**News Article**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Humanitarian journalist back from 2-year project stationed in Syria, ready to share with the world what she saw.*

NEW YORK CITY (April 28, 2024) ---- The depths of catastrophe in northwest Syria are manifested from the oppressive grip of Syrian and Russian governments. With nearly 300,000 people fleeing the fighting in and around the Idlib providence since December, it is easy to weed out who is local and who doesn’t belong.

 Journalist and grad student Emma Mayer was stationed in Idlib for two years, where she stayed with a family of six, blending in to the war culture and managing to capture the essence of what it is like to live in the midst of destruction.

 “These people,” she says, “they are real people, but they aren’t treated as such. And no one even knows the utter horror that is taking place on a daily basis in their own homes.” When asked about the time that she spent there and what a day for her looked like, her eyes grew weary. A small smile creased her face, but it didn’t reach her eyes, and her own reaction proved just how tiring the constant battle over there is becoming.

 Last week, the death toll in Idlib grew to 300 civilians this year. “Children are freezing to death on the streets, women are starving. Men are being shot. I mean, there isn’t an ounce of mercy for those people, and it’s gut wrenching to see on the news, let alone to live there,” Mayer says. “We rented a house for $50 dollars a month, but it could have been bombed at any moment. A few of the kids in the family were old enough to work, so we shared the rent. I haven’t felt an ounce of peace beyond that constant fear in two years.”

 Knowing that your house could be bombed or struck down at any time is not a peaceful way of living, at least, not that we are used to here. For the people in Idlib, this constant fear is normal.

 “I just want people to see that there is no other place for these people. Turkey shut its borders, most likely all of them have already been displaced multiple times from their original homes. This is a country full of helpless, homeless people that aren’t even given a choice, and I want people to see that,” Mayer says, her eyes filling with tears. “There’s so much death and pain in those communities, and almost everyone here [America] doesn’t know about it.”

 In the year 2020, Emma worked on a project for undergrad that managed to launch her into the humanitarian field. Her project, titled *Love & Hate,* was a collection of memoirs of people who have suffered hatred and/or experienced a unique love in their lives. Her unique passion for storytelling and people was evident from the beginning, and the collection was published into a book in 2022.

 “It is my life passion to make sure these people’s stories are shared,” she states. “The people in Idlib are suffering, and people should know. Who knows,” she chuckles, “It might be time to take up a *Love & Hate* Project 2.0.”

Target market: People in America; average age: approx. 20-50 years old; people who care about international news and humanitarian aid; would want people to be moved and inspired, as well as excited to hear more about what other countries looks like and what we can be doing about it where we are at.

Facts about Syria taken from: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2020/03/02/Syria-Idlib-photojournalist-reporting-under-fire>