

New Homes / New Fears

by Jowell Tan

Let's put it this way;

How would you like to leave the land of your ancestors, the place of your birth, the home of your identity;

The friends you collected in your youth, the neighbours' children you would play with before dinner, the old friendly shopkeeper who smiled when he saw you, the lady mistress of the local diner who would give you free portions, all the people you've come to know in your years;

The corner block where you had your first kiss, the convenience store where you'd buy your favourite snacks, the open fields where you played your sports, the schools and malls and roadside stalls;

The view from your room window where the magic sunset light would come in without fail, the blur of familiar scenes outside the buses and trains you sat in, the conversations and the stories;

To live in an unknown country, where you wake up at ungodly hours to cold showers and unventilated transport, to work long hours under the blazing sun, struggling with new technology, strange languages, and unhelpful colleagues;

Enduring looks of disgust and fear from the strangers whom you come across on the way home, on public transport that you cant understand, walking down new roads hoping you aren't lost, eating what you hope will be food your stomach can stand, just to squeeze in a small room in a small house with however many others, trying to sleep in that little corner so that you can do it all over again tomorrow;

So that you can earn enough to send home to a wife that misses your touch, to children that don't recognise your face, to a family that's miles away from you;

How would you like to be an immigrant?

