

focus

Abdullah, 5, in Belgrade, Serbia

For the past two days Abdullah has been sleeping outside the central railway station in the Serbian capital. The young Syrian saw his sister being killed in their Daraa home and is still in shock. He has nightmares every night, his mother says. Abdullah also has a blood disease but his mother does not have any money to buy medicine for him.



Maram, 8, in Amman, Jordan

Maram had just come home from school when the rocket hit her house. A piece of the roof landed on top of her. Her mother took her to a field hospital and from there she was flown across the border to Jordan. The injury caused a brain haemorrhage and for 11 days Maram was in a coma. She is now conscious but has a broken jaw and cannot speak.

Walaa, 5, in Mar Elias, Lebanon

Walaa wants to go home to her own room in Aleppo, Syria, where she never cried at bedtime. In the Lebanese refugee camp she cries every night. Resting her head on the pillow is horrible because the night-time is horrible. That was when the attacks happened. By day, Walaa's mother often builds a little house out of pillows to teach her that they are nothing to be afraid of.



Photos Magnus Wennman / Aftonbladet / Rex / Shutterstock

Amir, 20 months, in Zahle, Lebanon

Amir was born a refugee. His mother believes her son was traumatised in the womb. "Amir has never spoken a single word," says Shahana, 32. In the plastic tent where the family now lives, Amir has no toys but plays with whatever he can find on the ground. "He laughs a lot, even though he doesn't talk," says Shahana.



Lamar, 5, in Horgos, Serbia

The dolls, toy train and ball are at home in Baghdad, Iraq. Lamar often talks of them when home is mentioned. The bomb changed everything. The family were on their way to buy food when it dropped close to their house. It is not possible to live there any more, says Lamar's grandmother. After two attempts to cross the sea from Turkey in a rubber boat they succeeded in reaching Hungary's closed border. Now Lamar sleeps on a blanket in the forest, scared, frozen and sad.



Abdul Karim, 17, in Athens, Greece

Abdul Karim Addo has no money after buying a ferry ticket to Athens with his last euros. Now he spends the night in Omonoia square, where hundreds of refugees arrive every day. He is able to borrow a phone and call home to speak to his mother in Syria, but he cannot tell her how bad things are. "She cries and is scared for my sake and I don't want to worry her more." He unfolds his blanket and curls up in the foetal position. "I dream of two things: to sleep in a bed again and to hug my younger sister."



Childhood lost

By definition, a refugee is someone who leaves one country to seek refuge in another. The children in these photographs had little say about the circumstances that led them to join the human tide that has swept into Europe this summer.

Their faces and stories were captured by the award-winning Swedish photographer Magnus Wennman, who has followed the story from the

borders of Turkey to Beirut and Jordan, and the railway stations of central Europe.

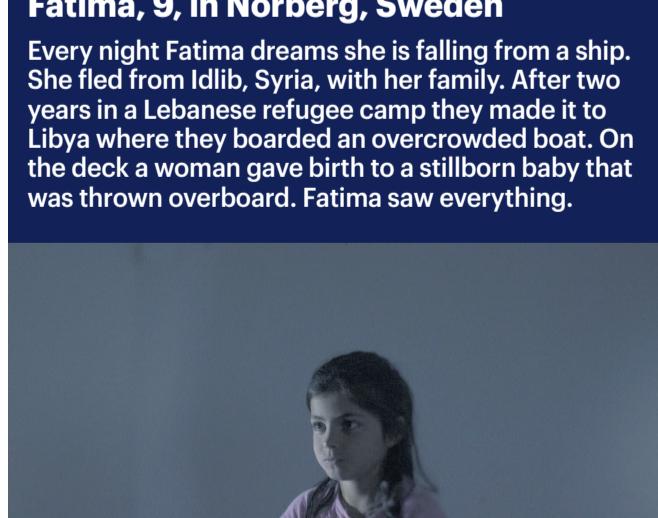
All of these young girls and boys carry a heavy load of trauma with their few possessions.

The horrors they have witnessed are etched on their faces and in their minds, and will not easily be forgotten. If all goes well, they may find safety in their new homes ... but a refuge from their past will be another matter.



Tamam, 5, in Azraq, Jordan

Tamam is scared of her pillow and cries at night. The air raids on her hometown of Homs, Syria, usually took place at night, and although she has been sleeping away from home for nearly two years, she still does not realise that her pillow is not the source of danger.



Fatima, 9, in Norberg, Sweden

Every night Fatima dreams she is falling from a ship. She fled from Idlib, Syria, with her family. After two years in a Lebanese refugee camp they made it to Libya where they boarded an overcrowded boat. On the deck a woman gave birth to a stillborn baby that was thrown overboard. Fatima saw everything.



Mahdi, 1, in Horgos, Serbia

Mahdi is 18 months old and has only experienced war and flight. He sleeps deeply despite the chaos around him as the refugees protest against not being able to travel further through Hungary, and the police eventually use tear gas and water cannon on them.