

P O R T R A I T S O F
PROMISE

MARCH 2024

**at-risk
to thriving**

orphan's promise

Hope and Healing in Poland



These are the stories.

These are the souls.

These are the portraits of
the lives we're changing.

While headlines change, the crisis in Ukraine continues. Ukrainian refugee families are living with the ongoing horrors of war, but there is still hope. One family is finding healing and community because of your partnership. Come with us to a small apartment in Poland and hear their story.

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LIFE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

Darina is a 13-year-old girl who wears silver-rimmed glasses and loves to smile. She enjoys taking guitar lessons and playing table tennis. She also adores her two little sisters: 8-year-old Polina and 4-year-old Christina. They lived in Kharkiv, Ukraine, with their parents until the war came to their neighborhood in 2022.

Their mother, Yana, shared, “We lived a peaceful life in Kharkiv. But after February 24, everything changed, and our life turned into a nightmare.”

One eye-opening article says: “At the beginning of their invasion of Ukraine, Russian forces launched a relentless campaign of indiscriminate bombardments against Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-biggest city. They shelled residential neighbourhoods almost daily, killing hundreds of civilians and causing wholesale destruction.”¹

Darina and her family were forced to shelter in the basement of their apartment building with 150 other residents. Parents tried to comfort their children amid the violence, but it was hard to distract them from the sounds of bombs dropping nearby.

According to the UN Refugee Agency, “Poland has welcomed the greatest number of Ukrainian refugees, hosting nearly 60 percent of all refugees from Ukraine.”²

Yana explained, “The children constantly asked when we would go outside, but Kharkiv was bombed every day and we had no answer to this question. We had to come out of the basement, risking our own lives to prepare food for the children and use the toilet. Despite everything, we tried to explain to the children that everything would be fine. This is just a game.”

After several weeks of hiding in the basement, Darina’s family made the long journey to Poland... and the unknown. UNICEF reported that the war caused “the displacement of 4.3 million children—more than half of the country’s estimated 7.5 million child population.”³

Most Ukrainian men couldn’t leave the country unless they had three or more children. Fortunately, this meant that Darina’s father, Artem, could join his loved ones in Poland. The family found a small apartment and began to try to build a new life out of nothing.

THE UN REFUGEE AGENCY ALSO REPORTED THAT “THE FULL-SCALE WAR IN UKRAINE BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 24, 2022 FOLLOWING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION’S INVASION OF THE COUNTRY. AS A RESULT OF HEAVY SHELLING AND FIGHTING, AN ESTIMATED 3.7 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES AND ARE INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND MORE THAN 6.3 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE CROSSED INTO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IN THE REGION.”⁴





A MOTHER'S HEART

While her family was now physically safe in Poland, Yana saw how the war had robbed her precious daughters of their childhood.

When Darina arrived with her family in Poland, she did not want to leave the apartment. She was not interested in anything and often kept to herself. She spoke very little and was deeply sad.

During the week-long trek to Poland, an air raid made Polina burst into tears, and Yana heard the words no parent ever wants to hear: "Mom, will I be shelled again?"

As their family tried to build a new life in Poland, the girls struggled to heal from the violence, uncertainty, and grief of war that haunted them.

When Yana and her husband heard about the Helping Hand center that partners with Orphan's Promise, they hoped this would be a place where their daughters could heal from the trauma they endured.



INCREASE YOUR *generosity*

The most effective way to give and maximize your gift is to give a recurring monthly gift. If you'd like to become a monthly partner with Orphan's Promise, please check out the information below. We'll count on you to ensure our commitment to these children is fulfilled!

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Virginia Beach, VA 23463

**Thanks for your generosity.
We look forward to making a difference together.** orphan'spromise

HOPE AHEAD

Darina and Polina started attending classes at Helping Hand, and their healing journey began. The sisters started watching episodes of Superbook. Darina later volunteered at a Superbook camp for kids. During lunch with her peers, she suggested they pray and even shared Scripture verses with them.

About 100 kids of all ages come to the Helping Hand center and have the chance to grow in a safe, loving environment. The kids can learn math, English, music, computer skills, and sports. Both sisters regained a sense of safety and normalcy through the loving care of the staff and friendships with the other kids.

“We are very grateful that Polina has the opportunity to visit the Helping Hand center where she can really forget the horrors of war, communicate in her native language, and have fun. The volunteers surrounded her with love and care,” Yana said.

And Darina is becoming herself again. She loves to study, actively participates in class, and is making new friends. She picked up guitar again and, slowly, her smile is coming back. “Thank you for returning our Darina to us!” Yana added. “She has found new friends here and the horrors of war seem far away.”

There is no greater reward than seeing a child’s hope restored.

Thank you for partnering with us and making this kind of transformation possible. Because of your compassionate generosity, children and their families have somewhere to turn in the aftermath of trauma and war. Your love is bringing light to the darkest places.

“Thank you for returning our Darina to us! ... She has found new friends here and the horrors of war seem far away.” –Yana

1. “Anyone Can Die at Any Time,” Amnesty International, June 13, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2022/06/anyone-can-die-at-any-time-kharkiv/>.
 2. “Ukraine Emergency,” USA for UNHCR, accessed January 19, 2024, <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/ukraine/>.
 3. “More Than Half of Ukraine’s Children Displaced After One Month of War,” UNICEF, March 24, 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-half-ukraines-children-displaced-after-one-month-war>.
 4. “Ukraine Emergency,” USA for UHCR, accessed January 19, 2024, <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/ukraine/>.




SCAN TO GIVE



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Orphan's Promise, a children's ministry of The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc., serves orphans and other vulnerable children around the world, taking them from at-risk to thriving through the transforming power of God's love. CBN is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization and your contributions to our ministry may be tax-deductible.