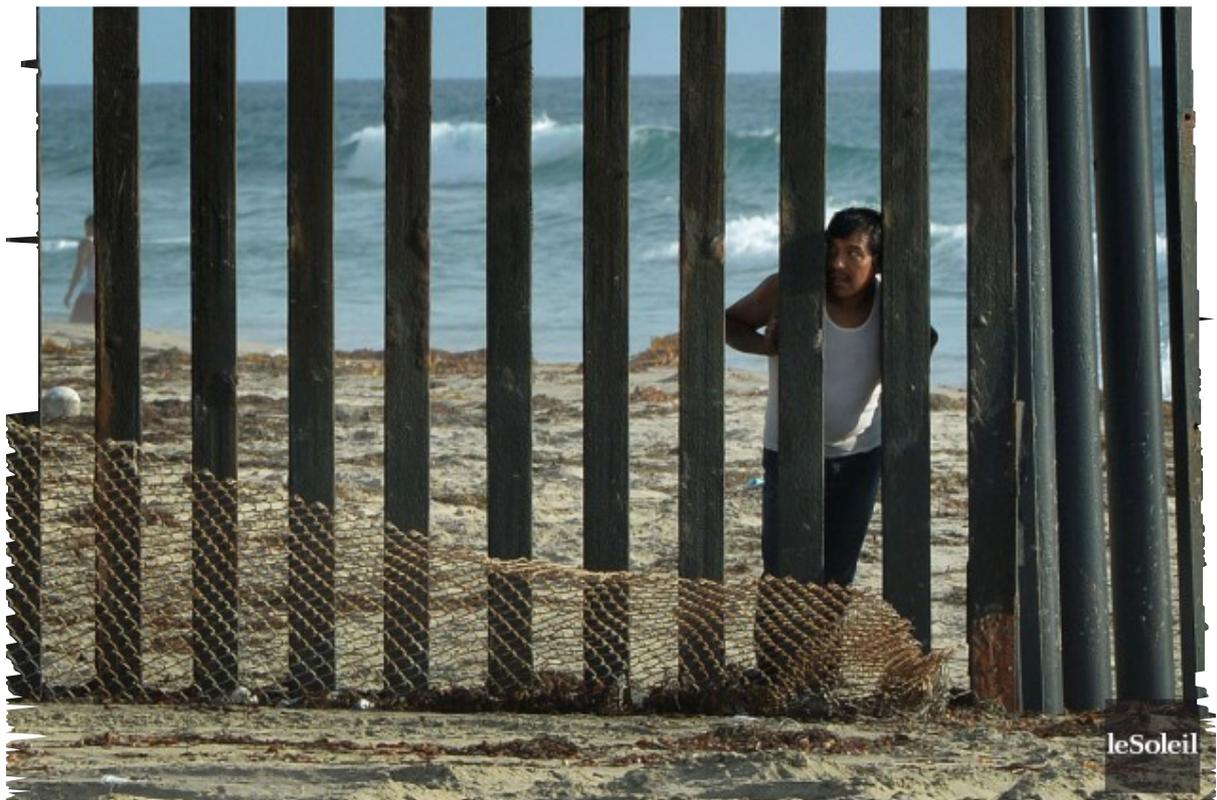


GIRARD Simon

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No borders for dreaming



Once upon a time, there was a young Iraqi refugee who was fleeing war and persecutions in his country. He wanted to join his girlfriend who had recently immigrated in England.

This story tells the journey of this young boy who was just 17 years old, from his start until his dream : meeting up with his girlfriend at London, the **capital** of England and also trying to play for his favorite football club : Arsenal.

The story started in Iraq, in the Mossoul **streets** where the family **house** was falling into ruins after the bombings and because of the war which didn't stop in the country. Amin had lost his family and he took the decision to leave to realize a dream. During three months, he crossed the Middle East and Europe through Greece for coming to France. This travel wasn't achieved without many efforts and difficulties : he travelled by train or walked, sometimes during a long time. Amin discovered the violence of people but also the help of other people who helped him to eat and sleep. He ate thanks to the generosity of help associations to refugee or the generosity of **inhabitants**, even if this help was scarce. But Amin saw also the hatred of countries and the hate speech which existed. When he arrived at Calais in France, he knew that he was close to his goal but the control of the **borders** between France and England was really hard to cross. The dismantling of the « The Calais **slum** » had some effects on him and many people of the slums, because they didn't want to leave Calais. They had only one dream : to go to England. The problem for this people and Amin was that they were under the threat of the smugglers who promised to them that they could pass them to England. Amin accepted the proposition against money but this try failed. At that moment, he realized that he had not found a solution to join

London and he made an important decision : he had in mind to join England and cross the Channel swimming. But he couldn't swim so he went to the municipal pool to get swimming classes.

At the municipal pool, he met Richard, a lifeguard who was a **city-dweller**.

Amin: « Hi sir, I want to know if it's possible to have swimming classes please ? »

Richard staring at this young boy dumbstruck : « Yes for sure, but what type of swim ? »

Amin, embarrassed: « crawl sir »

Richard : « Ok, classes last 1h30, we can start tomorrow if you're okay ? »

Amin thanked Richard and after three days of lessons, Richard asked Amin about his motivations and his objectives.

Richard : « By the way, what you want to learn swimming crawl Amin ?? »

Amin : « Ho..... hem..... I want to be honest with you, my goal is to join my girlfriend in England by crossing the Channel by swimming. »

Richard stayed impressed and was moved by this explanation. So he wanted to know more about the story of Amin and asked him to tell his story. So Amin told his life and his journey since Iraq. Richard started to feel responsible, guilty and to become fond of Amin. He knew that he wanted to help him but he also knew that if he did so he would be responsible of helping to illegal immigration. But he also tried to reason Amin.

Richard: « Amin, listen to me please. England, London with the **buildings, the sky-crapers, the subway** and the stadium are amazing and your dream is wonderful but it's unrealizable !! Even if you know how to swim in the pool, the Channel is really dangerous : they are ocean currents which are dangerous and pull you everywhere. The frets and boats can crush you !!!! It's impossible. And even if you can do this, where will you live in London ? »

Amin: « Maybe there is a **youth hostel** and a **hospital** if I've got problems. And I will do the Channel crossing with or without you help. I can't stay here eternally : I haven't got registration papers or a passport. You have a house in a rich **neighborhood**, you're a **townee**, you have a car, a family. You can go to the **cinema**, to the **museum** or in any facilities without the threat to be arrested !!! I do not even have a nationality and a country. »

Richard: « Listen to me Amin ! I think it's a bad idea to leave the country swimming. I think you should stay with me in this **city**, you can come to my home a long time if you want. Also, I think you can call the media to explain your situation and make a request to the mayor to know if it's possible to find solutions to your problems. I don't want to know you in danger, I'd rather you stayed with me because you can have comfortable social situation. The mayor can accelerate your demand for your identity papers maybe. »

Amin: « I will think about that during the night, we will talk tomorrow. See you tomorrow Richard »

Richard: « See you tomorrow Amin, I will want to see you in great shape. »

The next day in the morning, Richard went to the municipal pool and waited impatiently for Amin to announce to him the good

news : Richard had contacted the local media and the **Mayor** to explain the lived experience of Amin. However, at morning, Richard had no news about Amin. After waited for him during two hours, Richard decided to go around the **district** and the city to find his new friend. Richard shouted in all the streets, requested all the merchants if they hadn't seen Amin recently. After thinking for a while, Richard realised that Amin had decided during the night to cross the Channel. At this moment, Richard was scared and decided to warn the local newspaper that a refugee was in the Channel. The local media were crazy and thought it was an incredible story. So, they decided to notify the national media to know if they could broadcast this information on television.

During this time, Amin had begun to swim to England just with a t-shirt, shorts, a cap and also a pair of flippers that he had robbed from the swimming pool. After one hour of swimming, Amin was exhausted, but he couldn't stop: when he thought about his girlfriend, he had more motivation. He was even more motivated than before. During the travel, Amin saw a lot of ferries that were a danger for him if he touched one of them. But, he was motivated and wasn't scared about that. The trip ran smoothly. Suddenly, he heard a noise that was coming from behind him so he turned over and saw two boats with an alarm. He understood that they were the coastguard and they wanted to catch him. But Amin didn't want to be in jail so he plunged under water and he expected that the ships would leave rapidly but they stayed above him a long time. He had no more air, he knew he was going to die if he stayed a long time under water.... He thought of his girlfriend and of all his family and died.

When Richard knew this information by the media, he was so sad that he decided to send to Amin's girlfriend, a letter to explain how her boyfriend had died and a bunch of flowers.

This story is inspired from the movie « Welcome » and by all the stories of migrants which are a question very important in today society. In Europe, the handling of migrants is a question which lead to tearing countries and this tearing is used by some politicians and political parties.

This story tells the journey of a young Iraqi refugee who was fleeing war and persecutions in his country. He wanted to join his girlfriend who had recently immigrated in London and also trying to play for his favorite football club : Arsenal. But his travel is strewn with pitfalls.