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Bashiir's story

28 year old Bashiir is quietly seated in the room of a refugee center in Berlin. His demeanor is that of a person who feels out of place and isolated. His towering figure is hunched in a state of resignation, as if giving in to a battle.

Bashiir grew up in Mogadishu where, in 2008, he was forcefully recruited by Al Shabaab. The majority of his friends had already joined the insurgent group and continuously pressured him to join them. Despite his protests, his friends enlisted him without his knowledge. This lead to his detention and subsequent forced conscription to fight in a local attack with another insurgent group.

"I was held captive for 6 months in Janaale," he recalls. "I worked for them. Finally there was a fight in the area and I got the chance to escape."

"It's ugly to be a slave in your own country," says Bashiir. "After the fight I was wounded in several places, as you can see on my leg and back."

Following his injuries, Bashiir went back home to recuperate. Despite his physical state, the members of Al Shabaab continuously harassed his father regarding his whereabouts.

Having been forcibly recruited by Al Shabaab, Bashiir became a pariah in his own community. The government officials were after him. As a result, the idea to flee to Yemen was born.

Watch Bashiir describe how he was pushed to leave Somalia on a journey that would see him moving from one country to the next in search of safety.[/az_column_text][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row][vc_column][az_video_player video_player_type="others_video_mode" download_enabled="yes" download_sm_enabled="yes" download_lg_enabled="yes" download_xl_enabled="yes"

link_video_others="https://youtu.be/UEqRl1qbqg0″ link_video_download="link here22″ link_video_download_xs="001.1.adal" link_video_download_sm="http://tellingtherealstory.org/videos/001.1.adal_sd640.mp4″ link_video_download_lg="http://tellingtherealstory.org/videos/001.1.adal_hd720p.mp4″ link_video_download_xl="http://tellingtherealstory.org/videos/001.1.adal_hd1080p.mp4″ link_video_download_name="030.1.bashiir"][az_blank_divider height_value="" el_class="one-twenty"][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row padding="default-padding" bg_attachment="scroll"][vc_column col_padding="default-color-padding" col_padding_top_value="40″ col_padding_bottom_value="40″ col_padding_left_value="40″ col_padding_right_value="40″ el_class="col-md-8 col-md-offset-2″][az_column_text]"There are two types of humans: Those who tell you the truth about the struggles of life, and the others who say, 'life is perfect here, come and join us,'" says Bashiir, recalling advice he received from a friend.

"He said, 'if you are going to do the journey plan for everything,'" he recalls. "The only solution for me was this. I was afraid that if I were to travel from the airport I would face more problems."

After arriving in Yemen, Bashiir moved on to Saudi Arabia. But due to a lack of proper identification, he was unable to move around freely there, forcing him to leave. He headed for Turkey, but along the way he got arrested and detained in Syria for three days. Once in Turkey he spent six months working at a restaurant. Then Bashiir moved on to Greece, followed by a number of European countries, in search of protection.

Watch Bashiir recount his journey[/az_column_text][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row][vc_column][az_video_player video_player_type="others_video_mode" download_enabled="yes" download_sm_enabled="yes" download_lg_enabled="yes" download_xl_enabled="yes" link_video_others="https://youtu.be/DS4lARUgeCQ" link_video_download="link here" link_video_download_name="030.2.bashiir"][az_blank_divider height_value="" el_class="one-twenty"][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row padding="default-padding" bg_attachment="scroll"][vc_column col_padding="default-color-padding"

col_padding_top_value="40″ col_padding_bottom_value="40″ col_padding_left_value="40″ col_padding_right_value="40″ el_class="col-md-8 col-md-offset-0″][az_column_text]Bashiir's search for safety and stability turned out to be anything but what he had hoped. For approximately two and a half years, Bashiir moved from one country to the next through the assistance of smugglers. At the time of this interview, Bashiir had survived two dangerous journeys at sea — to Yemen and Greece — along with a number of detention centers and deteriorating refugee camps. Yet, his journey still seemed far from over. Marred by a legal European asylum system which he did not comprehend, and facing the possibility of deportation to Somalia, Bashiir was haggard and tired. Clinging on to the hope that one day everything would be fine.

"Life in Europe is a joke. When I say that it is because the laws are greater than the value of humanity," he says. "You hear that judges have to follow the Dublin Regulation. I respect the laws but they don't look at the person and everything he has been through."

"I applaud Germany for how they've welcomed me," he adds. "They show that there is another kind of life…I am happy that I now have a life without pressure and fear. But I am sad that I have left my family and my current situation. Life is not easy."

"Whatever happens is destiny, but I always have hope. I believe life can change."[/az_column_text][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row][vc_column][az_video_player video_player_type="others_video_mode" download_enabled="yes" download_sm_enabled="yes" download_lg_enabled="yes" download_xl_enabled="yes" link_video_others="https://youtu.be/pRRPMCRp6qo" link_video_download="link here" link_video_download_name="030.3.bashiir"][az_blank_divider height_value="" el_class="one-twenty"][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row section_id="distributionbar"][vc_column el_class="col-sm-12 col-md-8 col-md-offset-2″][az_blank_divider height_value="60″][az_date_credit_list pub_date="yes" modified_date="yes" interviewer_enabled="yes" author_enabled="yes" videographer_enabled="yes" author_name="Christa Awuor Odinga" videographer_name="Max-Michel Kolijn" interviewer_name="Mariam Hersi"][az_tag_list topic_list="yes" place_list="yes" pub_date="yes" modified_date="yes"][az_button_share

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