parental responsibilities to my kids". But, I get home, and this one that I have got here, I'm not a law breaker, I'm not fraudulent, I'm just a mum. Simple as that.

So, you have to, like tomorrow I'm going to do interview again, maybe they're probably going to take my baby away from me, stories like in my head. This is my baby. This is the only story I've got. Why would somebody just take me out of the picture? It doesn't work like that. So, I don't know, I don't know. I'm still scared right now. My circumstances not getting better, because you have to go to the same set of people, when your circumstances changes.

I wish the government will help mum. Because, the children, they need us. If they really care about the children, they - and they tell you to your face "we care about your child, not you. We're helping your child, not you". They tell you this, you have to hear it in every statement, like it's about the child. How can you take care of the child, without taking care about the mum?

Listen to people who have genuine stories, you don't need to prejudge them, so they don't hurt themselves at the end of everything. So, you're being left out by people who are supposed to help you. It's so sad. I just wish they would change bits of things. Listen to people, they need to listen.