



NASIMGUL

*"Me that i am afraid to even go near the sea
and can not swim, stayed 18 hours in the
waves alive! nobody believes this."*

Nasimgul



w2eu

***Survivor of a shipsaccident
after 18 hours in the rough sea
between Turkey and Greece***

August 2014- Lesvos



My name is Nasimgul ,

I am 38 years old and have a daughter 5 years old, Jasna.
We are from Afghanistan.

We started from Gazni, Afghanistan. Because of the bad situation in Afghanistan we were forced to go. It was war and i had to go away .

We did not plan to come to Europe. We wanted to stay in Iran where my mother is. But when we arrived there and stayed two months we realised that there it was as bad as in Afghanistan for us. So we decided to continue to Europe.

We started our trip to Turkey, stayed there some days in Istanbul and waited to come to Greece.

The first time the boat was supposed to take us to Greece , the boat got damaged short after we started. It lost air. It was a rubber dinghy . All people started screaming from fear. We managed with the little air on the boat to We left my mother back, she is has problems with her heart, and she has to be treated in hospital twice a week.

In Iran i was begging some people to let us some money to go to Europe.

I wanted that my daughter grows up in peace, without war.

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Then the people who organised our travel came back, they brought fuel and were screaming at us: „stand up! get ready to go!“ I was afraid.

I was afraid already the first time, but now even more . We stared again middle of the night . After half an hour in the sea, the weather got bad, big waves came. I was sitting near the motor holding Jasna, a wave took us, Jasna and me fell first in the sea. Three men fel on me. I went under the water and tried with my hand to keep Jasnas mouth closed so that she doesnt drink water. We could not swim.

Then another wave came and took Jasna away from me. I lost Jasna. I was crying and screaming her name: Jasna, Jasna. I heard her voice answer, i dont know what happened then.

I could hear my cousin scream: „Jasna is with us , be carefull try to come near „ But they were going away from me and then i heard them pray: „God is big“ It was the men and Jasna in the boat.

It was night i was alone in the sea.

A big boat passed by, i was screaming: „help help“ but nobody heard me. I saw the boat pass by and was praying that Jasna arrives safe and the men and then me too.

I should not have taken Jasna with me on that trip .The trip was so dangerous. And i knew the trip is dangerous. If something bad happened, if Jasna would die, it would be my fault.

In the morning around 7-8 i saw a ship again. I screamed again but they did not see me.

I was wearing my watch . every hour i was looking at my watch and i was thinking: in one hour i will get out of the water. For 18 hours i hoped.

After some hours in the sea i wanted to take my mobile fone out of the plastic to try to call. I dial a number, but then a wave came and made it totally wet, so i could not use it anymore.

I was cold and the see was full of waves.



At noon i saw a helicopter. It was turning around but did not see me. When the helicopter left i thought: „now only God knows what will happen, since they did not see me“. I was praying.

Then another helicopter came. It must have been around 15-15.30 and they were flying over me, but did not see me. When the second helicopter left, my lifejacket was full of water and was very heavy so i thought to get rid of it . I took it off also everything else that was heavy: my shoes. I became lighter.

As soon as i took of the lifejacket i started sinking. I could not swim and drunk water and then tried to get to the rocks i could see. I talked to God and said: „you can bring me out with the waves. Three waves and i am out“. As soon as i said that, 2 waves came and throw me to the rocks. I woke up from the pain.

I climbed out. I had no shoes i was cold. It was windy and dark and i climbed up the mountain.

I didn't see any houses, only two electricity cables and i thought they must lead to some houses.

Climbing the mountain i found one slipper and later one shoe. I put them on to continue climbing. After some 10 minutes i saw a house, i was exhausted.

An old man was sitting there, he had two sheep. He said something but we didn't speak the same language so i didn't understand him and i thought he wanted to steal my mobile phone. I was scared and run away. After 10 minutes i went back.

And then saw two women that made me happy . I went near to them, gave them my hand, the women got scared because my face was burned. I went with them near the sea and wanted to show them that i came from Turkey and that i look for my child .

I showed them the sea, because i could not speak with them. They understood me and called the police but they did not understand that i look for my child.

The police said they come. After that i relaxed a little bit . I asked for water. They brought two bottles of water and i drank them both . They said: don't drink so much. They brought me food a sandwich and i eat it. Then i fainted .

When i walked without shoes on the mountain my feet where scratched and my hands and the people put me alcohol to desinfect and from the burning of the pain i wake up. Then i saw the police.

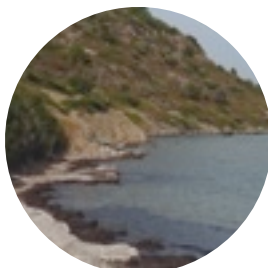
The people had put one blanket underneath my body and two on top, to cover me. They where rubbing my body with alcohol trying to warm me again. . This made me relax and get hope. I think i will now go with the police and i will see my daughter. Everything will be ok.

When i was thrown out of the sea from the waves on the rock, my back got hurt. Now the pain was so strong that i could not stand up anymore. They brought a stretcher and carried me in the ambulance.

In the car i felt deasy. My head was turning, i knocked at the car so they hear me. Nobody reacted, i knocked stronger then a woman came and she asked: „what is wrong? what is wrong?“ then i don't remember anything anymore.

I wock up when i arrived in hospital , around me was nobody.

I believed that all others died, that only me was alive.



When i walk up i was crying, crying.
The doctor asked: „why do you cry?“
I said: „ i lost my child, my small daughter, her name is Jasna.“ Then a man came and he said:
“ your daughter is alive she is fine she is with us. You will get better.“ I didn't not believe him yet i could not believe that Jasna was alive. He said:



When i went in the hospital corridor and saw Jasna sitting on a chair i was so happy that i was crying. I stayed 4 days in hospital.
God is great, i don't know what will happen from now on, but thanks God we arrived! That is why we write the story down so that we never forget it. I should never forget this story , i should not believe that i came out from the sea after 18 hours in the waves, not knowing how to swim, on my own. I should not forget my God.
As long as i live i will remember.



Now i am so happy. When i arrived i met the best people in the world, here in PIKPA, i will never forget you all. I will never forget how you helped me. I will continue my journey.

I wish to arrive in a country where Jasna can go to school and i wish to arrive in a country where we can get asylum and after that visit my mother who is so sick. When i came from Afganistan i wanted to stay with my mother, but the situation was not good. Now i want to arrive somewhere and then be able to visit my sick mother. It should be a place where they give us asylum





Some weeks later : Looking for the place where Nasimgül arrived and looking for the people who helped her.

We met small Jasna and her uncel when they just had arrived in Lesvos and were brought by the police in PIKPA to stay overnight. The search and rescue operation for the missing mother of Jasna was going on, but we had little hope that she might get found alive.

Hours later the information came, that a woman was found alive on a beach in the north and that the child should be brought to hospital to identify if it is her mother. Nasimgül had survived 18 hours in the rough sea without knowing how to swim!



Weeks later, when Nasimgül had gained strength again, we asked her if she wants to go with us to try to find the place where she got out of the water. She wanted and so we started a search tour.

We drove with the infomobile along the beaches to the north, and Nasimgül thought to recognise the beach and the place. We drew back and forth to look again and again at the beaches. At some point her eyes insisted it could be there.

We went to the highest hill and discovered there a small church of the Saint Fanourios . The saint that finds everything that is lost.



When we told Nasimgül the story of the Saint and that people go to him to pray to find back something they lost, she was sure it was him who helped her. Nasimgül prayed now to find the house again.

We walked around and Nasimgül could recognize the place where she got help from the women.

She showed us and Jasna, the beach and the rocks and the mountain, she climbed up without shoes. Just in the direction of the small church of Agios Fanourios that was hidden behind the trees.



No people where there.

Obviously it was a summer holiday space with small houses. We went to the small harbour and asked the fisherman if they can tell us whos house it is. Sure they said: it is family... they live in winter up in the village... We drove to the village to find them.

They opened the door and could not believe their eyes! Nasimgül the woman that came out of the sea, was standing there with her small child smiling at them .



Many people in Lesvos have experiences of helping refugees just arriving and in urgent need of support. Few have the opportunity to meet again and thank one another, exchange words or silences and names and see the person they often still think of, alive again.

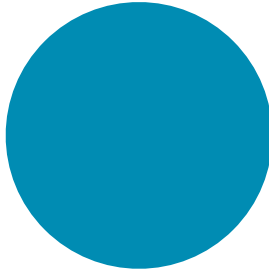


„I want to thank you all for what you did for me and my daughter, all of you. I want that God gives me a bit of your kindness.“

said

Nasimgul

Nasingüll was lucky, and we wish her and Jasna finally to find the peaceful life, they dream of .



In the European border waters between Turkey and the Greek islands, fleeing people continue to drown. Their dream of a life in peace, will never become true. In October 2015 , another young Afghan mother drowned , her small daughter and husband survived. Her death brought the total toll of dead and missing in Greek waters to at least 102 this year. Nearly 3,000 people have died, or gone missing 2015 crossing the Mediterranean Sea.

The only way to prevent and stop these deaths is to open legal ways for refugees to Europe.

Ferries not Frontex!

No more dead on the European borders!



Dokumented by w2eu
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this story is dedicated
to the memory of
Aylan and Papa Stratis

Mitilini 2015