

## About the book

Myriem's friends, kids from all over the world, touched by the dramatic life of refugees wanted to write a collaborative story dedicated to all those children who have lost their childhood somewhere on the road to exile.



# About the Author

**This story was written by students who participated in eTwinning**

**project “Myriem and friends citizens of a better world”**  
“.

(in order of writing)

- 4th Junior High School Petroupolis (Greece)
- Les Augusto Gonzales de Linares (Santander-Spain)
- 1st Kinderganden of Pylos (Greece)
- Osnovna škola Ivana Mažuranića ( Vinkovci, Croatia)
- Collège Pilote de Sfax (Tunisia)
- Junior High School of Krokos (Greece)
- Primary School of Pastida (Greece)

# Preface

What is the common ground between Greece (Petroupoli, Pastida, Pylos, Krokos), Tunisia (Sfax), Spain (Santander), and Croatia (Vinkovci)? The answer is the current e-book, a collaborative story about a boy from Syria. The refugee issue, seems unsolved, but not in children's mind and heart. They can dream hope and draw love in a such a simple way, that almost persuade us, the older and wiser (?) ones, that a solution is possible.

Maybe we should hear what they have to say or better "read" that!



# Jacob

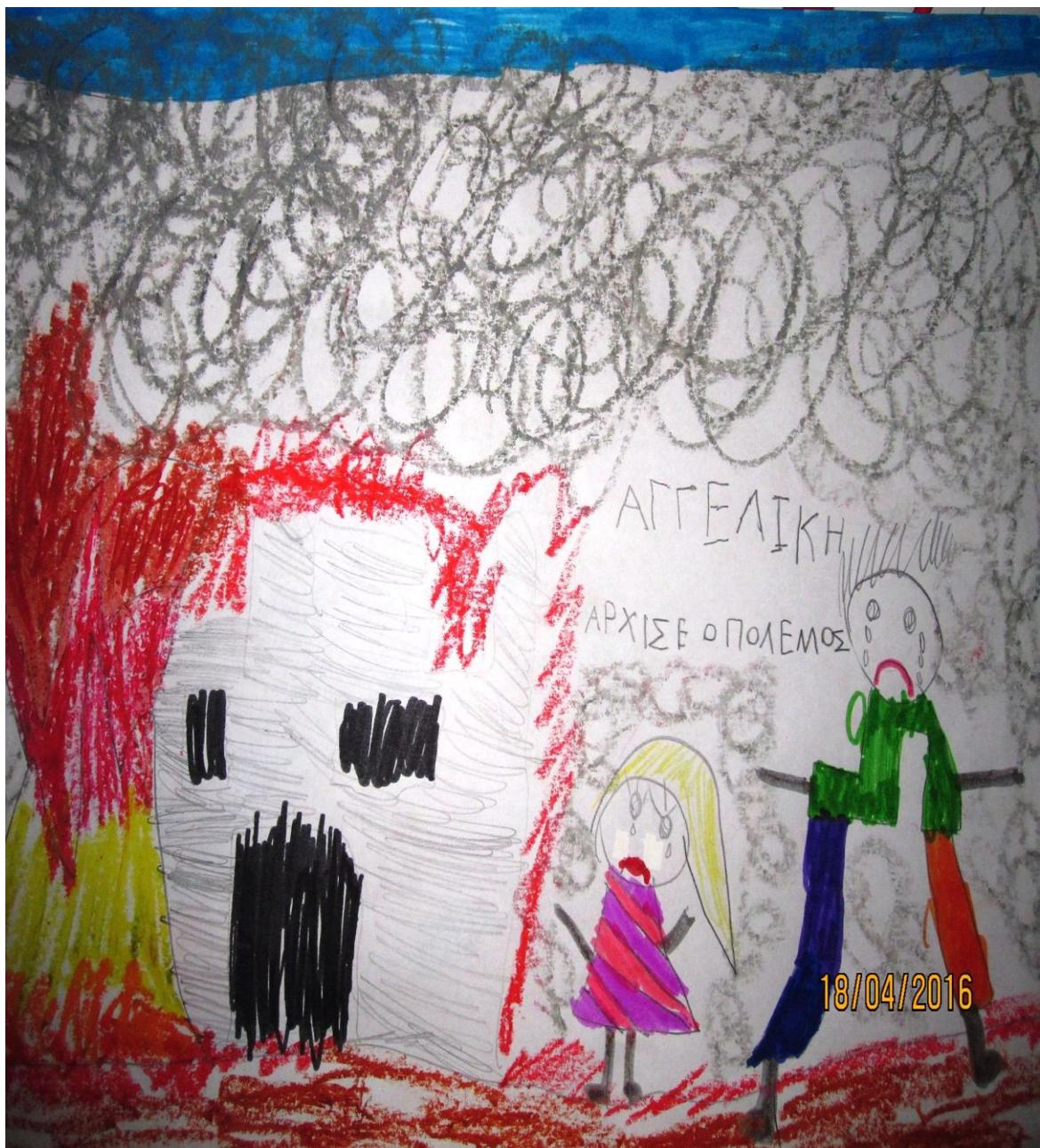
My name is Jacob and I am sharing my diary with you. Actually I have no diary now. Just sharing thoughts...

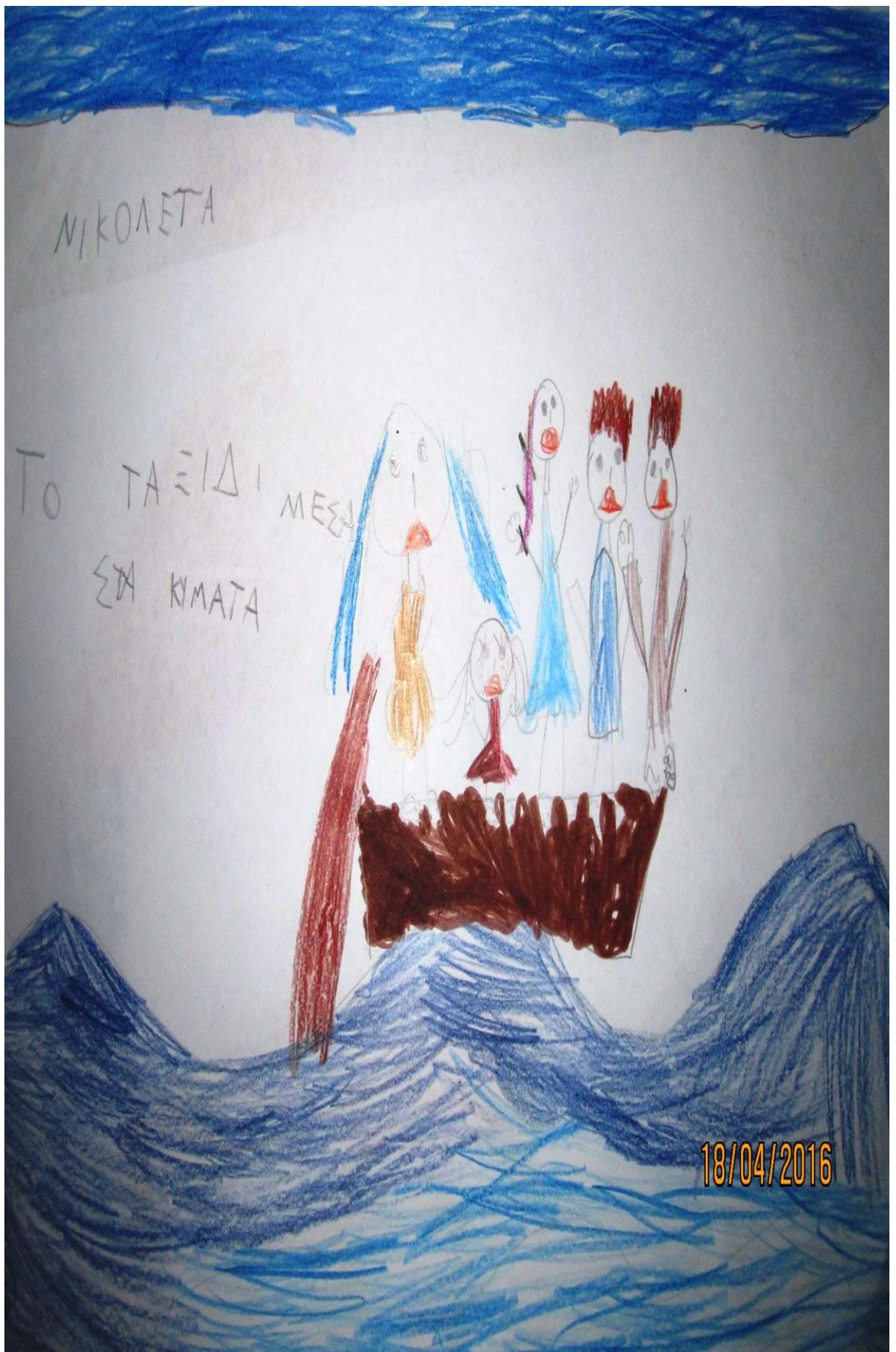
I am 13 years old and I come from Syria. I have a family and I had a beautiful house in Damaskos and I was living a normal life till 2012 when the war had begun.



I remember that day. I was in my bedroom playing with my sister Ivy. Suddenly I heard a siren and my mother broke into the room and she asked us to leave the house immediately because it would be bombing...

(Greece-Petroupoli, 2<sup>nd</sup> February)





Now, we live in a camp, a refugees' camp, as they call it. I share a quite big tent with Ivy, my mum and other families from Damaskos and from other villages near there.

My dad is missing... He worked in an electrical factory and when the bombing began he was at work. He is a brave man and I'm sure he is looking for us. I'm sure he doesn't want me to be sad nor unhappy so I'll keep myself hopeful and positive.

I want to tell you how is my life here....

(Spain-Santander, 11<sup>th</sup> February)



# Life in the camp

Life in the camp is very difficult. Imagine you wake up and you do not have your daddy besides you. Imagine you wake up and you do not have your bed but you are on the floor. Imagine that there is no ceiling or walls to protect you but only a tent. Imagine that you have not your warm clothes neither your shoes, nor your toys.



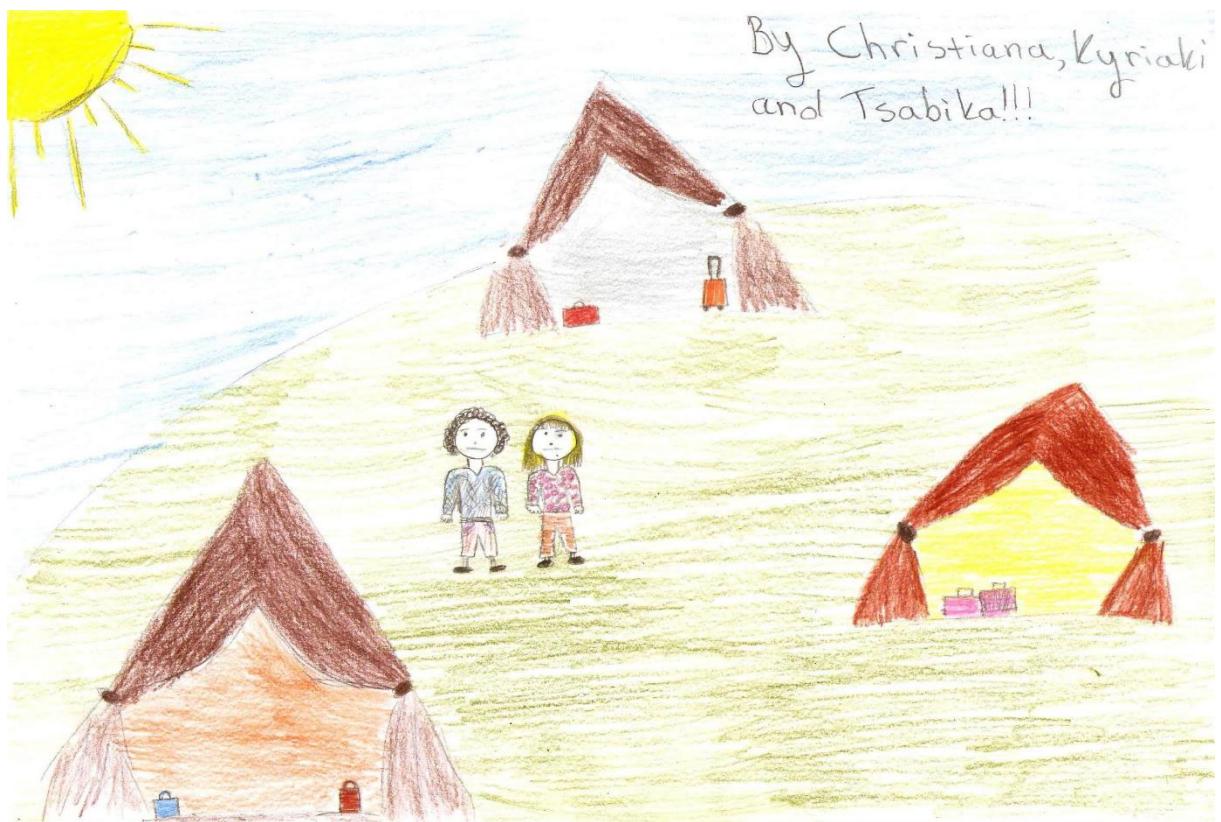
Although we are too many children in the camp, we are playing together and sharing the same dream "to be simply normal children".

Let me tell you what games are we playing in the camp...

(Pylos- Greece, 24<sup>th</sup> February)

During the day we play games which our mothers played when they were young. My sister's favourite one is outdoor bowling. It's easy to play.

We fill empty water bottles with sand. These bottles are the pins. Then we arrange the bottles in a triangle and take turns to bowl and keep score. The child who scores the maximum points is the winner.



On rainy days we stay in the tent and play Chinese whisper, which is my favourite game. It's easy to get 10 plus people. The more people involved, the better, because the message being passed around is likely to become very distorted and even funnier.



We write a few messages down on paper that consists of at least ten words and sit down on the ground in a circle or a line. The first player takes the message note and explains the message to the next person by whispering it in their ear. We end one else must hear. The next person has to say whatever they heard, also fast in the same manner, to the next person. It continues on around the circle or down the line. The game goes on until the last person says whatever they heard loud and the first person reveals the real message. When compare them, we usually have a great laugh!

(Croatia - Vinkovci, 4<sup>th</sup> March)

# Mum

We don't have our beds, but bedtime chat with my mum is all that matters. In fact, I learnt that her voice, by my side, is the only thing I need at the moment.

At home, my mum used to be a woman who quietly went to work, prepared meals in our kitchen and enjoyed our weekends. She is a completely different person here. Strong and brave, fights with everything she has, to protect us, her kids. I'm happy to have a mum like her.

While trying to sleep I hug her and Ivy. I want them to be safe and sound and know that I will protect them until daddy comes. And he will come, I'm sure...

*(Croatia - Vinkovci, 4<sup>th</sup> March)*

# The letter

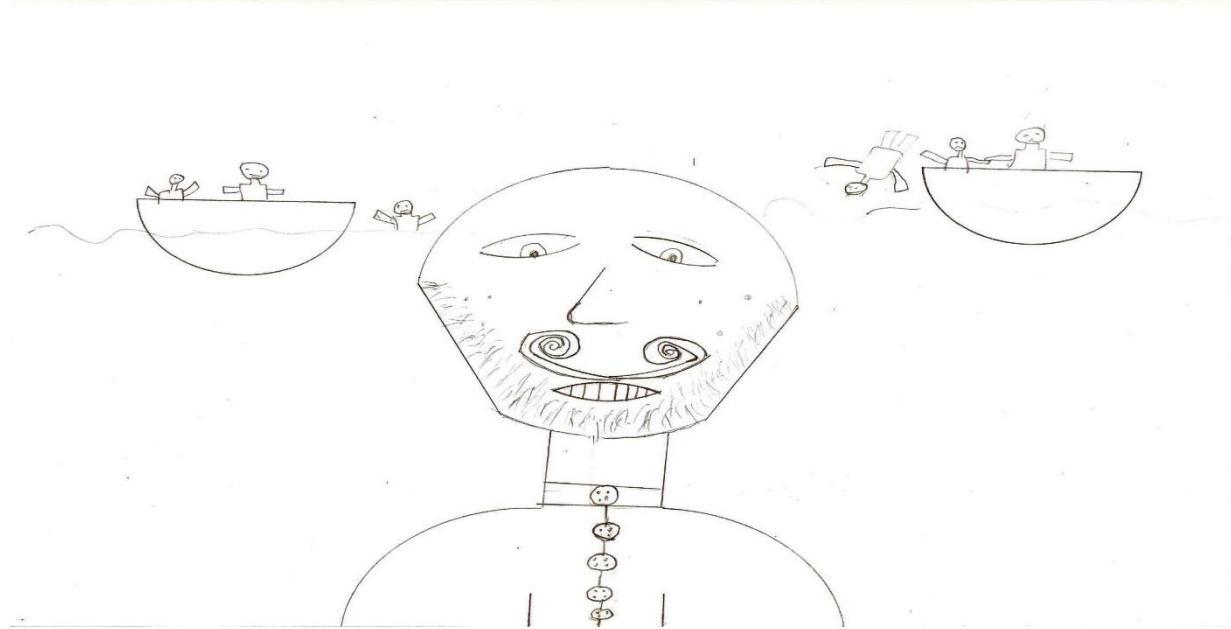
One day, after losing hope, a letter came up from nowhere. Everybody in the tent got so excited and scared at the same time. The letter was meant to me. I opened it and read:

"Dear Jacob, I was miraculously saved from the war. I'm trying to get to you as fast as I can, hoping to see you once again. I couldn't find you in the refugees that I have visited. So I've been sending letters to every Syrian camp. Whenever you get my letter, please reply.

With all my affection,

your Dad "

(Tunisia-Sfax, 7<sup>th</sup> March)



When I saw the envelop I couldn't believe to my eyes.

It opened a big door to hope. It was like a rainbow. It seemed that all around me were happy and smiley. I felt that I was strong enough to struggle with all the problems and difficulties. My dad was alive and soon will be all together.

Suddenly I thought that my father regards me as the man of our family, as he posted this letter to me. So I have to support my family more. As Ivy stands by my mother helping her in cooking and keeping our tend clear, I have to help them more efficiently until my dad finds us.

That night I stayed awake thinking all these and I tried to find a solution. And then the rain started and out tend.....

(Krokos -Greece- 9<sup>th</sup> March)

# The storm

Our tent was destroyed because of the heavy storm. Everything was covered up with mud. I saw my mom and Ivy crying. Everything we had was gone. Now we had to find another place to live in, food, supplies. We started cleaning up and picked up our dirty clothes from the ground.

The morning after something unexpected happened. A lorry full of volunteers arrived at the refugee camp. Mum yelled at us and told us to come out of the tent and lead to the lorry. The volunteers had brought with them food supplies, clean water, new clothes, and materials to mend our tents.

Everyone was hitting and pushing each other in order to get as many things as they could. I managed to reach my mum and helped her carry the supplies.

After that, me and Ivy started to mend the tent while mum was preparing lunch. Everything was coming back to normal. The question is; who had informed the volunteers about the disaster?

A few days after, while I was playing Chinese whisper with my friends, Ivy told me that she had something for me. It was a letter - hopefully from my dad.

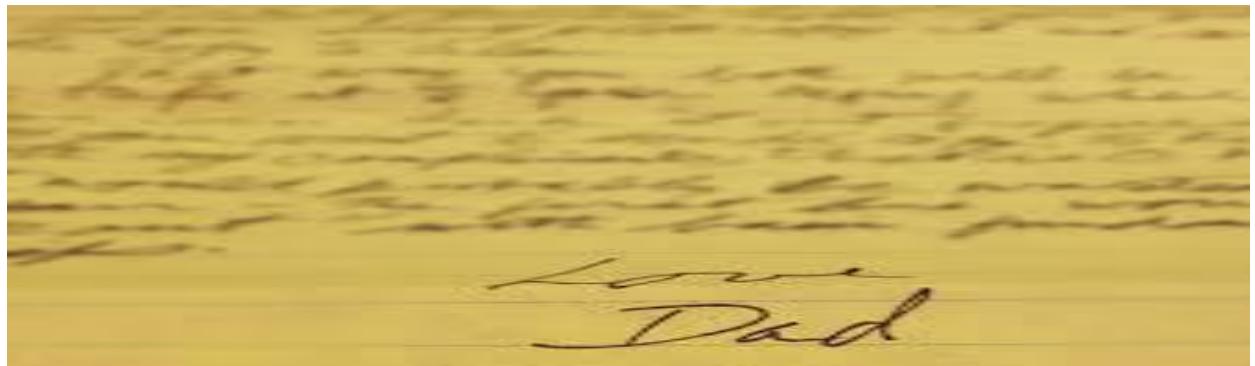
“Dear Jacob,

I guess you didn’t expect a letter from me. I hope everything is okay and volunteers helped you a lot. When I found out about the disasters the storm caused at your refugee camp I called the search party and told them about your camp. Then they immediately came for help.

Anyway, the reason I’m writing this letter is to tell you that I’m coming back to you very soon with tickets and we will return to Syria to our loved home in Damaskos. I’m looking forward to see you again after all these years and explain to you the reasons I abandoned you after all. How’s mom and Ivy? Please don’t tell them a thing; I want it to be a surprise.

Love,

Dad”



I kept my dad’s secret safe. I waited for my dad every day for two weeks, but none came.

(Petroupoli-Greece, 31<sup>st</sup> March)

# Volunteers give hope

Now I'm really happy because my Dad is meeting us soon. I'm keeping the secret and I won't tell anyone that he's coming to the camp and we are coming back to Damaskos. Good news from journalists and volunteers are spreading in the camp: at last, a new government in Syria is getting ready and international power is helping my country to recover from war.

I wonder if my Dad has been working with important politicians and with people who rules our country... I wonder if he is going to help all the families here in the camp to return to our country... My Dad is a brave and wise man and I quite believe that he has been working for peace somewhere...

Here in the camp I've felt the solidarity of volunteers coming from many many countries, such as Greece, Romania, Croatia, Tunisia, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Ukraine, Cyprus, ...and all of them have gave me their support and love. They have talked to me about MYRIEM AND MYRIEM'S FRIENDS... I didn't know who was Myriem but now she and all her friends have become my own good friends and their messages have made me strong and hopeful.

Myriem's friends from Santander almost cried when they knew about my story and wanted me to go to their home....

Nevertheless, I want to come back to Syria with Dad, Mum and Ivy....

*(Spain-Santander, 10<sup>th</sup> April)*



# Dreams

Maybe, some day in the future, that I'll become a great writer, I'll travel to Spain and to all the other places where Myriem's friends live and try to find them, so as to write down their stories.

At night, when darkness spreads above our tents, you can hear people crying, talking, praying...

but no... I'm only dreaming my new life, back in Syria, where I am a famous writer!!! I'm writing and I'm writing the story of my people, who travelled all over the world risking their lives in order to ...save their lives. I want my book to be full of images, emotions and hope!!! That's why I must travel to the countries that helped us or hated us or afraid us or.... That's my dream!! I only have to figured out the title and my dream would come true.

*(Pastida- Greece, 12<sup>th</sup> April)*

Myriam  
Cityzen of the  
World!!!

