



# LEILA & ABEL

## A MODERN ODYSSEY

### SUMMARY

« Leila and Abel – A Modern Odyssey » is a story based on the actual life experiences of refugees. The story is told from the perspective of two fictional characters, Abel and Leila. The characters come from different countries, namely Afghanistan and Eritrea, with varying ethnicities, religions and politics. The two protagonists also leave their homes due to different reasons: Leila is fleeing from an arranged marriage and Abel, not having good enough grades, is forced to go into the Eritrean Defence Force. However, what they both have in common is hope for a better future. In the book the reader can follow their harrowing stories about their journey's to a safer place.

### MOTIVATION

More than 100 million people have been forced to flee war, conflicts or persecution around the world. Immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees are just like anyone else, with needs ranging from education, housing to employment. They need to be protected. They need a fair chance. I hope that by telling the stories of Leila and Abel, I can promote awareness of what is going on in the world and in some way, help these young people attain basic rights that are taken for granted.

### METHODS

My primary aim within this project was to build trust with the immigrants that had volunteered to tell me about their lives and journeys. This took time, but made the interviewing process more forthcoming and informative. At the same time, I researched the social and political context of the interviewees in order to both better understand their stories, as well as adding additional credible detail to the narrative. Given the story is told through the eyes of two protagonists and does not follow a linear timeline, this required significant preparation and planning in order to write a coherent narrative.