



## Change in a Future by Arsalaan Bajwa, Grade 6

It has been 3 days since they left the refugee camp. Max and Kaylen were exhausted. They had last eaten a day ago, and were looking for their mother. Max and Kaylen's shirts were ripped and their shoes were torn. The roads were cracked and the air was thick with smog. The houses were pitch black, the windows were shattered and no one was to be seen. There were rotting bodies just laying on the ground with flies bu-zzing around them. Most of the stores and the supply shops were raided.

They had never known their father. He had passed away when they were little. Their mom was a very kind and caring person. Max missed his mom, her smooth skin, soft hands and her kind gentle eyes. She was their whole world and now she wasn't there. They had been together at the refugee camp. One day, a bombing happened. Jets flew over them dropping bombs. One was falling close towards their camp. They had to evacuate the camp. Max and Kaylen left with a crowd of people but could not see their mother. They supposed she was in the crowd. When the bomb had landed, they felt a huge blast. Half of the refugee camp had been destroyed. When it was clear, they came back, but did not see their mother. Max and Kaylen had a dark feeling that their mom did not make it.

They looked everywhere for her, but could not find her. The whole camp was blown up, nothing was still in one piece. They had thought, maybe their mother had gone with another group of people to another place, what could that be? They looked all over the place, still nothing, no sign of anyone. They were losing hope of finding their mother, but then an idea stuck in Max's head. There was a place in the city when this kind of thing happened. They called it "The Safe Place." Max and Kaylen thought that their mother had to be there. It was a long journey from here.

It would take about a few hours. First they got food, and started to go there. When they were nearly at the safe place, they had heard a gunshot. It sounded close. Max and Kaylen look behind, nothing, to the right and left and again nothing. Max and Kaylen were running a bit faster than before. They had finally arrived at the safe place. When they went in, everyone stared at them asking "Where did you come from," they said "We came from the refugee camp, we are here looking for our mother." They looked around and didn't find her, but then Max spotted someone, she was wearing the exact same coat their mother was wearing. He looked, and there she was, their mother. They were so happy to see her. They hugged for a good few minutes then thought who they were going to do. The Safe place was huge. There was a floor just for beds, a floor for food and a floor to relax. They enjoyed this very much. They decided that they will stay here until the bombing stops.

Everything had finally stopped. The bombing, the war. It had been a few months since Max and Kaylen first went to the safe place, but they had nowhere to go. Most of the houses, destroyed. Nothing was left, other than this building. One house Max saw was that its roof was off and a tree had struck it in the middle. There were only a few that were even standing up. Another he saw was fine, then it collapsed. Even in the building they were in, it wasn't perfect. Some of the windows were shattered, wallpaper ripped off and the floor was cracked. They had to stay in the safe place.