

Diary of a Desperate Child

11 August 2021

I see vast vacant land as this substantial A380 soars over the very picturesque Australian countryside. My loving father is right by my side as we both venture on this unanticipated journey together, to say our last goodbyes to my ailing grandmother. Unfortunately, we were more than a month slow to finally board this long-awaited flight because of all the stringent COVID 19 restrictions. Luckily, the very strict Australian authorities finally granted us an exemption on compassionate grounds.

12 August 2021

After what seemed like an entire week, the colossal plane cautiously lands on the never-ending runway of Khwaja Rawash Airport. Once the gigantic passenger doors of the aircraft open, me and my dad bolt out into the claustrophobic airport. We expeditiously go through customs in record-breaking time, and we take a local night Taxi to my Grandma's ravaged home in the Bist Hazari district. On the way, I dearly hope and constantly pray that my loving grandmother is still in a stable condition.

13 August 2021

We arrive at my wrecked grandma's house at the dead of night; it must be 12:00 am here or something. My dad pays the impatient taxi driver, who is elated he is receiving Australian money. Then Adrenaline rushes through me as I rush towards the door, my loving dad chasing behind me. I knock on the door three times, no answer. Then my dad breaks in, only to see my grandmother dead on the rubble of her house. We both start to cry, then out of the blue, a gunshot is fired.

14 August 2021

The last two days have been unbelievably hectic; we have been continuously running ever since we heard that loud gunshot. Word on the street says the Taliban have taken over Kabul! My mother warned us about the terrifying Taliban, saying they have already brutally taken over strategic towns in Afghanistan! We tried rushing back to the chaotic airport, but it is way too risky; the Taliban have killed many people who have attempted to endeavour on this treacherous journey.

15 August 2021

Suddenly, a big army truck with men with massive machine guns are chasing after us. We try to dodge them, but the bullets continue to come. After a while, they catch up to us. Desperate, my dad quickly creates a diversion; he says to me, “Goodbye, son” and he surrenders whilst I run into an alleyway. Out of the corner of my eye, I can see the men torturing him to death as tears run down my blood-red eyes. I ponder why they went for us; then I remembered we are Shia Muslims.

16 August 2021

Awake and freezing cold, I finally find shelter under a secure roof nearby. I struggle to get over my dad's tragic and sudden death. Then I ask myself a daunting question, why do people have to murder other people just because of their race or religion? This thought echoes in my head for a while. Then, abruptly I hear a rambunctious radio nearby; it's broadcasting Australia's evacuation mission. I'm an Australian; I still have time to get out of this mess. Tired, I start bolting to the airport.

17 August 2021

With absolutely no other option, I keep running hurriedly towards the crowded airport. I may be risking my life, but what choice do I have? There is nothing left for me here in this country! Looking back on what has sadly occurred in my time here, right now, I just want to be someplace safe, in my mother's arms. My heart is edging me forward, but my battered and bruised legs can not take it anymore; it's getting dark anyway. So I rest uncomfortably in a dried-up waterway nearby.

18 August 2021

I am awakened in broad daylight by some boisterous crows circling around me. Suddenly, it occurred to me that I have been sleeping for 10 hours. Without even processing what happened, I rapidly sprint towards the airfield. Then I see something that will change my life forever. Looking up, I see the last Australian evacuation flight gracefully flying towards Oz. My very last beacon of hope, gone. Tears run down my fatigued eyes as I asked myself, why does our fate in this cruel world heavily rely on race and religion? I hope that one day in the foreseeable future, people will truly see that we are all equal. Maybe, one day soon.

Written by Joshua Jansen