



**EMBRACE
DIGNITY**

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Press release

Book launch of Grizelda Grootboom: Survivor of Human Trafficking and Prostitution

Thursday 17h30 – Book lounge

Exit! is the story of Grizelda Grootboom life of prostitution and her ultimate escape from it all. Grizelda's life was dramatically changed when she was gang raped at the age of nine by teenagers in her township. Her story starts there. It is a story about the cycle of poverty, family abandonment, dislocation, and survival in the streets of Cape Town. She reveals the seedy and often demonised life of a prostitute; she describes the clubs and beds of the prostitution and drug industry over a twelve year period. She moves to Johannesburg at the age of 18 in an attempt to start a new life, but instead she is trafficked on arrival in Yeoville, tied in a room for two weeks and forced to work as a sex slave.

What would follow is a life of living hand-to-mouth, from one street corner to another, being pimped, being taught how to strip, to acquiring and using a variety of drugs – from buttons, ecstasy and cannabis, to cocaine – to sustain herself. She speaks of how her prostitution gains momentum in city strip clubs and the sometimes tragic pregnancies that would follow. Grizelda's harrowing tale ends with reconciliation with her family, while raising her six-year-old son. In writing this story she hopes to open a window on the hidden and often misunderstood world of prostitution, thereby raising better awareness and understanding about its harms and the horrors of trafficking and prostitution of women and children, and drug abuse. She hopes to heal and to set an example for others to follow.

Embrace Dignity is a South African grassroots advocacy NGO committed to addressing the root causes of prostitution and strongly believes that prostitution is inherently exploitative, invariably damaging and inextricably linked to the ubiquitous problem of violence against women and children and human trafficking in a society that is essentially patriarchal. The organization asserts that the act of purchasing sex and the profit making for such action should be illegal whilst at the same time that the act of selling one's body for sex should be decriminalized. It sees criminalization as an additional violation on the multiple forms of socioeconomic marginalization and oppression that prostituted women/ persons endure and makes any exit from prostitution more difficult.

For more information contact our offices on 021 462 3902 or contact Grizelda Grootboom on 083 4368902

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Board Members

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