



A mind-blowing idea

She was the refugee who became Young Australian of the Year ... now Tan Le is a Silicon Valley powerhouse creating a bridge between mind and machine.

Tan Le is sitting in her office in San Francisco, where a jumble of those same futuristic helmets is spread across the table. Outside you can hear the rattle of the city's famous cable cars, and inside this gleaming white workspace is where Le spends her days delving into the limits of the brain and self-tracking technology.

Tan Le has had tougher journeys.

She was only four but she remembers the boat. Being tossed around in a wild sea. She recalls the darkness of the ocean and the sense of foreboding. It was only later that Le learnt that her mother Mai Ho carried a vial of poison in case their boatload of refugees was attacked by pirates. In that event, her mother planned to give the poison to Le and her younger sister Min before taking it herself.

17 Feb 2020

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/weekend-australian-magazine/tan-le-from-vietnamese-refugee-to-silicon-valley-powerhouse/news-story/f093392f7d4e75cda5db5ca119e96f9f>

'Finally, a life': Canada comes to the rescue when a refugee family loses hope in Australia

Dima, Hani and their son escaped the hopelessness of detention through sponsorship that led to permanent residency, in Toronto

Dima first appeared in the headlines three years ago. Back then, she was a 37-year-old anonymous refugee on Nauru with a potentially life-threatening pregnancy, being refused a critically needed transfer to Australia. When the Australian government finally agreed, [Nauru's ministry refused to let her go](#).

Eventually, at 38 weeks pregnant, suffering suspected pre-eclampsia and with her baby in breech, Dima was flown to Cairns. Her husband, Hani, was left behind.

It took almost two years before she and her family were reunited – across the country in Adelaide, in the limbo of community detention.

8 Feb 2020

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/feb/08/finally-a-life-canada-comes-to-the-rescue-when-a-refugee-family-loses-hope-in-australia>

Soccer providing vital link between refugees and their new regional community

The catchcry that soccer is "the world game" rings true at this regional New South Wales field where football has become a way for refugees to find familiarity and friends in their new home.

On any given night, 100 people or more can be found kicking a ball around Coffs Harbour's Maclean Street oval.

If it is a Tuesday night in summer, there are up to 1,000 people from all corners of the globe playing and watching the six-a-side competition.

Among them is Hameed, who arrived in Australia from Iraq in 2018.

"I'm here with my community, in the same team," he said.

"All my friends play; my dad and my mum and my brother, they come and watch."

12 Feb 2020

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-02-12/soccer-provides-vital-link-between-refugees-and-their-community/11933158>

How two women from a conservative Queensland town made the deportation of a local Tamil family national news

It was a sunny spring evening when more than 50 people from the central Queensland town of Biloela gathered at their local park with candles and neon Post-it notes displaying handwritten messages of hope.

Carrying signs declaring "bring them home" and "let them stay", the mood was one of sorrow, but also, defiance.

Just over a week earlier, on 5 March 2018, a Tamil family-of-four from their tight-knit community had been grabbed from their home at dawn by and taken to an immigration detention centre in Melbourne, with plans to deport them back to Sri Lanka. The news spread quickly through the town of 5,728 residents.

At the vigil, some reported seeing the street outside the family's home cordoned off by police. Others shared their sorrow at the loss of their friends and colleague from the local abattoir.

20 Feb 2020

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/how-two-women-from-a-conservative-queensland-town-made-the-deportation-of-a-local-tamil-family-national-news>

'Never heard of anything like this': Advocates stunned by Manus escape

Refugee advocates have described a Rohingya asylum seeker's escape from Australia's offshore processing centre on Manus Island, and successful resettlement in Canada, as unprecedented and extraordinary.

Jaivet Ealom, 27, has spoken publicly for the first time about his high-risk and secretive journey to freedom in a series of interviews with The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age in Canada.

Ealom says he escaped from the Manus Regional Processing Centre in May 2017 and boarded a flight to Port Moresby by posing as an interpreter.

He then lived for six months as a fugitive in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands before arriving unannounced in Canada, where he was granted protected refugee status.

"Nothing like this has ever come to light before," Paul Power, the chief executive of the Refugee Council of Australia, said.

"It is extraordinary. I've never heard of anything like this."

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https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/north-america/never-heard-of-anything-like-this-advocates-stunned-by-manus-escape-20200222-p543b1.html?ref=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_source=rss_feed

'The only one who made it out': Incredible Manus Island escape revealed

Jaivet Ealom understands if you struggle to believe his story. At times, he can hardly believe it himself.

Ealom, 27, is a political economy student at the University of Toronto with a soft voice and a lively mind. Most of his classmates know him as a Rohingya refugee who fled Myanmar.

What few of them know is that he escaped Australia's offshore detention centre in Manus Island by posing as an interpreter. Or that he lived as a fugitive in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, where he obtained a passport by pretending to be a local. Or that he arrived in Toronto broke and alone, and was forced to sleep in a homeless shelter.

Had Ealom been caught during his daring and secretive cross-country journey, he risked being fined and imprisoned. Instead – after teaching himself a new language, altering his appearance and mastering global visa rules – he found freedom in the most unexpected of places.

"I thought I would be stuck there for the rest of my life," he says of his three-and-a-half years on Manus Island. He was detained on Christmas Island for six months before that.

"I didn't want to rot in detention. I realised I needed to get out."

He says if he'd known what he was getting himself into, he would never have done it. "I took so many risks," he says, shaking his head. "There were many times I thought it was all over."

22 Feb 2020

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/north-america/the-only-one-who-made-it-out-incredible-manus-island-escape-revealed-20200220-p542hh.html>