

WHEN MATH AND LIFE MEET

For a teenager moving to another country, an embarrassing moment of confusion is the worst nightmare. When she first arrived in the US Maria was excited, but when you don't know what you're going through it's hard to stay focused and do well.

Maria was born in Israel where life is good and people are nice.

She moved here with her mom and her dad because of his job. He works for Intel which in Israel is an hard job to get for an Arab. He was given the opportunity to move to the USA so he took it to give his daughter the possibility to study in a easier environment and to go to a university to become a geneticist, her dream job.

Her first day of school she went to her science class and sat in a seat that she later discovered wasn't hers; there were assigned seats and everybody was staring at her. Some people said hi that day and some people didn't care; they were too busy with their own stuff to care about the new girl. When she arrived home that day she was scared, and told her mom that she didn't want to go back to that school, where she fought she couldn't do well. She didn't have anybody to talk to and there was no way she would have been fine.

Maria has always been an organised, hard working student. The studying part wasn't that hard for her, mostly in her science and math class, but the people weren't easy to live with. Although school in her home country was not easy, Israel's teachers don't really pay attention to the students' necessities and they prefer to give a lot of homework for the students to work on rather than help them in class. Kids also don't really have the chance to explore extracurricular activities and sports after school. Students' life there only focuses on academics and they don't have the chance to have a "life" outside of school.

However Maria remembers a math teacher in Israel who taught her how to deal with problems, in math and in life. She helped her when she was about to leave and gave her the strength to overcome the obstacles that she was facing.

Her grandma, even though she went missing when Maria was 6, is the lead in her childhood story. She used to pick her up after school and she would spend the afternoon with her and then sleepover. Maria's perfect day would probably be one of those days when after school she could play with grandma, then go eat her favourite ice cream and watch tv shows. There's one thing that could make those days even better; her aunt Rasha who at the time was in university and would hang out with Maria even when she had a lot of things to do.

Rasha got married when she was 11 years old, and Maria defines that event as one of the most important in her life. They started celebrating a month before the actual wedding and she remembers preparing a surprise dance for the groom it was so much fun. That same aunt is moving here with two kids and Maria told her not to be afraid to overcome the obstacles and face the fears she will have in the new country.

