

Be confident

ABOUT THE JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN ANIMATION



On the World Refugee Day, 20 June 2021, Asylum Access Thailand (AAT) released an animation video about the journey of an inspirational girl from Sri Lanka. The story is derived from the real-life story of "J" (pseudonym), an 18-year-old girl from Sri Lanka who had lived a peaceful life as a beloved student until the harsh intervention by the government toward Tamil citizens. Many Tamils, including her family, desperately left Sri Lanka and sought asylum. Eventually, her family came to Thailand and sought refuge. Unfortunately, their expectations did not meet reality. When her three family members were arrested and detained in Immigration Detention Center (IDC) due to the absence of a valid visa in Thailand, leaving her and the other two siblings living alone. Today, we are excited to give you a sneak peek behind the scenes interview with the main person who deserves more than a credit from the "Journey into the Unknown" video.



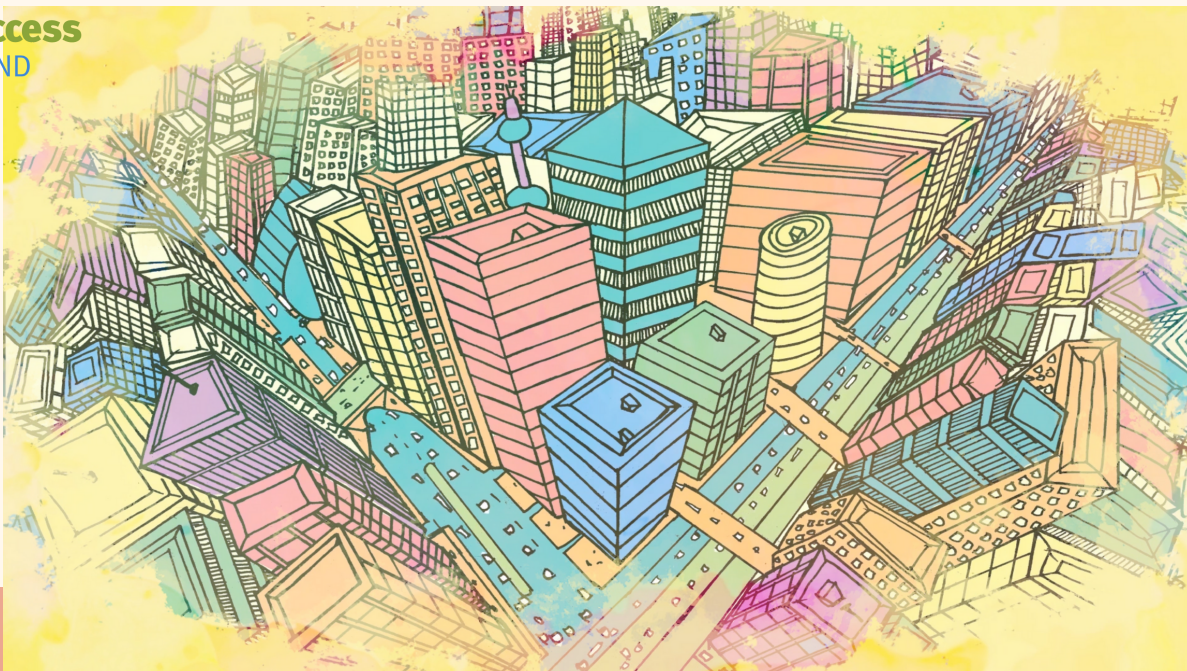
"What part of the video were you involved in?"

The narrator's voice throughout the story is actually my voice. Every picture that you saw in the video is also my artwork from the coloring book that is available on the CHAMALiIN page. Lastly, the whole story is derived from my personal experience and what I have witnessed.

"How do you feel about the involvement?"

When AAT first contacted me about the rough idea, I was a little bit confused about the process of recording my voice and making my drawing move. I was also hesitant about my capacity. However, I trust AAT, and I personally think that it (video) will be a great chance for me to deliver my message to everyone.





"What kind of message do you want to deliver and to whom in particular?"

I want to tell every refugee to be confident no matter what happens to them. This is because we are all facing and going through hardships in so many ways, and if you only devalue yourself, everything will be more difficult. If you stay strong, you will overcome any obstacles and think thoroughly about the problem and respond appropriately. Eventually, when the opportunity arises, we can catch it right away. In short, please have faith and be confident because every problem has its solution.

For the public audiences, I hope they will see the other side of refugees. We used to have a peaceful and independent life, but we were forced to come here (Thailand). Survival is difficult and unpredictable for us. We have the skill and can work; we just need your generosity in the form of support and opportunity.

"How is your life now?"

Just like every refugee, the access to basic needs (i.e. health care and education) are still limited. However, I am trying my best to support the rest of my family (sister and brother) mentally and physically. Thanks to AAT for introducing the CHAMALiN project to me, I am able to attend skill-based workshops such as drawing Henna on a notebook's cover and wooden postcard which allow me to practice my skill, as well as offering a series of knowledge-based courses that prepare me for the future.



Interviewer and Author: Nuchakorn Nunbhakdi, Community Outreach Assistant, July 2021