

# Spirit of Peace

Three girls from around the world are praying for the day they will receive equal treatment and education as war, unequal treatment and poverty blocks their path. Meet Inna, Amara and Afaasa: brave girls who are working hard to overcome big problems so they can find their passion and reach their dreams. Each of them is unique and different in many ways and have the strength to fight for justice, to fight for what is right.

By Luna Lee



**Inna** Born in Ukraine in the city of Kvjv, Inna is a strong and resilient girl who loved going to school. Her dreams were big and wide, and she was working hard to achieve them. However, few months ago, a war broke out between Russia and Ukraine and for Inna everything changed. The war was affecting humanity, education, and so much more. After a bomb was dropped in her city, Inna's family had to leave to escape danger. She is now currently in England, staying with her cousins. As one of the two million children who were forced to flee, Inna felt like giving up hope, until she saw on social media that millions of people around the world were supporting Ukraine. Inna felt a powerful strength reaching towards her. Even during wartime, Inna continues to struggle through with dignity and courage to make her dreams come true.

**Amara** Amara lives in a South African village with her parents and an older brother. At eleven-years-old, Amara can't have an education as her parents are unable to pay for the school's fees. In fact, she is required to help her family. Every morning, she must walk miles under the hot sun to get some water from a lake for her family. It is tiring, but for Amara, it isn't. As she walks by, she spots a village school and looks from a window to see the students learning. It amazes her every day to see them journeying across various types of topics, learning new things. She wishes for the day she can go into that very school in her crisp, clean uniform to learn with her classmates. Some might say that it is impossible, but for Amara, anything seems possible with determination and dedication.

**Afaasa** Living in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, it is hard for women as they don't receive as many opportunities as men. Recently, a group called the Taliban invaded the country and forced people to join their beliefs. The Taliban shut down schools as the female students weren't following the proper dress code system of wearing a hijab. Students like Afaasa couldn't go to school and were barred from other activities too. Many girls and women explained that they were frustrated from the unequal treatment. It is also very upsetting for Afaasa, as a girl she has to wear a hijab, a head scarf that covers her face. Our faces are a part of our identity, she thinks. Today, many girls under the Taliban rule are praying, hoping for a better tomorrow.

Bravery, and sense of justice, and passion are needed to face the enormous challenge of being barred from receiving an education. These three strong girls are struggling through a war, inequality, and poverty which is currently happening in Afghanistan and other parts of the world. These girls only wish is for education. To grant their wish, we must know the importance of education and help support them. "One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world."



**About the Author** Luna Lee is a Grade 5 student who goes to UWCSEA Dover, an international school located in Singapore. She likes to spend time painting, playing with her little brothers, and strolling through the Botanic Gardens with her family. Inna, Amara, and Afaasa are imaginary girls created by Luna, but they reflect the real-life struggles of many girls around the globe today.

