

Spanish
and
Cypriot
Stories

Imagine 2018-2020

THE WAR OF ALL US (marked)

Hello, my name is Kala and, fortunately, I'm 17. I was born in Syria and I can assure you that it used to be a wonderful country with the same facilities, advantages and disadvantages that you can find in any other country such as The United Kingdom, USA, Spain...

I grew up in a well-off family so I didn't have any problems related with money, quite the opposite. I could study and every summer my parents, my two big brothers and I would visit different parts of our country. When I was 5, I was introduced to music by my mum Zafira because I was always singing or, at least, trying to. So four years later, in 2011, I took an exam to be admitted in the conservatory of music and I was accepted.



The war started far from us, so we continued living there happily throughout that year until the enemy troops invaded the office building where my father Falah worked thus having to flee. That day, when he eventually made it home, my mum started packing the most important things in five bags, one for each one of the family with our most precious belongings and some food and water, nothing else. I had to leave my music and none of us could say goodbye to our friends and neighbours just in case we were attacked.

2



I do not know how, and my parents have never told me, but we became one of the 10 families that arrived to the shore of a beach awaiting for the mafia to kick us out of the country and to take us to Spain. It was a terrifying trip in a little dinghy for five days without anything to eat or drink. On the sixth day, we were collected by an NGO called Cruz Roja. Everyone in the dinghy started crying with relief because we were all safe and we had escaped from the terror of war.

The Spanish people were very kind and altruistic because they spent all day playing with us and they gave us all the food and water we needed, so I was no longer hungry. We spent nearly a week there and I started to learn Spanish because we had the chance to be hosted by a family in Lorca.



3

We moved there with the only thing we had, ourselves and our last respite energy to be accepted. The host family was very different from us because they only had one child whose name was Maria and the mother called Ana didn't wear the hijab.



It took us a couple of months to settle down but finally I started school. My first day was awful because everyone stared at me as if I were a strange creature and I would go back home crying. The last thing I expected was Maria to wear one of my hijabs and go to school with it to show the rest of the students that you could be from another country, have

another skin tone or profess another religion, but the most important thing was to be a good person and accept others as they are.



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In conclusion, today I'm turning 17 and, after six years in Lorca, I think I couldn't be happier because I continue playing music and I have the privilege to have my parents and brothers and a host family who give me the same love as my biological family. And what is more important, I can say that there are good people who dedicate their lives to those that try to run away from poverty, with no intention of earning money or considering themselves heroes. But in fact, I consider them just like that. Like my greatest heroes.



Patricia Trenza López 1ºBBC

My own story

Believe it or not, families are forced to split because of various educational, social or economic reasons that make people live apart. My story begins in Thessaloniki, where I was born. It's one of the most beautiful cities in Greece. I grew up in a neighbourhood full of happy people and smiling faces. Everything was perfect and I used to have a lot of friends there. Most of them were also classmates of mine. My parents earned a living, without serious difficulties at work. We were not wealthy but we had a very comfortable life.



My sister and I, were looking forward to finishing school. We had dreams of studying in a university and become active members in our society. Unfortunately, there was an economic crisis in Greece, which affected everyone in our neighbourhood, our school and our city. My family was affected too. My father got out of work and after a while my mother was fired too because the factory she was working, shut down. In a few months we were in a very difficult situation and then my father decided to go as an immigrant to Germany, where he found a well-paid job.



It was a strange situation at home with my mother crying all the time and my father being abroad. I felt that I was the "man" of the family then and I started looking for a part-time job to help at home. I had to finish school first but I did not have the intention to study anymore and neither did my sister. Survival of the family came first. After six months my father was ready to rent an apartment. He was a guest at my aunt's house in Germany until then. So my mother could go there and could find a job too.

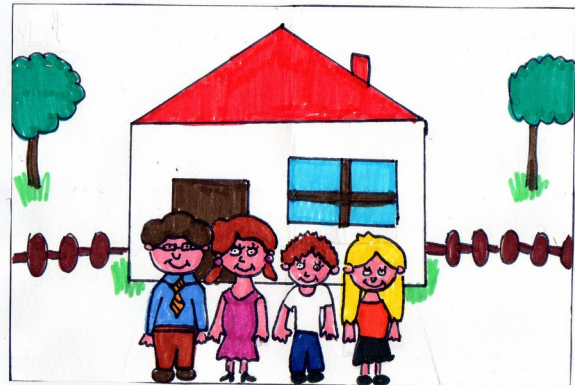


My sister and I would stay behind till everything was ok. They would send us the tickets when they would be ready. The problem was that we had no money and so my mother took the decision to sell all the family jewellery in order to be sure that we could be able to cover our everyday needs. The house was extremely quiet after my mother left. The silence was spread all over the neighbourhood as many people left their homes and immigrate in other countries. No familiar smiling faces anymore, or happy people around

us. Four difficult months passed by living away from our parents and then the day we were waiting for came. Our parents could be able to send us the tickets for the new homeland. We took care of everything and we locked the house. We said goodbye to few people in the neighbourhood and left for the airport. We were sad because we left home and happy because we were going to be a real family again.



Now we live in Germany having our jobs and earning a living. My sister and I attend evening courses in the German language which will help us study and fulfill our dreams. We settled down in a small city and we started our new life on a new basis. Sometimes I feel homesick but I realize that immigration gave my family the chance to face misfortunes and difficulties. We can make plans and dreams for our future lives. We do not forget our house and our country and we hope that one day we will go back.

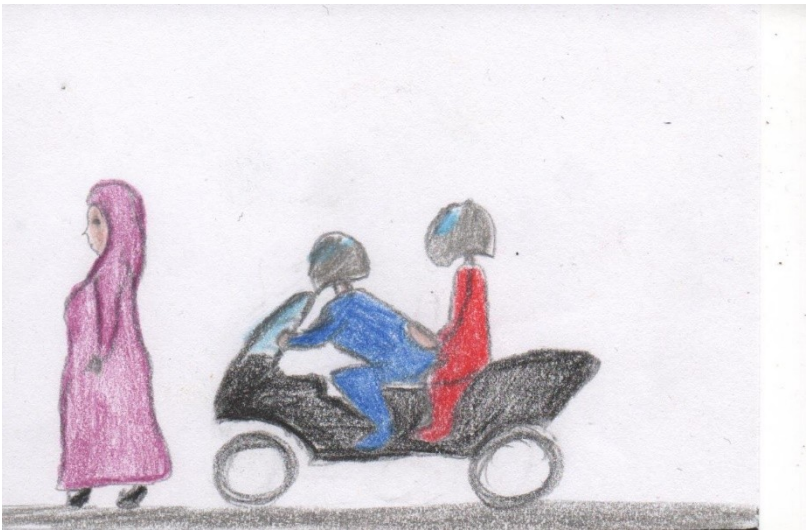


A REFUGEE STORY

Many refugees experience unbelievable hardship as they are forced to flee their homes, often leaving family members behind, and go in search of a better life. During the wars in Syria a nineteen year old girl named Amira had to leave her country in order to survive the war. She then had to live in exile in Egypt where she sought a better future.



Without a work permit in Egypt, Amira struggled through day shifts for low wages. As the months passed, she was getting more and more scared. One day, a motorcycle gang tried to kidnap her on the street. The war in Syria that drove her away from her family was in its fourth year. And the people who once welcomed her in Egypt had become weary of her.



Despite all this, Amira still had hope, because she was in love with another refugee, called Bassem. He promised to take her to safety in Europe where they would marry and build a new life. Amira knew the risks. Later that summer more than 2,000 migrants and refugees had already died crossing the Mediterranean that year. She didn't know how to swim, but for the second time in her life, she felt she had no choice but to flee.



So Bassem made a deal with smugglers to get them onto an old fishing boat that was packed with people and sail them to Cyprus. After two days at sea she started to get worried, and on the third day she told Bassem: "We will never reach the shore. We will all sink." As it seemed the smugglers made a double deal with the captain of the boat to throw them all in the freezing ocean. When the incident took place all of the immigrants were thrown in the sea and were left behind to die.



After a while a local fisherman passing by tried to save as many people as the boat could hold. Unfortunately, not many were still alive when the fisherman approached. Luckily Amira and Bassem survived and were taken to the shore. Medic help arrived and treated the injured . By the end of their horrifying adventure Amira and Bassem were left helpless, alone and scared, with no shelter or food.



As the years passed by the couple went through awful circumstances but managed to get back on their feet. They finally got a job that provided them with a satisfying salary so that they could rent a small apartment with heating and running water. Although, their life is a constant mix of fear, anxiety and hope for a better future they did not give up and overcame each struggle along the way



This is a story of a scared young woman who had no choice but to leave her loved ones behind. She was brave enough to travel to a foreign country to find safe shelter. Till this day Amira thinks to herself: "I wake up every day telling myself that this is a temporary situation and that things will get better soon. I hope so."

20 DECEMBER 2030

I look up, to my right and finally, to my left. No, there is no way out.

-Daughter: How much do you think the wall measures?

-Father: There are legends that say it can touch the clouds, but that's nothing for us.

-Daughter: So, why have not we crossed it before?

-Father: I needed you to get older. So, you could help me with your megastrength. You know I'm too weak and I could not do it without your help.



5 years planning this moment. Eventually, the day has come. Venezuela has fallen into Donald Trump's hands, and his wishes, which seemed never to be fulfilled, they are now a terrible reality. In my family we have always been fighting for our rights. On January 8, 2025 there was a demonstration so that once and for all, the bad conditions that we were facing every day would end. 2,500 people attended it. Among them, my wife. There were 5 deaths and my wife was one of them.

I should have attended that demonstration instead of her. She insisted that I had to stay looking after our 6-months-old daughter. She always said that she would prefer to die with dignity than living without being free. And that's what she did. Since then, Venezuela has been invaded by a terror wave. All the rebels has been murdered, and as I have already said before, I had to be quiet not to end up as the rest of my family. I had my daughter's life in my hands, and against that, everything else doesn't seem so important.

5 years living in a basement and devising a plan to leave this country. Now it is the final decision: I can fulfill it and face everything that can happen, or I can give up and keep on living afraid of going out because it could be the last time. There is no time. This decision will mark the end of the hardest stage we have been going through. I can remain idle dreaming of my daughter playing in the park without living a lie.



-**Daughter:** What is behind this big wall?

-**Father:** I don't know, but... we can check by ourselves? What do you think?

-**Daughter:** Ok, although I'm a little tired. When are we going to sleep?

-**Father:** There isn't much left, darling. We just have to make the last effort.

Okey, we are going to play a game, do you remember when we imagined at home that we were at the Olympic Games and we had to run as fast as possible to win the prize?

The police started to approach and we had less and less time to get our freedom.

-**Daughter:** And this time, what is the prize?

-**Father:** The best thing you can imagine. Now, when you hear a shot exactly like the one in the Olympics, run without looking back. We'll have our own Olympics Games.

BANG



Llegada

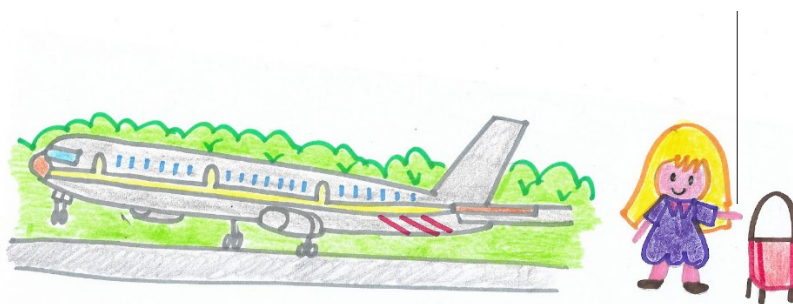
Inesperada

When you grow up in a country that does not have a healthy economy you can end up migrating to another country so your children can have more chances to have a better life, a future, and this is exactly what happened to me.

My parents twenty years ago left Ecuador and went to Spain leaving me with my grandmother.



At first, they would phone me but as they started working more hours they phoned less. They had to save 500 dollars every month for the household and my studies. We all made big sacrifices because when my grandmother fell ill I had to stop going to school to look after her and study at home. After a year of studying and hardly any news from my parents, I finally became a nurse. I never gave up. I wanted my grandmother to be proud of me. Sadly my grandmother died soon after and I wanted to find my parents so I worked for a year and saved enough money to be able to fly to Spain and begin the search or even start a new life..



I arrived in Spain and the first question I asked myself, what do I do now? I didn't know anyone, I was alone, and I didn't know the whereabouts of my parents. I didn't have a place to sleep. I didn't have any money and the first day I slept next to a container among cartons like a vagabond and cried myself to sleep.

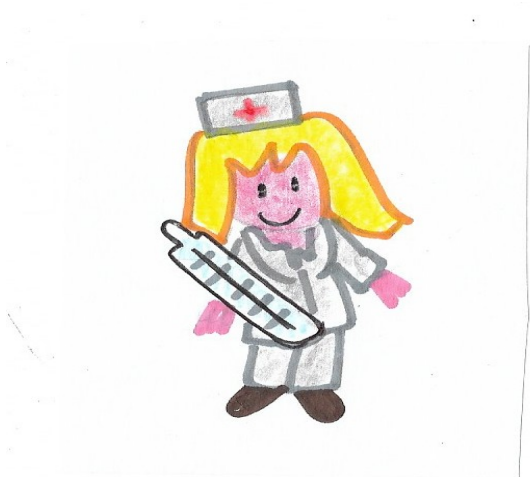


The next day I woke up thinking that everything had been a dream, unfortunately it wasn't, but even so I didn't give up. I didn't cry again. I got up, dressed and washed in a public toilet. My goal now was to find work and not to return to the place where I had slept. I got on my feet and began to ask everywhere but no one gave me an answer. I felt disappointed and very sad but I continued, finding a job as a clerk in a Colombian clothing store.



Now there was only one more problem to solve and that was where to live. I asked my new boss very nervously if she knew of any place to stay even if it was only for that night. To my surprise I got a fixed place to stay. It seemed like a dream, I started to cry but this time it was of joy and I thanked Silvia, my boss, for being such a wonderful human being. I spent 3 months working and living with her, I never paid for the rent or food because she said that she too had gone through the same thing that I had. The day came when Silvia told me that I had to leave because her niece from Colombia needed work. I never got angry with her for it because thanks to her I did not go back to sleep on the street. I simply thanked her for everything she had done for me. That same afternoon I picked up my things and once again I did not know where to go but I had saved a bit so I went to Murcia. I decided to go to a cheap hotel but comfortable and that night I slept well. The next day the first thing I did was to start again to look for work but nobody needed anybody. Finally I found

work in a field and that was what I did. I paid 2 nights in the hotel and on the third day I found a flat to rent and I moved there. I had to get up early at 5 am to go to work. My job was to cut lettuce in the field. I would get up at 5 am. It was terribly cold but I had to endure it if I wanted to get ahead. I worked 4 long months and every day that passed I wondered why I was there. If I had studies that was not my job that was not the job I wanted, so I decided to get out of that hard work and find the job that I really wanted to do, nursing. I did a course to go back to review everything. I studied with so much effort and dedication. The teachers were so happy with me that they recommended me in clinics and hospitals and fortunately gave me a position in one of them and here I am after 9 years very happy to devote myself to what I like and two children of my own.



A

BETTER

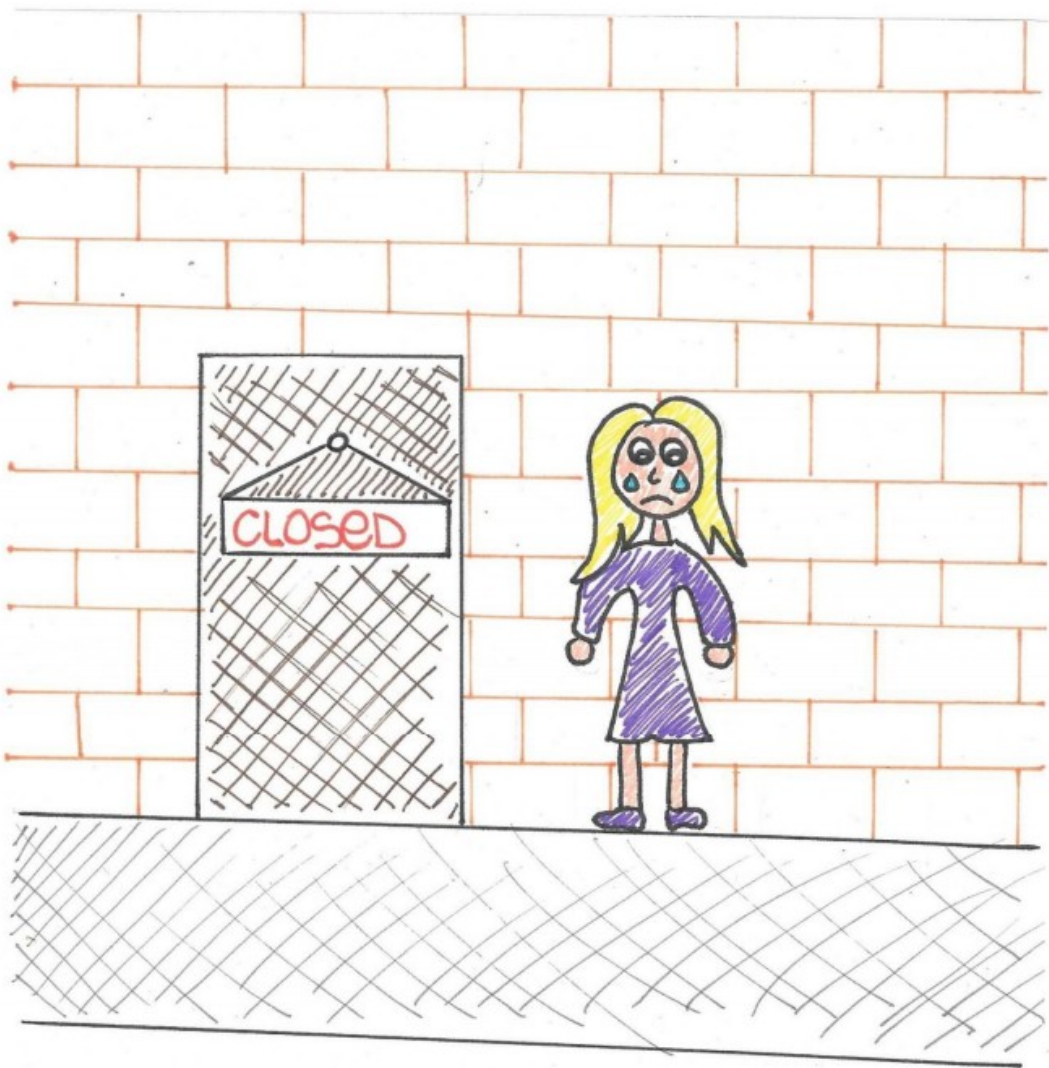
FUTURE

Poverty used to be one of the major reasons of immigration and still pushes people of all social ranks and ages to move to other countries, looking for their “Edem”. Young people usually want a very well-paid job as soon as they finish their university studies. They cannot wait for long and if nothing good arises in their life, they just look for a job in other countries. Nowadays it seems the easiest thing to search on the internet for everything. The hard economic crisis which is spread all over the globe is another crucial reason to immigrate to countries where the social level of living is importantly high.

For all the young people the changing of their way of life is not extremely difficult especially if they know that they are going to get a remarkable salary.

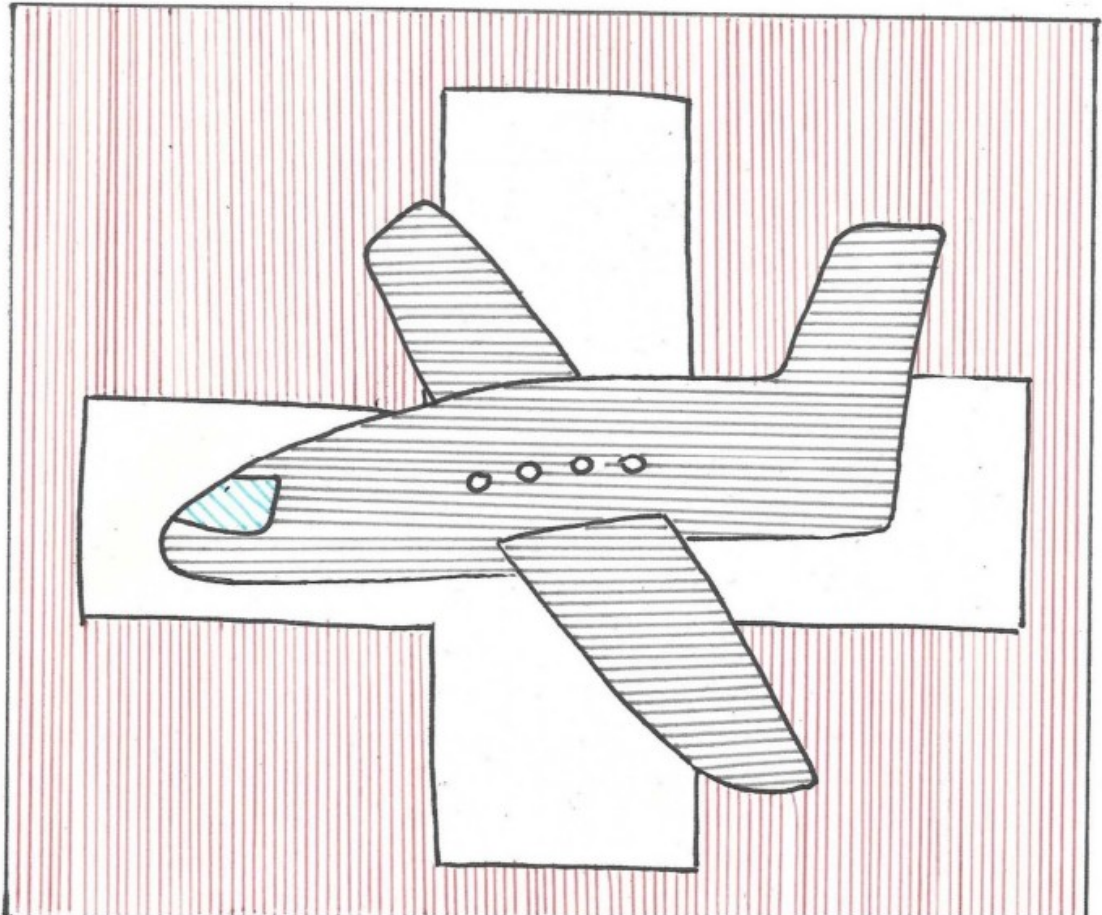
Elli was twenty-seven when the crisis hit the architecture-office she was working at. She was fired after five years she was working for them.

As an unemployed young woman she went through depression at the beginning but after a few weeks she realized that crying was not the solution to her problem. She could not find another job with the same terms and the salary she used to get in her previous one. So she decided to search in the internet to find a job in another country. It was not as difficult as it is for other professions.

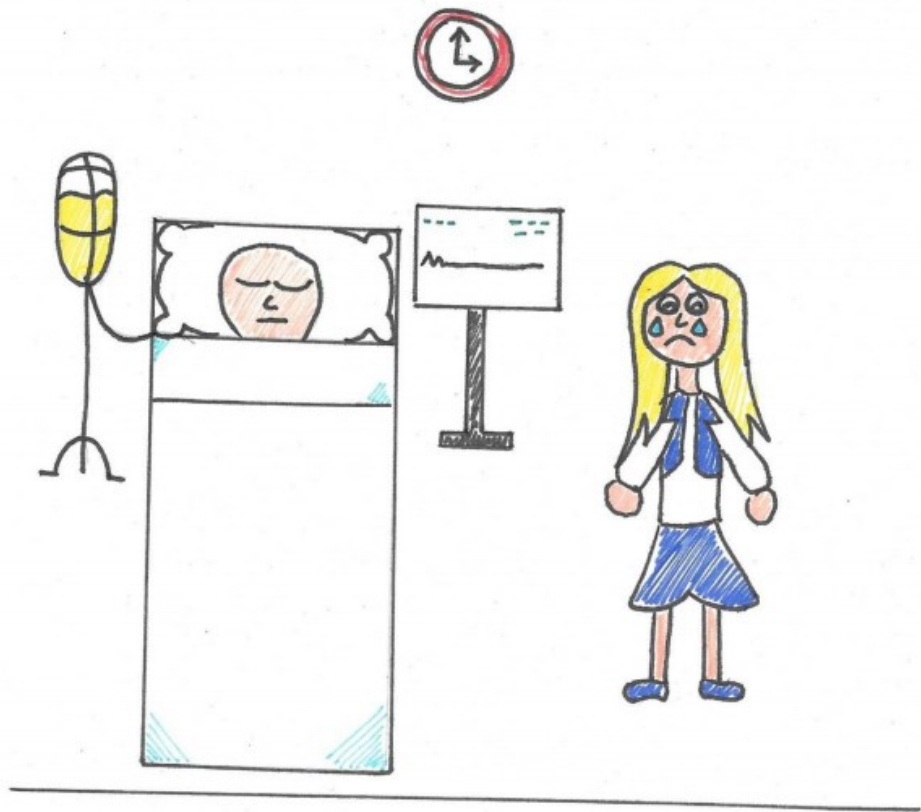


She found a great job in Switzerland for ten thousand euros a month. It was an important career opportunity and she could not miss it. Her mother was very sad when Elli announced the news to her but she knew that her daughter would be unhappy if she stayed in Greece without a job. So Elli prepared everything and left for the new country. She was happy because in this way she would be able to help her mother and she could fulfil all her dreams.

As an immigrant she did not find any difficulties there and the Swiss were very helpful with all the foreigners. Elli made a lot of friends there and the only thing that made her feel sad was the thought of her mother.



She was about to send her the ticket to come to Switzerland when she had a phone call from Greece. Her mother was in hospital. She was very ill but she did not want her daughter to know. The diagnosis showed aggressive cancer. Elli was confused. She did not know what to do. The manager of the company she was working for offered the best solution: "You can stay in Greece for as long as you wish. Your post can wait for you".



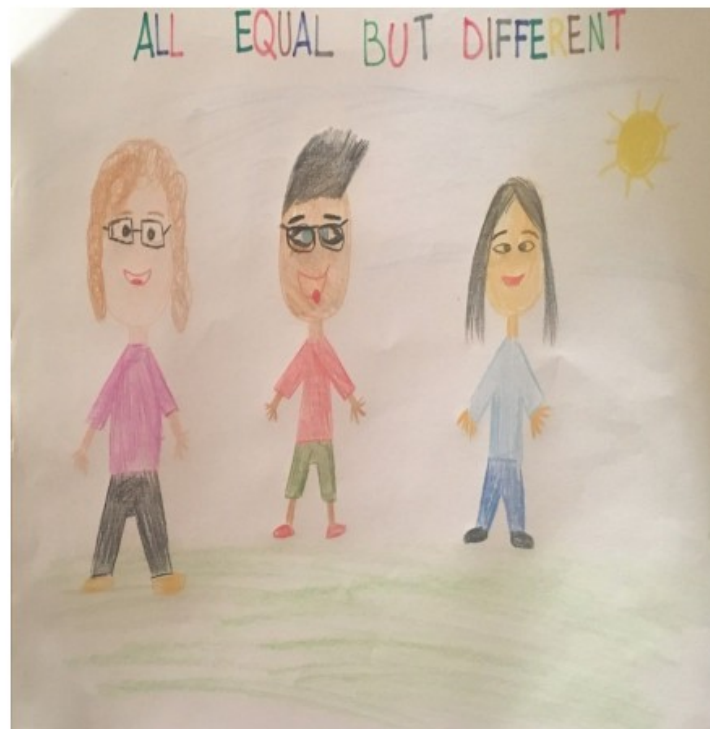
Elli had stayed in Greece for two months only.
After her mother had passed away she went back to Switzerland. It was her new homeland. She had a new house, new friends and a brand new life to live. After all our homeland consists of the people we love and care and share things with. They say that “No place is like home”. But home is only our family.....



THE END

COLORS marked

Today is "Colour-Day", a party at secondary school "All Equal but Different". At this party everyone is painted in a colour; orange, red, blue ... and different types of activities and games are done for the whole school. But it has not always been like this.



It all started thanks to a child from The Congo and his group of friends. September arrived and a new course began with new people. That year a child named Max from The Congo registered. Max started the course as the rest of his classmates

although with some difficulties because he didn't control the language perfectly. But even so, he got good marks and he behaved well in class. He made a group of friends very quickly and with them he spent time and met up almost every afternoon. But after a few months some older students waited for him by the door when everyone was already going home. They took his backpack and threw all his books on the ground. They told him that they didn't want blacks in their high school, that it would make people laugh at them. Max didn't say anything at home because of the shame and fear. He left his new group of friends aside because he didn't want to lie to them about what had happened that day. He began to miss class and get worse marks. His friends wanted to know what was wrong, but he said nothing. In the end he couldn't keep it anymore and he ended up confessing what he had been hiding all this time. He told them all the things those children had said to him that day at the door. His friends didn't know what to do and they went home sadly thinking about how they could help.

It only took a couple of days for Sam to get all the group together except for Max and design a plan. The next day they would paint their faces and arms in a different color. For example, Peter, a boy who was very athletic, decided to paint himself pink and Julia, a very flirtatious ballerina was painted green. There were five of them in the group and so five colours were chosen; pink, green, blue, red and gray. And so the five friends were painted, each one in the agreed colour, to look for Max. Max felt a bit surprised at first but then it was funny to see them so colourful, they looked like Martians.

They spent the whole day together and if someone asked them, they answered that they were like that, that they were that color. So, if they made fun of Max they made fun of everyone.

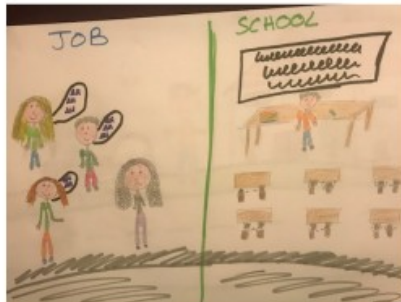
The immigration has a solution

A few years ago, where poverty abounded, a topic emerged that became known, immigration. It was a subject everyone was talking about since it was something that was happening. Oliver a boy of 16 years whose mother was of foreign origin (Venezuelan) and the Spanish father, he always wondered why his mother decided to immigrate to this country, which led him to have a serious talk to her one Sunday afternoon.



After the long conversation he came to the conclusion that he did not come here for pleasure but to work and be able to survive. He said that it is very hard to come to a country where you will be rejected but thanks to that you met your father and he could have him. Hearing those words from his own mother left him shocked and he was made reflect that we all deserve to be able to immigrate to another country and we should have a more open mind when receiving immigrants because they deserve a decent life. Oliver has seen how every day discriminate against his mother for being from another country and instead his father is treated much better. Seeing that they discriminate against their mother, they think that they should do something since no one deserves to be treated like that her mother works in a cleaning company but instead she has a career and her studies

done but for the simple fact of being Venezuelan they do not accept it. Oliver has seen how her boss sometimes mistreated her verbally and belittling her and can not let her plus. His father works as a teacher in a private school and he is not treated like that. To see all this Oliver decides to invent a plan in which all young people can help to avoid these things that are happening.

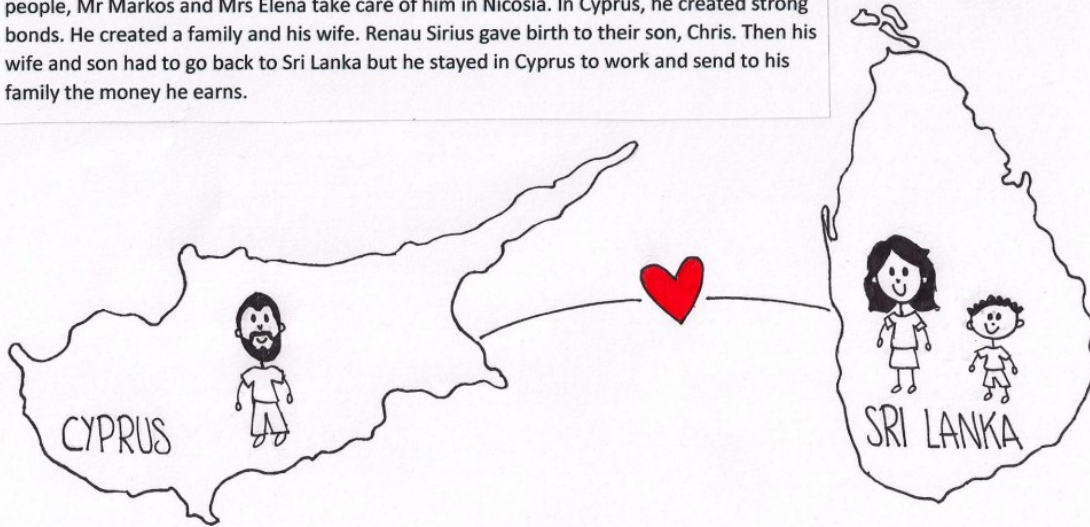


Oliver had the idea to make all the young people through talks given by associations in which he collaborated that went against racism and social exclusion so he can help to young people to raise awareness that we should help young people who come of difficult situations to be integrated and to not exclude them since they would not feel well and could bring more serious problems in addition to us if we go to other country we would not like that do that to us. Oliver every week was giving the talks and saw how the young people were slowly going becoming aware and how they were helping people from other countries to integrate; oliver to see that all his efforts had been successful he was very happy because he thought that now with everything he had done, fewer people would feel bad because there would be many people who would would help to integrate with this I draw the conclusion that all with our differences are same as it does not matter where we were born that it does not matter what race we are allWe deserve to have a decent life and if we need to emigrate to another country and we must help us all because after all we are human and have feelings.



Kami

Kami from Sri Lanka lives and works in Cyprus for the last three years. A couple of elderly people, Mr Markos and Mrs Elena take care of him in Nicosia. In Cyprus, he created strong bonds. He created a family and his wife, Renau Sirius gave birth to their son, Chris. Then his wife and son had to go back to Sri Lanka but he stayed in Cyprus to work and send to his family the money he earns.





I am 16 years old. My mother and I are both from Guatemala. My mother was forced to have sexual intercourse when she was 14. She got kicked out and struggled trying to find a place to sleep. My father heard about it and didn't care. His sister gave her a place to sleep but the problem was that the place was really little and filled with bugs. She had to sleep with those bugs everyday. She was 15 with a new born. My father at the time was having dreams about me. He wanted my mom and I to come to the United States. I don't know why he didn't go to a lawyer and try to work things out. He is a citizen, and yet he decided to bring us illegally. I was five years old at the time. I remember the day. My mother just told me to be quiet if I wanted to see my father. I remember holding my breath for some time waiting for the car to cross. It was the most sad and yet happy day of my life. I think my mom just wanted a better future for me. She wasn't making much and she knew my dad would help out. I don't really remember the day I saw my dad for the first time, but the years with him were amazing. Everything changed when he left back to Guatemala and wanted us to go back. My mom saw how I was doing in school and how we didn't suffer like we did back home. She didn't want to go back and she didn't. She later on went to Chicago. Her sister let her stay with her, and it was awful. My aunt was really selfish and mean. My mom didn't like that at all. We later on moved to California and she met a guy. It was the worst five years of my life. The guy didn't treat her the way my dad did. She was scared and worried for her life, and so was I. I don't want to go more into that. We recently moved out. I think now that she is on her own, she is working hard and being the best mom. After all this my main focus is just doing well in school and going to college. It is my main goal to finish college and look and my mom and thank her for staying and making my dreams come true of being someone in life.

anonymous

San Bernardino California



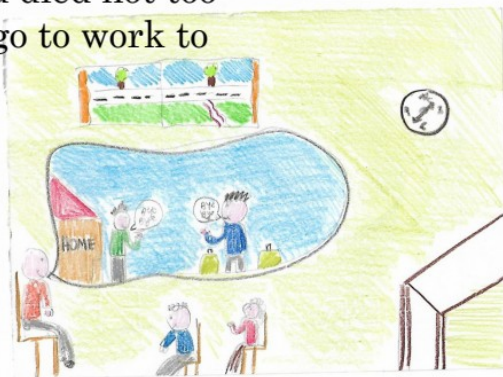
They start working at the age of five and they must work twelve hours a day. Besides, they don't have enough food or water to live. Because of that, they don't have enough strength and they are exhausted at the end of the day



I was very surprised so when I was at home I told my family. My grandfather asked me a lot of questions. At the beginning I did not know why but after words I asked him and he told me his story



In that time, there was not so many years, live was harder and here, in the Canary Islands, there wasn't everything we needed and it was difficult to find supplies to pass the day. I am the eldest brother and, because of the fact that my father had died not too long ago, I had to go to work to another place.



A Spanish Company, which was placed in Sahara, hired me so I moved to Sahara to work in a mine. It was hard to be away from my family but I had no choice, I was the last hope for my family. While I was living there I met a lot of people who were working with me. They earned much less than me and they barely have enough to pass the day. They had ten children and just a salary to maintain them because women aren't allowed to work. They didn't have free days or holidays and not even a break.



Because of the wars me and my Friends had to leave to survive, living many of our friends and habits. By that time I had saved enough money and I could come back but many of them had to kept living in the middle of the desert, far away from their civilisation. I have lost contact with them but the last thing I knew was that most of them had lost their families. Your new classmate must be their son or grandson

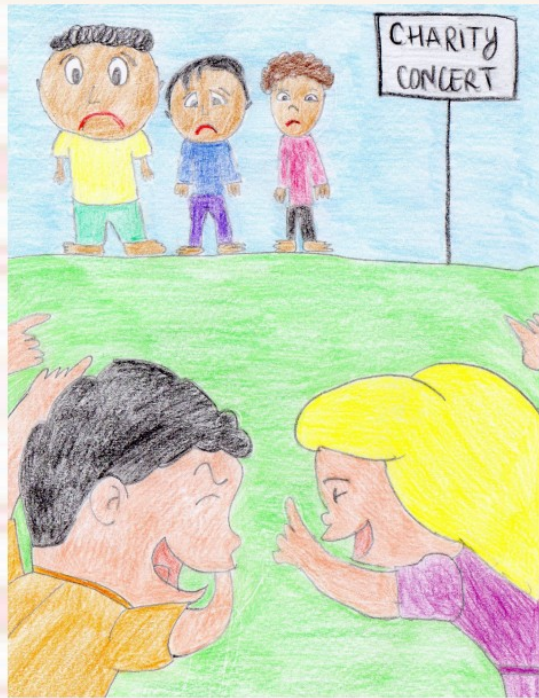


Now I have realized that I have many classmates from other countries and I have never talked to them, it is time to change that.

The
end



When I was in my last year of school, on my return from holidays ; We went to a charity concert organized by the City Council to raise funds for refugee children. Once there, I saw how a crowd of children without resources from Africa arrived. My classmates made fun of them because they were barefoot ... I did not find it funny. The children did not have a good look.



The situation changed when the concert began, a very pleasant atmosphere was formed, the lyrics of the songs made you think. And right there I gave thanks for being born in the conditions I have, for having a family, a decent home, education, food, clothing ... and for being able to be free.

Months later, my uncles, who had no children, welcomed an orphan child. His name was Dosu and he was 12 years old, he came from Israel and he had Muslim beliefs. He entered the school at midterm and it was hard, everyone looked at him but nobody came to talk to him, they criticized him for being different; He felt excluded. I approached him, I became his friend, he was very happy.



Dosu told me how his previous life had been, everything he had to endure. Someone burned his old house and his father died in the fire trying to rescue his little brother. His mother and he were able to escape from there and they went to Egypt. Soon robbers took his mother as a hostage and from that day, Dosu was an orphan child. He was living in an orphanage in Libya with other children who had also been through similar situations. In their countries, one could not live with dignity and they wanted to find better conditions to live. One day a charity of Spanish Homeless Children, traveling through different countries, appeared at their refuge and took them to Spain. There they fed them, cleaned them and gave them clothes, to be adopted. A year later my uncles welcomed him and then ... There he was, telling me the tragedies he had been through



Dosu and I became close friends, while others despised him and insulted him for being from another nationality. At school everybody was Spanish and Christian, except Dosu who was Israeli and Muslim. He only had me as a friend, he felt alone, he did not understand why others did not want to be his friends if he was a person just like them.



One day Dosu wanted to tell all the students his story, he went to the principal's office and started talking on the public address system. I wanted to explain to them that all children are not as lucky as them, who have been born in a good living conditions, where they can go to school, where they have water and food, a family, clothes, toys ... There are people that unfortunately have been born in complicated situations, wars, poverty. Nobody wants to have that. We all have the right to be happy and to have a decent life, that everyone is equal regardless of their origin, skin color ... His words made the rest of the students reflect, no matter where he came from, they wanted to know him and know more about his life, they wanted to help him and become friends.



Up to this day Dosu and I are best friends, and we go every weekend to watch football with the other students .





Evanthia and Vasnia

As soon as Vasnia was born her mother died from pneumonia, there weren't any medicines or money for her treatment, so the infant of the family was without a mother. Vasnia was the second child, the older sister Evanthia was four years old so the father had to get married immediately in order to find a woman to take care of his two daughters. The new wife unfortunately cared mostly for herself and especially the new kids they had.

Evanthia and Vasnia were the older children so they had to take care of the house and the four younger children her father had with the new wife. Their life was difficult and painful as the obligations for these two young girls were too heavy to tolerate. At the age of twelve Evanthia and Vania were sent to the capital of the country to work. They were living with an aunt who took care of them but they had to work and took care of the house. They were cleaning the stairs of various block of flats, babysitting children from the neighbourhood and their aunt sent them to become hairdressers but still continue to clean floors, iron clothes,...

Life was really difficult for the two girls but at least they were together. They were living in the capital for three years doing the same things day by day and at the same time they grew up and became very beautiful girls. Evanthia got engaged to a young man she hardly knew and moved to Germany. Vasnia fell in love to a young man and moved to his country.

Life was not easy for the two sisters and the distance between them was the biggest sorrow for them. The two sisters met only once after 25 years. They admitted that this was the happiest days of their lives. A few years later Vasnia died and a year later Evanthia.

Stories Index

n	Title	pg
1	The war of all us written by Patricia Trenza illustrated by Giulia Rossi	2
2	My own story written by Cypriot students illustrated by Francesca Gerosa and Anna Colombo	6
3	A refugee story written by Cypriot students illustrated by Cecilia Giardini	8
4	20th December 2030 written by Raquel Lario Lopez and paula Marin Sirvent illustrated by Laura Giudici and Greta Spreafico	13
5	Llegada Inesperada written by Joselin Tocto, Carla Sarango and Cristina Johana illustrated by Martina Lombardi	15
6	A better future written by Cypriot students illustrated by Alessia Motta	19
7	Colors marked written by Meixi Periago Jimenez illustrated by Rita Cavallo	29
8	Immigration has a solution written by Nia Gisela and Alfonso illustrated by Lucrezia Turco	31
9	Kami written by Cypriot students illustrated by Alessia Torchio	33
10	I am 16 years old written by Cypriot students illustrated by Beatrice Paroli	34
11	Multicultural story written by Lorean, Sandra and Lola illustrated Lucia Prandoni	36
12	My new friend Dosu written by Lorena Martinez and Antonio Lario illustrated by Giorgia Salvalaggio and Giulia Marcianò	40
13	Evanthia and Vasia written by Cypriot students illustrated by Lucrezia Bonaiti	44