

Pastor's words haunt sexually abused victim

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Johannesburg - "If there is anything you need, you must tell me because 'now you are mine'." These are the words that haunt 27-year-old Samantha Nkosi*, one of the victims who came forward to speak against controversial Nigerian pastor Timothy Omotoso.

The 58-year-old televangelist, who is based in Durban, is alleged to have trafficked more than 30 girls and women who were from various branches of his church countrywide. He apparently took the girls to a house in uMhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal, where he apparently sexually abused them.

Apparently, senior members of the church would recruit "vulnerable" girls between 13 and 15 and make them perform sexual acts with the pastor.

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Nigerian televangelist Timothy Omotoso



After an attempt to nab the pastor in Bloemfontein at the Easter weekend failed, he was finally arrested by the Hawks on April 20 at the Port Elizabeth airport and has been in custody since

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Omotoso is facing 22 charges of human trafficking and sexual violence charges against 30 women who have come forward.



By way of affidavit, the pastor has vehemently denied allegations of sex with the girls.

Nkosi, who spoke this week to The Sunday Independent, narrated the events of the night the pastor allegedly sexually harassed her.

“He called me into his bedroom, where there was another girl, and asked me to massage his feet. I remember doing that for over an hour, before he ordered the other girl to leave the room,” recalled the young woman from Secunda, in Mpumalanga.

Omotoso allegedly forced Nkosi to come into the bed, to which she grudgingly obliged. “I was still very confused and scared. I just did as he told me to. He then touched me all over to a point of rubbing his erection against my vagina.

“When I told him that he was hurting me, he got off to get baby oil. That seemed like the perfect chance to move off the bed, but he quickly told me to sleep and not move,” said Nkosi.

Her face wrinkled in disgust and anger as she recalled how Omotoso smeared the oil on his penis and on her thighs to which he “did his thing until he ejaculated. I was traumatised to say the least. I just lay there like an ironing board and didn’t know what was going on.”

According to Nkosi, it was not the first time the pastor had tried to get cosy with her. “The first time was at a Sandton hotel where I was first invited to a ‘meeting’ with him,” she said, adding she was approached by one of the women who worked for “the man of God to come with them after the last crusade’s service”.

“At the hotel, I was surprised to see so many girls were surrounding the pastor, taking his shoes off, serving him food. But then I quickly dismissed it as an act of service in the house of God.”

Omotoso allegedly requested to meet Nkosi at about 6pm, and then told her he liked her. “I didn’t really understand what he meant by that. I was honoured and thought he was planning to mentor me. I took everything very spiritually. But that was not the case.”

After proclaiming his feelings for Nkosi, she was allegedly handed R1000 to buy clothes and other small necessities because she had gone there with nothing.

“The other girls at the hotel seemed excited by this gesture and kept saying ‘there is still a lot you will see, R1 000 is nothing to daddy’.”

That evening, the pastor allegedly requested that Nkosi take a bath and join him in his hotel bedroom. “When I got there, he asked me to massage his feet before opening the blankets for me to touch him anywhere I wanted.

“When he saw how uncomfortable I was, he ordered me to come to bed. And then he started touching me all over. I didn’t tell anyone about this encounter because I thought this only happened to me alone.”

Even after this encounter, the human resources graduate accepted Omotoso’s invitation to his Durban house.

She alleged that 50 to 60 women were housed there, and the explanation was their life situations needed some spiritual interventions.

The girls were from Omotoso’s many church branches, including Port Elizabeth, East London, Soweto, Secunda, Richards Bay, Bloemfontein and Lesotho.

“I was very happy with the invite. I personally felt stuck in my life because I would apply for various jobs, and nothing would come up. This felt like my chance.”

Desperation of unemployment and stagnation seemed to have forced Nkosi into overlooking her first encounter with Omotoso. She clung to her hope for the best. In the house, it seemed as if the girls, herself included, were in a trance.

“No one asked a question of how so many girls lived in one house with only one guy. Instead, we would fight to be number one to him. Daily duties were to clean the house, do the laundry and just to live a life that pleased him.

“And on Sundays, they (the girls) would go to church as if nothing was wrong. You only see how wrong this is after you leave.”

The entourage of women serving on the church’s various committees, such as the worship team and as ushers, remained etched in her mind.

“I was ready to keep quiet and go to the grave with this secret of mine because I managed to leave the house and had moved on with my life.

“But when I saw how arrogant he had become, I had to come forward. He is fooling people and I wanted people to know him and follow him for who he is.”

Nkosi’s sister, Ntombi*, also landed in the house because of promises made to her too. “One night she (Ntombi) came out crying, and he called me to his room to ask if I didn’t tell my sister about what was happening in the house because she was freaking out. My mom knows about this but I would never want my dad to find out.”

* These are not the girls’ real names

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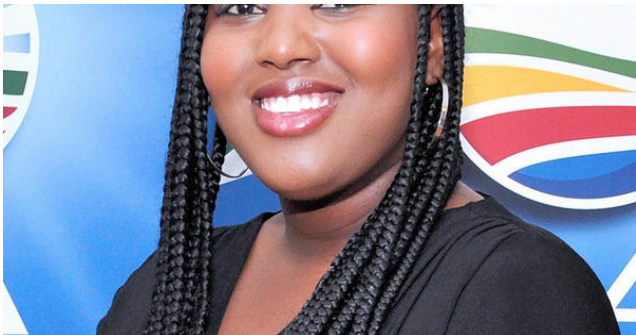


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