

BIHAC, BOSNIA 02.09.21



“Arman. Arman means hope”.

“When we want to go to Game, we first go to the Croatian border. We aim and hope to be able to reach Italy in 14 or 15 days, but the police catch us. When they catch us, they take everything we have, our things, the little money we have, and they beat us. Before they send us back to the border, they beat us and turn loose their dogs to chase us down. They take off our shoes and leave us only with a T-shirt and trousers.”

“We still have that hope because the situation in Afghanistan is very bad, and they can't send us money from our homes. The police in Croatia are not all the same. Some are good and some are very bad. The last Croatian policemen who caught us mistreated us very much”.

We met in a hurry during the night. It was very cold and you had no blankets. You are maybe 17 years old, I don't know. Guessing your age is difficult... you grow up suddenly without having been a child.

You tell us about yourself, you show us pictures of your family, of your cousin, of your different life before this life came along, before the journey trapped you in its web of false hopes, of better imagined, but hardly guaranteed futures.

You show us a drawing you made. You drew your house in the present, which for you is the past, and in the future. You draw Afghanistan overwhelmed by Taliban violence, with a mother trying to protect her child and the bullets all too clear in your mind.

You draw the future, and it is a house in the green, isolated among the trees. The future is tranquillity, serenity, peace. And then you tell us about your ideas, your projects, you share with us your desire to help others when you are given the opportunity. You have met many people who have helped you on your way, and you are ready to give something back. You are so full of life, my friend.

