MIGRATORY BIRDS

Scene 1:

Zeynep: hello, welcome. My name is Zeynep, what is your name?

Amaya: hello my name is Amaya. Nice to meet you.

Z: come on in we are waiting for 3 other people. (..) would you like to tell me something about yourself?

A: I am from Bagdad. I’ m 1 7 years old. I have 2 older brothers and one sister. I came to Greece 8 months ago.

Z: hello , I’m Zeynep.Welcome.

Ramji: hello

Nekka: hello

Bahar: hi

Zeynep: Have a seat.

Z: This is Amaya. She’s from Iraq. And you are ?

Ramji: I’m Ramji and I’ m from Lybia. I’ m 17 years old

Nekka : I’m Nekka and I’m from Nigeria. I’m 16 years old

Bahar: and I’m Bahar from Syria. I’ m 13 years old

Z:Nice to meet you.. so guys …The newspaper is part of the Network for Children’s Rights programme entitled ‘’contact points’’, which aims to improve communication between refugees and the European community in order to build understanding and bridge the distance between life inside the camps and the reality outside the camps. It is full of words of our hearts, information about our difficult days and our lonely nights. We named it migratory birds because we left our countries like them to find a better place where we can survive. So, I want you to try and write an article for this newspaper. To do this you need to remember some of the happiest moments of your lives.

R: (stands up) I remember.. I had a friend named Abdul. We used to play football together. We would say things like <last one to the field is a looser>. I remember family dinners. We used to tell stories about Lybia. I remember every single one of them. (sits down)

N: I remember.. we used to play everyday outside in the streets with my brother and his friends. They used to cheat and beat me everytime. I would get angry and tell them that I was never gonna play with them again. But, now that I think about it, I kinda miss that. I think it’s one of the best memories that I have..

Bahar: I remember playing with my dad. He used to help me study.. but that was a long time ago.. I was a little kid.

Amaya: I’ts very difficult for me to remember happy moments from my country. I only remember bad ones ,war, bombs, death.

Zeynep: It’s ok. You can also write about your difficult days or the reason you left your country. For example I left from Afganistan because of the Taliban. I was a music teacher and I strongly believe that women are equal to men. Unfortunately, the Taliban had banned all types of music and forced all women to wear burqas . I couldn’t live there.

Amaya: The situation in my country is characterized by extensive brutality, substantial violations of human rights and the total absence of the rule of law. The breakdown of Iraqi security forces has created a major breach of security in the country. This is why acts of violence frequently go unpunished. Sunnis and Shia commit abductions, tortures, rapes and murder those of who belong or believe that belong to the opposite religious group.

I come from Bagdad but the regime wanted to displace my family because of its progressive ideas. My parents believe that women should dress according to their taste, can drive car and have the right to work outside of the home. They let my older brother who is a student sing, dance and hang around with his female classmates. All these reasons gave the opportunity to our enemies to blame us. Leaving the country was our only choice.

Bahar: in Syria there has been a war since I was little. I was always scared but I hoped it would be over one day. I remember the smell of the dust and the blood. The ruined homes and the screams. I remember my grandmother. She did not want to leave her home. It was my parents who knew we had to leave. So my sister and I have a better future. So we can study and have a life. That’s why we left everything back.

Ramji: Since the fall of the kadafi regime and the civil war that broke after 2011, there isn’t a central government in lybia. On the contrary, over 1700 armed government forces and gangs keep fighting over the control of important turf, like Tripoli. They all have one thing in common. They hate kadafi. My family supported him, so we were persued. In lybia they don’t understand of underage children or women, they torture us all. There is no law, every gang does whatever it wants. They imprison us like wild animals.They do to us whatever cruel thing you can imagine, so that our families can give them money. They **crusiate us**, they peal our skin, they spank us with hot pipes and throw naked wires when we bath so that we get electrocuted. So my family decided to send me here, so that I don’t suffer.

Nekka: My country is suffering for the moment the Boko Haram showed up. They are an extremist muslim organization that goes against the European way of living. They don’t want girls to go to school and often abduct them to use them for its purposes. They are brainwashed and send to perform kamikaze bombing operations in places where there are a lot of people. The soldiers break into at people’s houses during the night and slit their throats.This way, 17 people in my neighborhood were killed the past year. Many others are killed in the streets. My 20 year old brother was driving a trycicle when he stambled on a fight between the soldiers. A stray bullet struck him in the heart and he died.

Bahar: I remember every moment from the trip. The pain at my feet because of the endless walk. The journey with a truck which I thought would never end. My father’s strong hands when I was exhausted. He embraced me and he sang to me children’s songs.

And then that frightful trip… In this boat.. we would have been 40 people and eventually we were at least 70. In every wave I felt my heart beat hard. I thought it would be the end. But we finally arrived and now we live in a camp. With people I do not know. All I know is that I wanna go home.

Zeynep: As I said I left my country because of the Taliban. I travelled from Camboul to Nimrouz and then to Pakistan .It was a very dangerous journey. They kept us hostages for 13 days without any water or food. Only when we paid them they left us .We went to the borders of Iran .The guards there were shooting us without mercy. We were lying down for 3 hours until they finally stopped. Then we went through a dark forest and after many hours of walking we arrived in Iran. Our goal was to reach the Tourkish borders. After 30 hours of walking we reached the borders and we crossed them with a truck 🇹🇷.Only the sea was tearing us apart from our final destination, Greece.

Ramji: The smugglers had taken old commercial fishing boats-some so old they weren't supposed to be used-put new engines in and given them to the people they knew. The captain of the ship might not even know the way to Greece. He might not even have been a captain before. When the ship set off, we were worried about the engines breaking down, but we soon realised the biggest problem was the waves. The boat wasn’t built for the journey and it was flipped every time a wave hit. My only hope was Nekka. A girl i met there. And she turned out to be one of my closest friends. By the time we saw a rescue helicopter, two days after we left lybia, some people were already dead-flung into the sea by the waves, or suffocated downstairs in the dark

Amaya: When I left Iraq, I travelled to Turkey. I did some miles on foot and some by truck. And then I passed in Izmir. Those were the most agonizing and painfull days of my life. From there I sailed off to Lesvos island in a 12 meter boat after having paid 3,000 euros only for me. It was overcrowded as the smugglers had crammed around 40 men, women and children on the little boat. After several hours at sea, the captain informed us that he was no longer in command of the boat, which suddenly started taking in water. Among terrified screams, I tried to elbow myself to reach the small cabin, but I was hurled overbroad by panicking passengers. I was very desperate. In the sea, the currents were so strong that I could hardly swim. It was only until several hours later, we were spotted by a Greek boat and were transferred to Chios island. Other survivors were brought to Samos. The shipwreck so far claims the lives of six persons who were found by the Greek and Turkish Coast Guards while the rest are still missing.

A

nekka:I loved night time. When I felt in peace and security in my house. When I could lay down on my warm bed. When I could look up on the sky from a small window. But now, I look at the sky from a tiny window with a net. And the fear, the terror rushes over me when the night falls . I can’t find nothing beautiful in the night anymore. The stars don’t shine ,they flicker. They seem sad.

When night comes I fall into my loneliness, like someone who is lost in the desert. I scream for help but no one can hear my voice. Last summer I lived through the warmest days and the toughest nights. And now I’m faced with the most cold and scary nights of winter.

Bahar: people look at me in a weird way. Differently. O don’t understand your language but i can see it in your eyes. The language of the eyes and the face is the same everywhere. I can see compassion and sympathy in some eyes and hatred in others. When you try to keep away from me i feel as if i have a contagious disease. It is painful to be treated as a sick person when you are healthy.

Some of you hold your handbag tightly when you see me and i wonder if you think that i am a thief because of how i am dressed. When i see this i am scared to get on the bus or on the subway. When i am on the bus i try to show you my hands to you. I keep my hands busy, to reassure you that i am not a thief but a simple human being wearing a hijab. When i get off the bus i take a deep breath and walk away with tired hands and a broken heart.

Amaya: Hope. This word might not be as it seems, a composition of letters, but it means a lot more.

Ramgi: hope is an open space with a view of what’s most beautiful, that keeps us going and so we can face challenges, so we can surpass all the barriers in front of us.

Bahar: Hope is a small window , which despite its small size, it still has a view of open horizons.

Νekka: hope is the positive energy that god puts in us, so that we can become stronger and overcome difficulties, thinking always that he will give us all the good things we desire.

Zeynep: Life is hope.. and whoever loses hope.. loses life. Hope turns infertile land into fertile. Hope is the beginning of every act and creation .From that comes success.. Hope is us!

Ramgi: Sometimes I’m bored of it all. The people, the photographs, the frames, the memories.

Amaya: I get a certain melancholy when I wish that everything was like it was and I wish the hours would turn back. I wish lots of things would stay forever and others I wish never happened.

Nekka: One day something as heavy as a mountain lingers on my heart. The other the knot is on the throat. And another day the river is in my eyes.

Bahar: In days like these I don’t want to think about my past, because it makes me see the world darker than ever.

Zeynep: I laugh and live, but I know all these smiles are fake. I have tpo act as if I’m happy just to keep people around me happy although I know that inside of me there is a tornado of akwardness and trouble, of dreams which seem so far away.!!!!!