

My fourth story is the story of Mohammed.

Hey guys. My name is Mohammed. Mohammed Sally.

My father's name is Mohammed.

Hey guys. My name is Mohammed. Mohammed Gally.

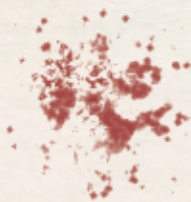
I am a speaker, an advocate, and trainer.

But I haven't always been the person who I am right now.

In fact, if I had somehow introduced myself to you five years ago I would be like:

"Hey guys, my name is Mohammed Gally. I am a medical student in Syria, actually on my way to become a cancer specialist."

34:37



I was a speaker, an advocate, and a trainer.
But I haven't always had the resources I do right now.
In fact, if I had another introduced myself to you five
years ago I would be dead.
Well, guys, my illness passed away. I am a medical
specialist in the field of cancer.
I wanted to become a cancer specialist during
my high school actually after my favourite cousin
passed away because of cancer.

I remember that I always asked why couldn't they
cure her and I kept getting the same answer, "cancer
cannot be cured."

So that's why I wanted to become a doctor.

I wanted to find a cure for cancer.

I studied very hard and in fact by 2011,
I was a fourth-year medical student.

And also, by that time, I had already
fulfilled my newest dream which was
to own a smart phone.

but then one day my life turned upside down.

35:35



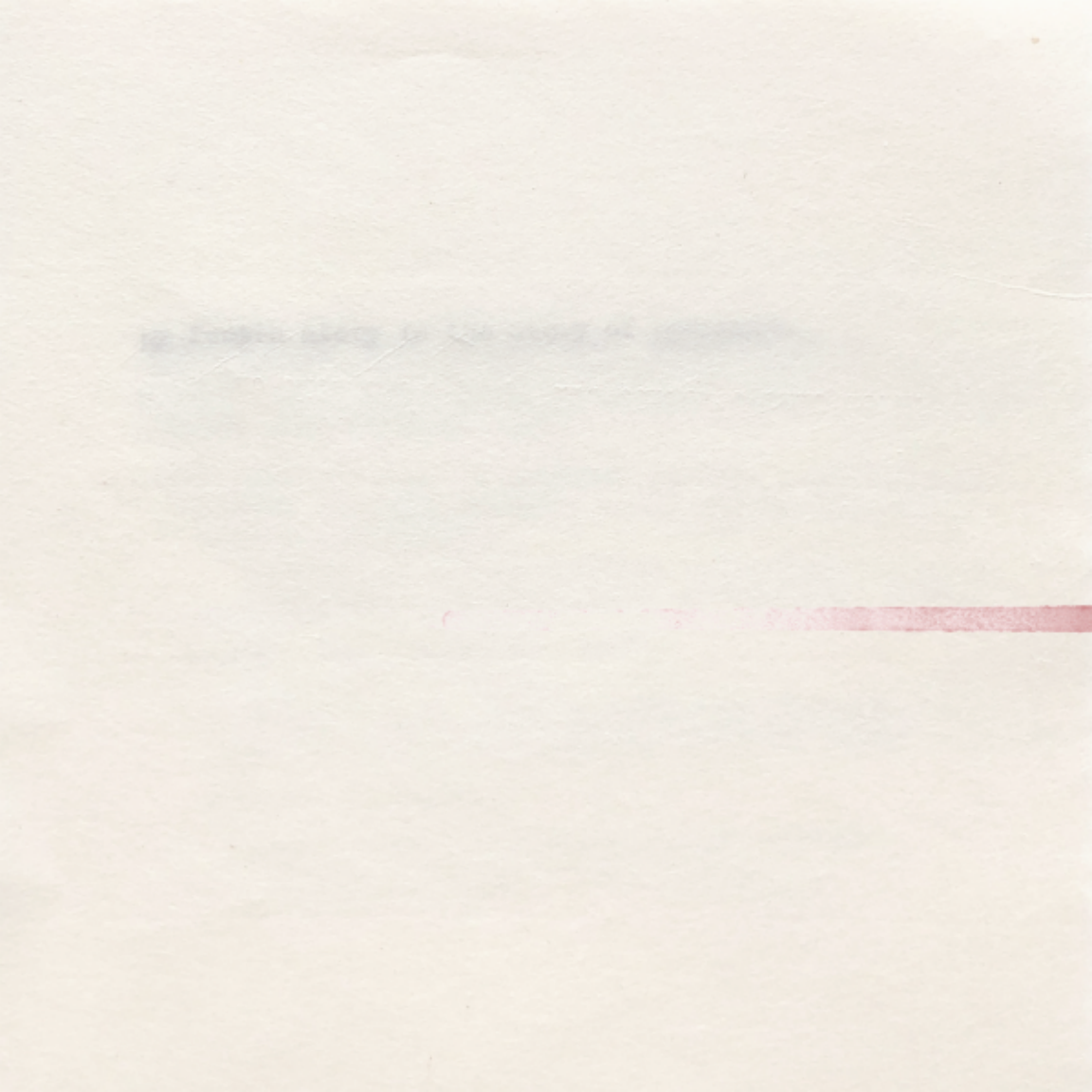
I am in the central square in the ancient city of
Holmes in Syria. There are crowds that are chanting
and demonstrating for freedom.

I take my phone and I start filming the uprising

but suddenly two burly policeman tackled me to the
ground.
"terrorist! terrorist!" they shout at me. And then
they start hitting me.

36:08

with every blow. I felt like a shock was going
through my entire body.





I could feel the warmth of my blood
as it trickled down my chest.

and I could see my white shirt turning red.

I tried to tell the policeman;

"I am just a medical student, not a terrorist."

But I could hardly speak. They were choking me
and I was crying in vain.

one of the policeman tried to grab my phone
from my hands.

I resisted.

so he brought out his gun. He put it to my head,
and that's when I had to let go of my phone.





37:07



from that moment,, and over the next years,

I endured unspeakable torture in overcrowded,
cockroach infested, jail cells.



37:27

There was so much disease around
me that even the gaurds were scare
to enter the jail cells.

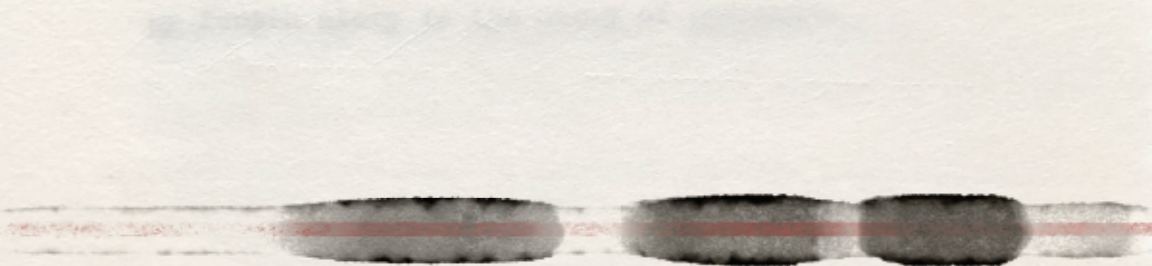
One time, my knee was cut up so badly that
a deep huge bloody gash was opened up.

With having no other choice I had to use my
medical training and I took another bandage
from another prison to close my wound.



There were many days when I barely
remembered my name.

In fact
suicide
was a very tempting option.



But the only thing that kept me alive was thoughts of my family, thoughts of my mother and my five siblings.

Actually memories of my siblings and I used to play with one another is what kept me amused for hours.

to escape from that hell hole I used to close
my eyes and picture the face of my mother
and

her strenght

because she single-handedly raised me and my five
siblings.

My mother,

she is a fighter!

and, she's the one who taught me
how to be a survivor after my father
died really early on.

two years into this ordeal being in and out of
prison.

I bought my way out of jail and that was only
because my mother and my siblings sold the family
home to raise enough money so they could
get my out.

that was in 2013.

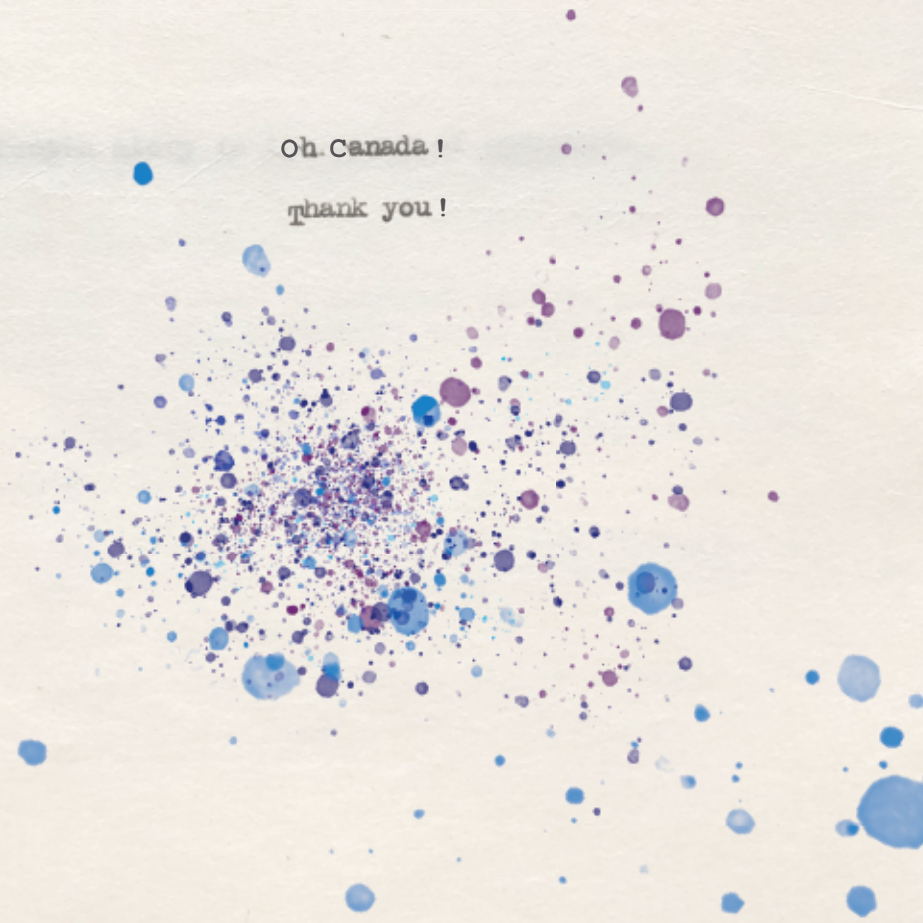
The only reason that I stand before you in 2018
is that I am actually one of the first syrian refugees,
that Canada accepted.

40:07

40:09

Oh Canada!

Thank you!



And to you and to you, and you,
and you, you, you, you, Canadians.

Also, thank you. I will always be grateful
to you.

40:33



40:34

I can't believe that I am back and sharing these details with you but thanks to Canada I have a new life.

Today, four years later, I stand before you a Canadian citizen.

Actually, October 15 is the day when I became a Canadian. October 20 is the first time I vote in my life. The first time I have rights. The first time I feel like I am a full human being that is receiving full respect and getting dignity.

The plans that I had to become a cancer specialist are on hold right now

and maybe could never become true.

but also that doesn't mean that I can't save or change lives.

In fact, today I work for a nonprofit that shows Canadians how to sponsor refugees. Having been one myself I know what it takes to rehabilitate newcomers that arrive here with nothing but the shirts on their back.

But I am so happy to tell you that
my own application to sponsor a
syrian refugee has just been approved.

Guess who that family is?

My own mother and my five siblings.
Actually they are home in Burnaby
right now waiting for me to come home.

go from a doctor to a terrorist to a refugee to a Canadian citizen, sponsoring refugees just like me. I know what it is like for life to just change on a dime.

I was lucky enough and Canada was kind enough to welcome me but millions of others as we heard from Greens are not so lucky.

So I finish by saying that one refugee is
too many.

And please never forget that every refugee
story behind every statistic there is a human
story of immense struggles families that are
torn apart and dreams that are crushed.

so never forget this

because who knows one day you, or someone that is
close to you, could become a refugee.

And who knows, one day one refugee can still
become an archeologist and save your life.

Thank you.



