EVERYDAY A GIRL

DREAMS BEYOND WAR

Photo Essay of Halima by Ndey Yassin
Curated and edited by Esther Hadassah Mwema for the Everyday A Girl Photo Essay Series
Halima is from a town near Senegal in West Africa. She lost her parents in the war that took place in her home town, Cassamance. Her dad’s sister took her and brought her to Gambia. She now lives with her aunt.

Halima’s aunt is a cleaner in one of the GSM Companies in Gambia. She keeps Halima and her three children. Halima works as a maid to raise money to pay her school fees. Though she was taken many classes back, she believes she is doing well in her studies. She does not want to be a cleaner all her life and that is why she is serious about school. She is a junior, in year 9.

She is always extremely tired when she goes to school but tries her best to stay alert and learn. She cannot quit as she needs that income. After classes, she helps her aunt to cook, clean pots, wash clothes, and then sometimes sleeps without eating due to her exhaustion.

At first, her grades were very bad because she used to forget to do her homework due to fatigue. Sometimes, there was no light in their house and her aunt would not allow her to light candles fearing that an accident will occur if she forgets to blow the candles before sleeping.

Halima’s boss is very good to her and often pays her more than agreed if Halima needs school necessities. After work, she takes a quick nap then hurriedly goes back to her home to get ready for evening classes.

Halima’s story reveals an inner drive to succeed. Her fierce dedication and sacrifice for education makes her a true visionary and role model for girls. Girls face a lot of challenges to stay in school and need full support.