

Fourteen years of living under a wooden-framed structure made of branches, twigs, and mud. I never really expected a life like this. A life filled with work, no money, little food, and a hut to live in.

I live with one of six of my sisters and my grandfather. My sister and I sister sleep on mats on the cold, muddy floor. Grandfather sleeps in the storeroom upstairs. I used to have the storeroom but, grandfather has had a bad back for a while and I couldn't stand seeing him suffer.

"Please grandfather! I just want a bed!" pleaded my sister.

"I know and I'm sorry but we can't afford one. You and your sister both have been trying to find a job and until you guys can get one you can't have a bed. I'm sorry," said grandfather in an apologetic voice.

I was a domestic worker trying to get seven hundred Nepali rupees per month. I've been trying to get enough money to buy beds for all of us but my employers treated me so badly I decided to run away. I couldn't handle them treating me so harshly.

I had to drop out of school to go to work. I don't really want to go back to school because I feel like I'd be too old to rejoin the class. Without school I can't get a good job that pays well. From the looks, I don't think we're going to be able to buy beds anytime soon.

My sister and I work in the fields outside of our countryside hut. "Jyoti! Can you please go pick leaves for the buffalo?" My grandfather asked.

"Of course grandfather. I'm heading down now," I replied. I grabbed my basket and went outside.

After I was done picking leaves, I gave the basket to grandfather and went to start a fire. Grandfather went up to the storeroom and went to sleep. Me and my sister put our mats down on the floor and snuggled up next to the fire. The fire was our only way of getting warm. I'm always scared to sleep with the fire on all night. What ifs always run through my head. What if I accidentally roll into the fire? What if the fire burns down the house?

I can never seem to stop worrying about how my family is going to turn out. I can't imagine living in a home or having a life like this anymore. I went to bed thinking about a new home. Maybe it's not a new life and wouldn't solve everything but, it would solve my worrying about the fire, not having a bed to sleep in and I wouldn't need to worry about my family so much.

I went to bed dreaming about a new home. A home that has a warm, safe fire place. Three beds that won't hurt our backs and a home that isn't made of branches, twigs and mud.