



# *Literacy Volunteers of America*

## *Essex & Passaic Counties*

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### **New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning Adult Learner Writing Contest 2017**

**Category:** Memoir  
**Title:** I Would Become My Dreams  
**Student Author:** Ms. Abir Alkousa  
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#### **I Would Become My Dreams**

Two weeks after I came to America, I woke up from a long night filled with tears and prayers. I found myself alone in this big world, no husband, family or friends. I had left them all behind living the horrors of an ugly war. I lost the presence of a loving husband and the caring eyes of a mother who gave me all she had, and a father who always treated me like a princess.

Life was never easy, but nothing prepared me for this moment. I felt an overwhelming sorrow, my heart was about to stop, I wished everything bad could just end, I found myself at a crossroads with nothing ahead but the unknown.

I turned my head and looked at my children who were asleep next to me. There lies my older son, 9 years old, with his sun-kissed skin and dark hair, he has gotten so much taller in one year. He has his father's looks, and dreams of being a famous soccer player like Christiano. Next to him sleeps my younger son at 5 years of age. He takes after me: his lighter skin, chestnut hair, and a shadow of an innocent smile on his plump lips, which I have often joked that they look just like Angelina Jolie's. They slept like babies, with a sense of peace and safety, because they believe that they have a Mom who protects and takes care of them. I had promised to make-up for all the bad days they had went through during the war in Syria.

I decided to gather my shredded pieces and regain my strength and resilience to become the mother they would be proud of, their source of strength and joy. I wiped away my tears and told myself "I am strong, I am a strong woman ..." over and over again I repeated those words to myself until I came to believe them. I reminded myself that I am not alone because God is always with me and so are my children. Since that day, I pray to God to keep me strong when I feel weak or sad and I always remind myself "I am strong ... I am a strong woman".

I have been in my new country for two years, they brought along both bitter and sweet days. There were days when I was hopeful and motivated to take on any challenge, and others where I felt broken and with nothing but worries and fears of the future. Those were the days that made me what I am today; a stronger woman who has the ability to achieve all she sets her mind to. I learned two lessons which I have taught my children: first, you should believe in God, he is your greatest support in the good and bad days, he will never leave you out at his door, thus never feel that you are alone, ever! Second, you should believe in yourself. Your own potential is always greater than what you expect. You can achieve anything you wish for... and more.

Before we go to sleep, every night, we thank God who has given us the strength to hold out in front of all the difficulties that we experienced and always gives us the energy to face the future. Every night each one of us says "I am strong... I am smart... I would become my dreams".

