

Letter to the World from Moria (No. 8)

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My pen won't break, but borders will

I didn't know that in Europe people get divided into the ones with passports and the ones without. I didn't know that I would be treated as 'a refugee', a person without papers, without rights. I thought we escaped from emergencies, but here our arrival is considered an emergency for the locals. I thought our situation in the camp is an emergency, but in Europe the meaning of emergency for people like 'us' is to be dead.

In the conditions we live, exposed to heat in summer and rainfalls in winter, in the middle of rubbish, dirt and sewage water, unsafe in permanent stress and fear facing the violence of the European Asylum System in this small world of 15,000 people – we are all emergency cases.

In fact, in Moria, most arrived already with injuries in their souls and sometimes on their bodies. But here everyone gets ill, also the healthy, and our situation turns our sicknesses into emergencies very fast.

Consider the story behind life in Moria hotspot: having spent days, weeks or months walking up and down hills, over rocks and in between trees, we live in a forest. Standing in queues for hours. Lost between what we think of as protection and what they create to hinder us reaching safety.

In Europe we become like ping pong balls. The authorities shoot us from one office to another, back and forth without ending and without understanding what, where, why – which makes our situation worse and worse. Even the 'success story' of finally receiving a residence permit cannot end the looks of discrimination we have to live with every day.

We are not another quality of people; another class of humans; another kind. We are different people with a thousand different stories. What unites us is that we had to leave our homes.

So stop treating us differently. Stop lying and pretending that people are safe here. Stop saying Europe is a better place, when it is only better for some and not even accessible for others.

We are not treated as part of Lesvos' population, like Greeks, like Europeans. Our destiny depends on a bureaucrat's decision, on the economic value of a

political decision in favour of migration or not, on the political mood dominant in the continent, on European strategies and plans. It is not built on the foundation of 'us' and 'you' being one kind.

I am a girl in a tent and I am thinking about this world as the days won't pass by and I am waiting for permission to leave this place.

My pen wont break until we end this story of inequality and discrimination among human kind. My words will always break the borders you built.

Parwana