



# NEWCOMERS

AN INFORMAL SOCIAL GROUP  
WELCOMING NEW ARRIVALS TO ATHENS

<http://www.newcomersinathens.com>  
[newcomers.bulletinboard@gmail.com](mailto:newcomers.bulletinboard@gmail.com)

Newsletter November 2020

Dear Members,

November is here again, so time to begin preparation for the winter months, by pulling out your winter coat, adding another blanket to your bed, or searching for the perfect recipes for pumpkin soup or pumpkin pie.

November takes its name from its original position in the Roman calendar where there were only 10 months in the year, meaning that November was indeed the ninth month. Back home in Scotland we would often say the dreary weather is Novemberish, but that's a term that can rarely be used to describe our Greek weather.

Once again, we have to cope with the impact the covid virus is having on our everyday lives, as the country returns to a strict regime of restrictive measures. The five-digit **number 13033** returns to our daily lives and to our mobile phones. Only through SMS will we be able to go out of the house and for specific reasons.

But there are still some events to look forward to, albeit in the 'new normal' way. We can't sit down with the usual group of friends and family for that special Thanksgiving dinner, but our thoughts will be with them, wishing them well in the winter months ahead. And let's not forget our Scottish friends on St Andrews Day at the end of the month.

Advent Sunday, that marks the beginning of the Christmas season, falls



on the 29<sup>th</sup> November this year. I clearly remember the anticipation of opening a little paper window every day on a glistening nativity scene calendar, and counting down with my grandmother to see how many days were still to pass before Santa would deliver a present – if I'd been good!

Let's all continue to be careful and considerate and let's remember to count our blessings!

**Chris Grant-Bear, Editor**



*PS: I know how difficult it can be to stay informed on a daily basis, if you can't read/speak Greek fluently. Here are some sites where you can follow the updates on the coronavirus pandemic and read the Greek news alerts in English.*

[ekathimerini.com](http://ekathimerini.com), [amna.gr](http://amna.gr) [naftemporiki.gr](http://naftemporiki.gr)  
[protothema.gr](http://protothema.gr) [www.gtp.gr](http://www.gtp.gr) [www.who.int/](http://www.who.int/)

**Stay informed to stay safe!**



## Dates to Remember

**11<sup>th</sup> November:**  
Remembrance Day, Veterans Day

**17<sup>th</sup> November:**  
Greek Polytechnic Uprising, 1973

**26<sup>th</sup> November:**  
American Thanksgiving

**29<sup>th</sup> November:**  
Advent Sunday

**30<sup>th</sup> November:**  
St Andrew's Day

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*Keep informed of upcoming events,  
tours, get-togethers and meetings...  
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# NEWCOMERS MEMBERS USEFUL INFORMATION



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## Emergency Numbers

<b><u>EU-WIDE EMERGENCY</u></b>	<b><u>112</u></b>
<b><u>POLICE EMERGENCY:</u></b>	<b><u>100</u></b>
<b><u>FIRE BRIGADE:</u></b>	<b><u>199</u></b>
<b><u>TOURIST POLICE</u></b>	<b><u>171</u></b>
<b><u>AMBULANCE</u></b>	<b><u>166</u></b>
<b><u>SOS MISSING CHILDREN:</u></b>	<b><u>1056</u></b>
<b><u>DOCTORS SOS</u></b>	<b><u>1016</u></b>
<b><u>EMERGENCY HOSPITALS</u></b>	<b><u>1535</u></b>
<b><u>POISON FIRST AID</u></b>	<b><u>210</u></b>
<b><u>8081464</u></b>	

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*Newcomers is an informal, non-profit, social group run by a committed team of volunteers offering support, advice and information to new arrivals in Athens via monthly meetings, activities, a newsletter and an e-community Bulletin Board. Newcomers is also dedicated to doing rewarding work in the local community by helping a small number of worthy causes.*

*Formed to encourage people to meet each other, make new friends, and cope with the practical side of living in Greece as well as enrich their lives with culture, Newcomers welcomes all nationalities, with English as the common language.*

*Although informal, we have a team of committed volunteers who meet together regularly to take decisions and agree on issues affecting the group. Each volunteer provides help in various capacities. There are no membership or annual fees – only a small charge at each general meeting to cover costs.*

*If there are surplus funds left over from an event, the monies are donated to the charities supported by the group.*

*Newcomers Monthly General Meeting is held on the second Wednesday of each month from September to June in the Northern Suburb of Kifisia. Twice a year the meeting includes special luncheons. Meetings usually include a speaker who shares information about a specific topic of interest. New people are introduced, general announcements are made, upcoming activities are announced and any questions are answered.*

## From the Patchwork Club

Can you help us out? Have you swapped your summer and winter wardrobes yet? We can help you out by taking cotton clothes and fabric you no longer need or use.

**If you have any cotton items to donate to our patchwork group, please let me know.** Men's shirts are great, as are old sheets, pillowcases and duvet covers. Tablecloths and napkins can be used too - we are a thrifty, resourceful group! The fabric will be cut and re-used for the quilts we sew and donate to charities here in Athens: to old people's homes, Amurtel, mother and baby homes, the School for the Deaf, etc.



I'm happy to arrange a convenient pick up. Just email me, at [chrisgrantbear@gmail.com](mailto:chrisgrantbear@gmail.com)  
Thank you!

# Our Legal column

## Moving Abroad with Your Children (part 2) by Marylou Andriakopoulou

Deciding to take your children to a different country is seldom an easy decision. Children (and often adults, too) are mostly creatures of habit and they like their home, their school, their routines and their friends, so it is usually after much thought that a parent will decide to remove them from the country of their habitual residence. When parents live together, this decision is usually taken jointly, such as in the case of two parents who are unable to find work in Greece and one of them, or both, seek employment abroad, something that occurred often during the years of the financial crisis in Greece.

Things become much more complex if the parents are separated or divorced and do not live together any more. The parent who does not live with the child will usually object to the parent who lives with the child "removing" the child to another country, something that will have a major impact on his/her ability to see the child often.

The parent who wants to move abroad with the child will have to apply to court. The legal battle cannot be foreseen to be easy, taking into consideration the reluctance of judges to remove a child from the jurisdiction of his/her habitual residence. The parent who wants to move abroad with the child will have to have some strong arguments to present to the court and prove that taking the child to another country is necessary, in view of the circumstances, and will be beneficial, or at the very least not harmful, to the child.

Even though no one can be sure of a positive court decision, arguments that may be seen favourably by the court could be:

- Wanting to care of an elderly or dying parent, or another close relative, such as for example a disabled sibling or child, and there are no available persons or institutions to provide such care.
- Needing to move abroad in order to find work, or because a position has been offered to the parent, and the parent has not been able to find employment that is suitable to their qualification in Greece,

especially if the other parent does not make regular child support payments, in spite of a court decision that obliges him/her to do so.

- There is no suitable school in Greece for the child (such as in the case of a child who is discovered to be in need of special education because of a learning disability, or other conditions, such as mental retardation or autism and does not speak enough Greek to enable the child to attend such a school in Greece).
- The child has been living abroad for long periods of time (because, for example, the parents were working abroad or because the child went often to visit relatives there) and seems to adapt better to another country than to Greece.
- The parent marries a person who lives abroad.

The arguments will be evaluated by the court and a decision will be issued. If the decision allows the parent to move from Greece with the child, the "removal" of the child will be considered lawful and there will be no danger of the child being ordered back to Greece.



**Marylou and Karolina Andriakopoulou, lawyers to the Supreme Court of Greece and Members of the Athens Bar Association, have been practicing law for 25 years.**  
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# Where to Buy Food Supplies for a Thanksgiving Dinner at Home in Athens *by Tatiana Harkiolakis*

With November upon us, you may be thinking that pandemic conditions have taken away your chance to have a normal Thanksgiving. Thankfully, with the miracle of delivery services and dedicated local shops, all is not lost! Below are four recommendations for where to load on supplies for a Thanksgiving dinner at home in Athens.

A hidden classic for British foods, the small but mighty **B.R. Foods** (*Tzavella 27; 2130 246012*) in Halandri is loaded with a range of English and Scottish classics, from frozen meals to candies to butter and meat. Visit their e-shop ([brfoods.gr/shop/brfoods](http://brfoods.gr/shop/brfoods)) to order a whole frozen turkey or stuffed turkey breast for your Thanksgiving table. Top it off with pumpkin pie filling, cranberry sauce, mushy peas, dumpling mix, and Bisto gravy.



Photo: <https://www.facebook.com/www.brfoods.gr/>

Looking for a showstopping cake to end the meal with? Order from **Cake**, a cake shop with locations in Kifissia (*Argiropoulou 3; 2106232021*), Kolonaki (*Irodotou 15; 2107212253*), and Aigaleo (*Leoforo Thivon 507; 6906633789*). They stock a range of foreign-style cakes and desserts in their e-shop ([shop.cake.gr](http://shop.cake.gr)), including red velvet cake, carrot cake, pumpkin pie, and New York-style cheesecake. They also make custom cakes for birthdays and other celebrations.



Photo: <https://www.where2go.gr/en/entry/cake-kifisia/>

Finally, if you want to add a dose of handmade Greek cooking to your Thanksgiving, stop by **Oi Pites tis Yiayias Euridikis** (*Kiprou 25; 2108030088*) in Vrilissia. This busy pie workshop

sells handmade, family-sized Greek pies, either already baked or raw (to be cooked at home). In the spirit of the season, try the sweet *kolokithopita* (Greek pumpkin pie), or go for a more classic *spanakopita* or *tiropita*. They tend to sell out fast, so place an order ahead of time if you have your heart set on a specific pie.



*Bonus:* Longing for a U.S. or Canadian treat you can't seem to find anywhere? Visit **MyAmericanMarket.com** (yes, they ship to Greece). Based in France, this market stocks a range of goods, including sweet, snacks, canned foods, condiments, and drinks—there's even a special section with Japanese snacks and candy!



photo: <https://www.myamericanmarket.com/>

## **I ATE TOO MUCH** Jack Prelutsky

I ate too much turkey,  
I ate too much corn,  
I ate too much pudding and pie,  
I'm stuffed up with muffins  
and much too much stuffin',  
I'm probably going to die.

I piled up my plate  
and I ate and I ate,  
but I wish I had known when to stop,  
for I'm so crammed with yams,  
sauces, gravies, and jams  
that my buttons are starting to pop.

I'm full of tomatoes  
and french fried potatoes,  
my stomach is swollen and sore,  
but there's still some dessert,  
so I guess it won't hurt  
if I eat just a little bit more.



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## The humble coffee cup! by Pauline Leyden

5 minutes on the lips, 450 years in the tips!

Those of you who read my column here will know that I believe that each individual can, and should make a difference. Taking control of our own actions can give us hope for the future of our planet - the task ahead is huge and I for one need some hope. In fact, where governments and policies fail to address climate change and the issues facing our environment, individual actions are crucial.

The number of plastic coffee cups used in Greece every day is truly shocking. According to the Minister for Environment and Energy, Kostis Hatzidakis, 350 million plastic cups and 2 billion plastic bottles are used annually in Greece.



"According to Green Peace Greece, over 1 million plastic cups are served daily in Athens and probably as many straws and that's just for coffees! Only a small percentage of these cups are recycled. The rest ends up in landfills and oceans, harming ecosystems for decades." (Institute on Research and Training on European affairs).

The Greek government recently announced that Greece will ban the use of single-use plastics by July 2021. This includes straws, cotton stick buds, cutlery, plates, all styrofoam containers and cups, drink stirrers, balloon holders and oxo-degradable plastics (these are conventional plastics which quickly breakdown into micro-plastics that are left in the environment indefinitely). The target is to reduce the use of plastic cups and food containers by 30% until 2024 and by 60% by 2026. The aim is to encourage a more circular economy (develop products with their end of life in mind so that they can be recycled or repurposed with no residual waste) while motivating companies to redesign products and recycle.

All this is good news for the environment but until these changes happen, we can all choose to stop using them now. Why wait? Is it worth it? A five minute pleasure, at least 450 years in a landfill. Multiply that by 350million a year in Greece alone...

## Have you heard of ART, a local Animal Rescue Team?

They are a group of about 10 volunteers who are super! They are a NGO, operating since 2014 (up to 2018 as EMAZ and after as ART) who love and help all kinds of animals in need, cats, dogs, birds, etc. and their only reward is the pleasure of saving them.

I have contacted them twice and they were extremely helpful, persistent and would not give up the effort to help me rescue kittens who were trapped.

About 4½ years ago they managed to fish out of a water drain on Kifissia Avenue, my orange kitten Caruso. It took them about 2 hours, using a net to trap him and blocking off 2 of the 3 exits. (see relative pictures)

In August this year 3 volunteers spent 3 hours, from 21.30-00.30 trying to rescue a kitten which had fallen in the main water pipes of the street by my house. They first tried to open a manhole, and when they couldn't they called the fire brigade and then the water company who both came but were not able to help: they stated it was a matter for the municipality. In the end ART made a ladder and set a trap. Fortunately there was no need to contact the municipality the next day as the kitten had climbed up the ladder, smelling the tasty sardine in olive oil and had been trapped! (see pictures below).white kitten

I highly recommend this group if you ever have the need to save an animal. It would be nice to donate some amount at that time to help them buy/renew necessary equipment such as safety helmets, lights for going down into pipes, climbing trees, and ropes etc.

You can read more about them on facebook ART or the site [animal-rescue-team.org](http://animal-rescue-team.org) and see stories and pictures of animals saved by them.

**Thanks, Adriane for sharing this info with us!**



## From Martina, our foreign correspondent in Tunisia

This short monthly piece of writing that I contribute to the newcomers newsletter, means the world to me. A great deal of careful thought goes into what I will be writing the weeks between the handing-in of one piece and the deadline of the following one, even though I may delay the actual writing of it to the last possible moment. This being such an important part of my monthly activities and me not having much to do like most of the worlds momentarily, you would think I would be more diligent about getting it written more promptly.



For this issue I collected my ideas, and was even so professional as to record them into my phone, lest I should forget them.

I envisioned critical analyses of several books and their writers and wanted to pair these with a comparison between the moral literary codes of yesteryear and those of today. In this already turgid framework I was going to bring the visual arts into the mix as well, to increase the illustrative examples forming my overall premise. The central theme of my analysis was carefully constructed to disguise my personal fear of creative mediocrity.

The space allocation I have in each newsletter for my column is five hundred words. I was satisfied with the level of preparedness and structure for this illustrious installment, and procrastinated no more than usual in beginning to write it. In my last recording, in a less confident voice, I urged myself to try to keep it simple. Five hundred words was clearly not going to be enough for my ambitious musings.

As my dead line was closing in, 2020, true to its calamitous reputation, came through once again with an unadulterated series of scourges: News reported the Tunisian terrorist attack in a Parisian church, the Aegean sea earthquake, the continuing debacle that is the US elections, Covid-19 related infections and deaths showing no signs of diminishing, and most selfishly saddening, the Tunisian government imposing tougher CoronaVirus restrictions which included the closure of schools. Again.

My procrastinating prowess and the aforementioned news was enough to take the wind completely out of my sails. I abandoned plans for all that epic writing on the day of my deadline and decided instead to recreate a famous drag queen's makeup on my face. In this way I proceeded to give new meaning to the phrase "being in denial".

The funniest, or rather most tragic, part of this story is that I recorded myself transforming into a crossdresser, and will soon be uploading the edited video of this most questionable choice of activity onto my youtube channel for the world to see. Luckily this very channel prides itself for possessing the least viewed videos on youtube.

What a bizarre turn of events on this my writing deadline day. I went from intellectual-analytical-wellread-critical-artist-writer to middle aged woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a woman. The very mediocrity I was constructing a narrative to cloak, became this day's most profound achievement. Perhaps next month I will discipline myself enough to provide you with a more insightful use of my time, and yours.

Should you wish to watch my descent to mediocrity, my youtube channel name is Martina Anagnostou. Don't forget to like and subscribe on your way out.

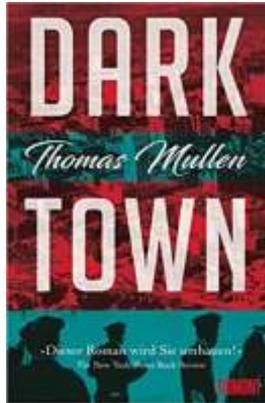
Happy Samhain.  
Martina Anagnostou  
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## Book Reviews by Di Drymoussis

Do longer evenings mean more time for reading? That's certainly true in my house, so we have 3 reviews for you this month!

### Darktown by Thomas Mullen

*A seriously good novel that depicts a challenging and unforgiving world and unforgettable characters.*



Recommended by 'The Sunday Times' by an author I hadn't come across before, I found this the best crime book I have read for a while. A great read and sobering to think that perhaps certain things may not have changed very much since the 1940s in some States. This book makes it clear that social conditions in Atlanta and the South in 1948 showed that black citizens were treated quite abominably.

The story was plausible - no sudden move to make the main characters perform superhuman escapes or the like. From the first page, the reader is drawn irresistibly into a socially and culturally oppressive postwar pre-civil rights Atlanta, which Thomas Mullen creates with precision and feeling. You feel that you know the characters the writer introduces; as the plot unfolds they are in no way stereotypical, but are coloured perceptively and sympathetically, which breathes reality, interest and tension into the story as it unfolds. It is a novel with a message but the message doesn't overwhelm the story and is perhaps more powerfully articulated as a result.

Atlanta 1948, and eight black policemen have been recruited as a gesture of good will, shall we say. Their task is daunting as their own community's expectations are unreasonably high, while white colleagues will stop at nothing to ensure they fail in their duty. Faced with hatred and scorn on one side and resentment on the other, their lot is a thankless one and yet they cannot afford to fail.

It is, quite simply, a brilliant and beautifully written southern detective thriller, evoking the ethos of the period without seeming dated. It is a cliffhanger throughout with a twist at the end

of each chapter. Mullen takes on the racism and bigotry, from both black and white citizens, and weaves around them a compelling and deeply fascinating tale of murder, vice and danger in the American South. I found myself totally immersed in the story and believing completely in the characters as Mullen drew them. The casualness of the racism portrayed in **Darktown** is made more horrific by the helplessness of its victims and by the end of the book I found even the small victories of Boggs and Smith so uplifting. The multi-layered story holds your attention until the very last page.

A superb but disturbing read, it at times made me stop reading and realise not only that this took place in my lifetime but the current 'Black Lives Matter' movement and the dreadful racist acts taking place in the USA show that little has changed.

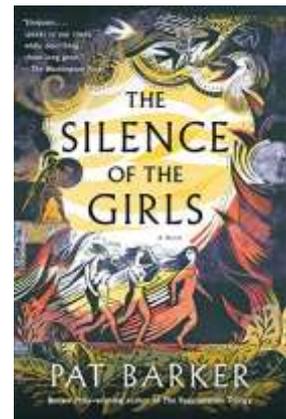
No doubt Thomas Mullen will be ranked with the best of the genre if he persists with this class of novels.

It is an outstanding, intelligent and compelling read which I highly recommend.

### Silence Of The Girls by Pat Barker

book review by Di Drymoussis

**Booker-winning novelist Pat Barker imagines the untold story of the women at the heart of history's greatest epic.**



*When the Greek Queen Helen is kidnapped by Trojans, the Greeks sail in pursuit, besieging the city of Troy. Trapped in the Greek soldiers' camp is another captured queen, Briseis. Condemned to be bed-slave to Achilles, the man who butchered her family, she becomes a pawn in a menacing game between bored and frustrated warriors. In the centuries after this most famous war, history will write her off, a footnote in a bloody story scripted by vengeful*

men - but Briseis has a very different tale to tell.

Homer's *The Iliad* is widely considered to be literature's first great masterpiece. Pat Barker brilliantly alters the perspective with a beautifully written story retelling aspects of Homer's Iliad from the viewpoint of some of the women who suffered the horrors and personal tragedies of the Trojan War.

Homer vaunted his murdering heroes. Barker considers the wives, daughters and mothers whose lives were destroyed by those very heroes, through slavery, rape, dehumanisation, physical suffering and mental torment. She gives voice to women silenced by an era and by a "literary culture" that saw them as background interference. By reimagining their lives in such a moving and sensitive way, we see a three-dimensional Trojan War, not just the male dominated façade that Homer presents.

The story is told anew from the point of view of Briseis, taken as a prize by Achilles, with no rights whatever. So often women are ignored in history. History is so different when viewed from the female perspective! Pat Barker's writing vividly captures the terror, brutality and squalor of war and the desperate plight of the women. Remaining faithful to Homer's original story and keeping its mythological background intact she conveys the horror that is women's experience of war without ever lapsing into prurience or voyeurism. Her characters, both female and male, remain complex and multi-dimensional. Achilles in particular, with his longing for greater closeness to his distant mother, is brilliantly drawn. Her command of dialogue is superb; the soldiers have a grim combatants' humour that is both contemporary yet appropriate to the Homeric age. However, it is her portrayal of the resourceful women of Troy, with their full range of responses to the ghastly situations that face them, which powers this brilliant retelling of the classic story.

The earthy horror of ancient battle is so well described, the characters are so well drawn and written with depth and empathy for the horrific situations they each find themselves in, that I was completely immersed in this world. This is a taste of the brutal reality of war, politics and the life of women who were used as nothing more than pawns or chattels, in a narrative tempered with sensitivity and empathy that leads to an understanding of the acceptance

that those poor women had to endure.

It's a very accessible tale, simply and beautifully written, despite dealing with the gruesome subjects of war, carnage, exploitation, male entitlement, women being treated in the most oppressive fashion imaginable, hugely difficult living conditions, death and disease, plague and so on. But the courage, humour, friendship and solidarity of the enslaved women shines through, giving them strength to survive their horrible ordeals. Nevertheless, the constant presence of background fear in their lives is a recurring theme.

Pat Barker has created a page-turning compulsive read and, although the story is reasonably well known, the writing is so fresh and so compelling that I raced through the book in 3 days and then finished wishing there was more.

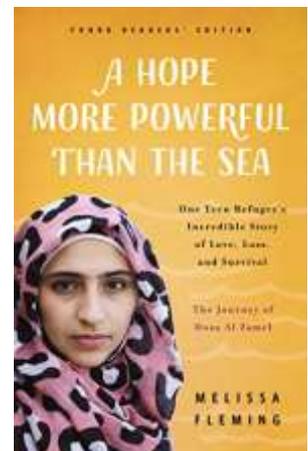
A superb achievement. A great book by a great writer! Highly recommend.

## A Hope More Powerful Than the Sea

by Melissa Fleming

book review by Di Drymoussis

Having read part 1 of the AMURTEL piece in October's newsletter concerning Didi's work with refugee women and babies, I thought this book would be an excellent recommendation since it totally resonated with the subject matter – I had just finished reading it the evening before.



It is the account of the young Syrian woman's experience as a refugee that I am pretty sure most of us remember the news and TV accounts back in 2014 of the girl who was rescued after floating for four days in the sea while holding on to an 18 month old girl whose life was also saved due to her bravery. (In fact she also held on to a 6month old boy, who died just as they were rescued). She was nominated for the annual Athens Academy Award and in December 2014 travelled to Athens from Crete to accept. I remember it well because Rokas the young Lithuanian inmate at Avlona whom I had

befriended and supported was nominated at the same time and had invited me along to watch the ceremony.

Refugees are always in the news but we so rarely know their individual stories. If you have any interest in human life, then this is a 'must read'. Doaa's story is incredible and terrible and unbelievable; yet it is happening in Syria every single day. It is an essential read to understand the Syrian crisis in a way I had not before - the basic politics in the region of Syria/ Egypt/ Jordan and how the revolution and refugee crisis began. The book does a lot of things very well: imparts empathy onto the reader, tells the story of someone who endured incredible loss with incredible bravery and allows the reader to step inside someone else's shoes and consider what they would've done in their situation.

I knew it was going to be an emotionally demanding read. Now I wish I could ask every person who has ever wondered why refugees leave their homes and risk dying at sea in their search of a better life, to read this book. The ongoing refugee crisis is a disaster of our times. Sometimes it is hard to empathise as the sheer horror of the reporting and the numbers of men, women, children and infants involved can create a feeling of helplessness in us as we watch, read and hear stories of the relentless stream of refugees. But by focusing on the story of a remarkable individual and living through her ordeal, it is possible to totally understand and care - not just about Doaa and her family, but all the millions of people around the world, enduring similar hardship. For this is a story of a family, a community and a country at war - the consequences of the war to ordinary families, told through the most extraordinary story of a brave and passionate young woman - Doaa Al Zamel.

It begins by mentioning how the Syrian revolution first came about and the effects of it - specifically where Doaa lived. Told from the point of view of one family, we get a clear picture of Syria before and during the protests that threatened the Bashaar regime. You learn what a typical Syrian family is like - an insight into the family organization and their traditions and values. The protests, though peaceful to begin with, became violent when the Syrian military killed peaceful protesters having begun using tear gas and then bullets to deter protesters. As an all-out war broke out in Syria, many became refugees. We then learn how refugees are treated in neighbouring host countries and the difficulties they face. Their journey to and time lived in Egypt is in stark contrast to the experiences which came later.

Reading about Doaa and her fiancé and their

desire to build a better future is a story we can all connect with - and the lengths they go to to get away are lengths many of us would go to as well. To be free, to leave a war torn country behind, to find work and make a good and honest living, to support an extended family - these are honorable dreams. It explains the journey many refugees have taken across the Mediterranean sea in search of a safe haven and the dangers they embark on and how so many lives have been lost at sea. Just when you think it can't get any worse - it does - and it's incomprehensible that she could have prevailed. I was struck by the depravity of men in this book - men who could exploit the misery of others for their own profit. But that depravity, that darkness of heart, only causes the good and gracious people of this world to shine all the more brightly. While Doaa, the brave refugee, stands out as a hero in this book, she is joined by many others who risked their safety, sacrificed their comfort, and gave of their own finances to provide a new life for Doaa and others. This book will inspire you and, at times, make you cry. Anyone who wants to understand the refugee crisis will benefit greatly from this reading. And anyone who simply needs hope will see that hope is found in giving ourselves to others.

I was somewhat disappointed by the writing style which was rather dry and flat and I felt it could have been better edited. However, at the end of the book it explains that Doaa had first told her story in Arabic which was then translated to a Greek UNHCR official who then translated it into English. No doubt the writing suffered from so many translations. Even so, Melissa Fleming, a UN official and refugee advocate who did a TED talk about Doaa and then put in an incredible amount of work to bring the book to life should be applauded.

A valuable, though impossibly hard read, for anyone wishing insight into the impact of the Syrian war. The story of Doaa gives this war its voice, in Syria and elsewhere. A story that is no longer 'out there', or about 'others', but could well be the defining story of our time, where all are drawn into its narrative. In this story, borders between countries, mindsets, and hearts, need to urgently be challenged and creatively redefined if we are to continue to call ourselves human. This book should be read by everyone - but above all by people in positions of power. We all need to feel the connection with our fellow human beings and the traumas they are enduring as our world is wracked by conflict and war. Denying refugees a safe haven is NOT the answer.

## Recipe of the Month – Turkey Tenderloins

(Originally submitted to ThanksgivingRecipe.com.)

A simple yet festive main dish. If you're not up to the task of roasting a turkey this dish is for you. If you can't find tenderloins, any prepared turkey kabobs would do.

Serve with Cranberry Chutney.

### Ingredients for 4 servings

- 1 pound (1/2 kilo) turkey tenderloins
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style prepared mustard
- 2 teaspoons dried rosemary, crushed



### Directions

- Step 1 lace the turkey tenderloins in a sealable plastic bag and set aside.
- Step 2 In a small bowl combine the soy sauce, mustard and rosemary. Pour over turkey, seal bag and shake to coat. Marinate in the refrigerator for 1 to 4 hours shaking once or twice.
- Step 3 Preheat oven on the broiler setting. Remove the turkey from the marinade and place on the rack in the broiler pan. Broil 4 inches from the heat, turning once, for 20 to 22 minutes or until meat is cooked through and when pierced with a fork the juices run clear. Slice and serve with Cranberry Chutney.

## Doggy Snacks!

Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate and spend time with friends and family. For some of us, family can also include the family dog – and every dog loves a treat!



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**The vet will tell you that, of course, human foods should be kept to a minimum. So, check this list to be sure of what is a safe snack for “man’s (and woman’s) best friend”.**

- **Bread:** Plain bread, without any nuts, raisins, or spices, is a fine snack, but don’t overdo it. Dogs don’t derive any nutritional benefit from bread and too much can pack on the pounds.
  - **Carrots and celery:** Did you prepare a stuffing with these ingredients? If so, your furry friend can share some bite-sized pieces.
  - **Cheese:** low or non-fat cheese is good choice for an occasional treat.
  - **Corn** is a common healthy ingredient in many canned dog foods, but don’t ever give them the cob, which can cause choking or intestinal blockages if swallowed.
  - **Ham:** The high fat/salt content means it should be a rare treat rather than a regular meal.
1. **Rice:** As long as your dog isn’t allergic, feel free to feed rice and other grains to your dog.
  2. **Sweet potatoes,** rich in vitamin A, promote healthy skin, coat, nerves, and muscles.
  3. **Turkey** is perfectly safe for dogs, but be sure to remove any fat or skin and **NEVER** give them the bones, which can splinter and cause tears or blockages in the digestive tract.
- 4. *However, there are a lot of foods that are definitely not dog-friendly. The list makes for scary reading if you are a dog lover like me, so it’s very important that you oversee what goes into your dog’s mouth! A good house rule should be that only one person is actually allowed to give the family dog a treat.***
5. **Alcohol** and animals don’t mix. Even small amounts of booze can result in ethanol poisoning with symptoms that can include lethargy, seizures, heart attack, lung failure, and death.
  6. **Apple Pie:** Plain, uncooked, cored and seeded apples are fantastic treats for dogs, but a piece of apple pie is a terrible idea. High-fat crust combined with spices like cinnamon and nutmeg can result in stomach upset/pain, liver disease, high blood pressure, and seizures.
  7. **Chocolate:** You’ve probably heard this before, but it bears repeating: **NEVER** feed your dog chocolate. It’s highly toxic (especially the darker varieties) and can stop a pooch’s metabolic process resulting in diarrhea, vomiting, seizures, and death.
  8. **Coffee, tea, or any caffeinated drinks** overstimulates the nervous system causing elevated heart rate, vomiting, and seizures.
  9. **Garlic, leeks, or onions:** These members of the Allium family are highly toxic to dogs and can cause elevated heart rate, anemia, and general weakness. Watch any dog that might have eaten a stray piece of garlic or onion closely as symptoms may not appear until a few days after ingestion.
  10. **Grapes and raisins** are highly toxic to dogs. Even small amounts can make a dog desperately ill leading to rapid kidney failure and death.
  11. **Ice cream:** As a general rule, dogs do not tolerate dairy products well. To avoid the gastrointestinal distress, but still reward with a cold treat, skip the ice cream (or frozen yogurt) and feed them frozen fruits like blueberries, strawberries, and bananas.
  12. **Raw potatoes:** While many packaged dog foods contain potatoes, uncooked potatoes contain solanine, which is toxic to dogs.

## Part 2 A big thank you to the wonderful women at Newcomers!

By Didi and the AMURTEL team



As varied and heartbreaking as many of the mothers' stories are, there are apt to be common similarities according to culture and ethnicity. A great number of African women, for example, from more than ten different countries with the current majority being French speakers from Cameroon and DR Congo, report feeling safe in Greece, that the violence they endured in their native countries was everywhere: in the home, the streets and the workplace. Many of our African women are single mothers whose children are the results of sexual violence or survival sex.

Afryea, a Ghanaian mother of one, was sold as a teenager into a rich man's house, used as a servant and sex slave and had her first child taken away at birth, most probably to be sold or enslaved. She does not know what happened to him. Managing to escape with the help of a man who became her husband, they spent years en route and finally arrived in Athens, where they've settled and had a child. Afryea emphatically states that the hardships she's been through to get to Greece have all been worth it because what she lived through will never happen here to her daughter.

The stories of the Middle Eastern women are different and tend to center around the theme of having been homebound with their lives controlled by male family members. In Afghanistan, for example, a woman's name is never uttered in public, not written on documents including the wedding invitation when she marries, medical prescriptions or

hospital records when ill, not even on her death certificate or tombstone. She is always referred to as the wife, daughter, sister or mother of male relatives and that includes when speaking directly to her. In parts of the country, especially villages, women never leave the house without a male guardian. Thus, many women's first step is to become independent little by little. Some proudly declare that they move around Athens on their own or with their children without having to have husbands or guardians with them while others say they are still not allowed to do that. A few tell that they no longer ask their husband's permission every time they go out. Many want to study, an option not previously open to them. They say they have become stronger and speak their minds more readily. Shirin, a Syrian mother of 3, thinks she is one of the lucky ones because, "I voice my opinions with my husband in ways I did not do in Syria and my husband listens in ways he didn't in Syria."

Maryam, a 24 year old with one child, divulged in a group conversation that she wanted two or three children but her husband wanted seven. She and the other women all laughed and nodded their heads while one woman came out with the suggestion to let him take a second wife. That way, Maryam and her children would still be supported but she would not be forced to have more. Some of the women immediately agreed that this was the sensible solution while others, who were first wives and did not like having second or third wives in the family, disagreed. Maryam retorted as a strong, idealistic and hopeful 24 year old that she did not want her husband to marry more wives. She said now that she was in Europe and she knew her rights, she would ask him not to, begging, screaming, crying if necessary. Maryam went on to admit that in Afghanistan, in this situation she would never have said a word, despite how painful it would be. Of course, she and the others all agreed that if he decided to do it, she could not stop him. It was his choice ultimately, not hers. In the end, the fact that polygamy is outlawed in Europe gives Maryam a feeling of safety but not surety.

One thing that almost all our women have in common, regardless of where they hail from,

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is pride in motherhood. Being a mother is a primary personal and social role which defines them, both individually and in society. Most of our women agree that they were raised mainly to be mothers and this brings them much joy and a sense of fulfillment. The shared commonality of motherhood at AMURTEL allows them to gradually open up and be willing to discuss, or at least think about, a variety of topics and even sensitive ones such as sexuality, gender based cultural roles, abuse, and human rights.

At AMURTEL, we are committed to safe and empowered mothering from pregnancy through 18 months after birth. We aim to strengthen mothering skills by creating a safe women's space within which to explore both the cultural similarities as well as the differences in African, Middle Eastern and European parenting. We strive to help mothers feel validated in their traditional customs while simultaneously introducing science-based ideas.

Our aim and hope at AMURTEL is that women will become stronger through knowledge, making friends and finding themselves part of a community of mothers. We believe everyone has the right and the capacity to maintain or regain their health, well-being, dignity and self-determination.

This is possible due almost totally to support from individuals like yourselves. The charity donations in the spring and again most recently, the lovely handmade quilts, and the diapers/nappies we've received from Newcomers in the past have all been part of how we manage to continue with the work. Once again, we wholeheartedly thank you for your caring!

For more information: [www.greeceamurtel.org](http://www.greeceamurtel.org) [didi.gr@amurtel.org](mailto:didi.gr@amurtel.org)