

SEDIN MUSTAFIĆ



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Sedin Mustafić survived the Genocide in Bosnia. He had to flee his home with nothing when the Bosnian War started, ending up in the apparently safe area of Srebrenica.



'Forgive as much as you can, but don't forget. If you have hate, it's only going to destroy you. We need to teach young people to not hate and appreciate what they have.'

Sedin was born in 1986 in Zvornik. Sedin lived with his parents, grandparents and older sister. Sedin's father, Hamdija, would work away from home for long periods of time and when he returned, he would bring presents for his children. Sedin and his father had a love of football and he cherished the rubber ball that his father gave him.

Sedin was six when the Bosnian War started in 1992 and his family were forced to flee their home to find safety, shelter and food. They walked for days in extreme weather conditions. Sometimes, the snow was as high as Sedin's waist.

When the family arrived at a village, sometimes they would be given a slice of bread to share between them. Often, they would encounter shooting at a village and would have to turn back. Families would have to sleep in the forest with no electricity, appropriate clothing or footwear. They ate whatever they could find to survive, such as mushrooms, leaves, fruit and snails.

Eventually, Sedin and his family reached Srebrenica, an apparently safe area controlled by the United Nations. In Srebrenica, men were separated from women and children. It was difficult to find food, and people would have to trade items such as clothing or jewellery for a bag of flour or a pinch of salt. Sedin's father would try to bring food to the family as often as he could. As Sedin was a child, he received a small ration of bread and milk every day from the United Nations.

In 1993, Sedin and his mother, sister and grandparents fought for their place on a truck to Tuzla. His father and grandfather had to stay behind. When they said goodbye, Sedin's father gave his family a big piece of bread called *pogaca*. The family assumed he must have had to sell something valuable like his rubber boots to buy the bread. Sedin says 'You never knew when it would be the last time you would see your family'.

During the journey from Srebrenica to Tuzla, small children suffocated between people's feet and many people died due to overcrowding. When they arrived at Tuzla, Sedin felt much safer and even received two letters from his father.

In July 1995, around 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were murdered in Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serb Army, despite it being a UN-designated safe area.

It was the single largest mass murder in Europe since World War Two. Sedin's father was amongst those men.

When the war ended, people no longer had items to trade for food and many faced starvation. Sedin and his family moved to Zivinice along with many other families who came from Srebrenica and neighbouring villages. The living conditions were difficult, with fifteen people living in one room with a shared bathroom.

Sedin says 'We would always have to work extra hard as refugees, wherever we went, even though it was our Bosnia'. Sedin's mother encouraged him to work hard in school, but it was difficult to obtain good grades when they could not afford school materials and the walk to school took several hours.

Sedin and his family did not know that his father had been murdered, and were still hopeful that they would be reunited with Hamdija. However, along with thousands of other Bosnians, Sedin's DNA was taken in the hope of identifying the remains found in mass graves. A friend of Hamdija's contacted the family to tell them that he knew Hamdija was killed in an attempted escape through the forest. He told them what Hamdija was wearing when he last saw his friend to help with the identification.

In 2004 a DNA match was found, and Sedin and his mother had to identify the clothes on a body. They were the same clothes that his father had been wearing the last time he was seen by his friend in Srebrenica. Today, Hamdija is buried alongside his mother, Sedin's grandmother, according to her wishes.

In the same year, Sedin fell in love with a Bosnian girl called Selma who fled to the UK after the war. She was visiting her grandparents in Bosnia when they met. After a long-distance relationship, Sedin moved to the UK and they got married in 2007. They now live in Hertfordshire with their two children and have fostered young asylum seekers for the past two and a half years, feeling that they can personally relate to people who have fled their country for safety. Sedin still loves to play football and plays for a local team.

Sedin says 'When I first arrived in the UK, life was not easy as I didn't speak any English and had to start from the beginning. However, football and the community made it feel like my second home. Well, I say second but I've lost count of how many I've had.'

Every year, they visit the grave of Sedin's father in Bosnia and pray. There are many people who do not know where their loved ones are buried, so they feel lucky to know where Sedin's father rests. Sedin says: 'At least we have peace to know that he was found and we can say our prayer and try to move on'.

Selma and Sedin often visit Bosnia to help the poorest communities, where they donate money, clothes and cooking supplies to those most in need. They both have a very positive outlook on life saying: 'We consider ourselves so lucky, almost as if we have had another chance at life and we will never take that for granted.'

Find out more... Genocide in Bosnia: hmd.org.uk/bosnia

SEDIN MUSTAFIĆ



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH
DIWRNOD COFIO'R
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Goroedd Sedin Mustafić yr hil-laddiad ym Mosnia. Bu'n rhaid iddo ffoi o'i gartref yn waglaw pan ddechreuodd Rhyfel Bosnia, ac aeth i ardal Srebrenica a oedd i fod yn ddiogel.



'Maddewwch gymaint ag y gallwch, ond peidiwch anghofio. Wnaiff casineb ond eich dinistrio chi. Mae angen i ni ddysgu pobl ifanc i beidio â chasáu a gwerthfawrogi'r hyn sydd ganddyn nhw.'

Ganwyd Sedin ym 1986 yn Zvornik. Roedd Sedin yn byw gyda'i rieni, ei fam-gu a'i dad-cu, a'i chwaer hŷn. Byddai Hamdija, tad Sedin, yn gweithio i ffwrdd o gartref am gyfnodau hir a phan fyddai'n dychwelyd, byddai'n dod ag anrhegion i'w blant. Roedd Sedin a'i dad yn dwlu ar bêl-droed ac roedd e'n trysori'r bêl rwber a gafodd gan ei dad.

Roedd Sedin yn chwech oed pan ddechreuodd Rhyfel Bosnia ym 1992 a gorfodwyd ei deulu i ffoi o'u cartref i ddod o hyd i ddiogelwch, cysgod a bwyd. Buont yn cerdded am ddiwrnodau mewn tywydd garw. Weithiau roedd yr eira'n cyrraedd canol Sedin.

Pan fyddai'r teulu'n cyrraedd pentref, weithiau bydden nhw'n cael tafell o fara i'w rannu. Yn aml, byddai yna saethu mewn pentref a byddai'n rhaid iddyn nhw droi'n ôl. Byddai'n rhaid i deuluoedd gysgu yn y goedwig heb unrhyw drydan na dillad ac esgidiau addas. Roedden nhw'n bwyta beth bynnag y gallen nhw i oroesi, fel madarch, dail, ffrwythau a malwod.

O'r diwedd, cyrhaeddodd Sedin a'i deulu Srebrenica, ardal ddiogel yn ôl y sôn a oedd yn cael ei rheoli gan y Cenhedloedd Unedig. Yn Srebrenica, cafodd dynion eu gwahanu oddi wrth y menywod a'r plant. Roedd dod o hyd i fwyd yn anodd, a byddai'n rhaid i bobl gyfnewid eitemau fel dillad neu emwaith am fag o flawd neu binsiad o halen. Byddai tad Sedin yn ceisio dod â bwyd i'r teulu mor aml ag y gallai. Gan fod Sedin yn blentyn, byddai'n cael dogn bach o fara a llaeth bob dydd gan y Cenhedloedd Unedig.

Ym 1993, brwydrodd Sedin a'i fam, ei chwaer a'i fam-gu am eu lle ar lori i Tuzla. Roedd rhaid i'w dad a'i dad-cu aros ar ôl. Wrth ffarwelio, rhoddodd tad Sedin ddarn mawr o fara o'r enw pogaca i'w deulu. Roedd y teulu'n tybio ei fod wedi gorfod gwerthu rhywbeth gwerthfawr fel ei esgidiau glaw i brynu'r bara. Meddai Sedin, 'Doeddech chi byth yn gwybod pryd fyddech chi'n gweld eich teulu am y tro olaf'.

Yn ystod y daith o Srebrenica i Tuzla, mygodd plant bach rhwng traed pobl a bu farw llawer o bobl oherwydd bod y lori'n orlawn. Pan gyrhaeddodd nhw Tuzla, roedd Sedin yn teimlo'n llawer mwy diogel ac fe wnaeth e hyd yn oed dderbyn dau lythyr gan ei dad.

Ym mis Gorffennaf 1995, llofruddiwyd tua 8,000 o ddynion a bechgyn Mwslimaidd Bosniaidd yn Srebrenica gan Fyddin Serbiaidd Bosnia, er bod yr ardal wedi'i dynodi'n ddiogel gan y Cenhedloedd Unedig.

Dyma'r llofruddiaeth dorfol fwyaf yn Ewrop ers yr Ail Ryfel Byd. Roedd tad Sedin ymhlith y dynion a lofruddiwyd.

Pan ddaeth y rhyfel i ben, doedd gan bobl ddim byd ar ôl i'w gyfnewid am fwyd ac roedd llawer yn wynebu newyn. Symudodd Sedin a'i deulu i Zivinice ynghyd â llawer o deuluoedd eraill a oedd yn hanu o Srebrenica a phentrefi cyfagos. Roedd yr amodau byw yn anodd, gyda phymtheg o bobl yn byw mewn un ystafell ac yn rhannu ystafell ymolchi.

Meddai Sedin, 'Roedd rhaid i ni weithio'n galetach a ninnau'n ffoaduriaid, dim ots ble'r oedden ni, er ein bod ni yn ein Bosnia ni'. Cafodd Sedin ei annog gan ei fam i weithio'n galed yn yr ysgol ond roedd hi'n anodd cael graddau da pan nad oedden nhw'n gallu fforddio deunyddiau ysgol a'u bod yn treulio oriau yn cerdded yn ôl ac ymlaen i'r ysgol.

Doedd Sedin a'i deulu ddim yn gwybod bod ei dad wedi cael ei lofruddio, ac roedden nhw'n dal i fyw mewn gobaith y bydden nhw'n gweld Hamdija eto un dydd. Fodd bynnag, ynghyd â miloedd o Fosniaid eraill, cymerwyd DNA Sedin yn y gobaith o adnabod y cyrff y daethpwyd o hyd iddyn nhw mewn beddau torfol. Cysylltodd cyfaill i Hamdija â'r teulu i ddweud wrthynt ei fod yn gwybod i Hamdija gael ei ladd wrth geisio dianc drwy'r goedwig. Dywedodd wrthynt beth roedd Hamdija'n gwisgo y tro diwethaf iddo weld ei ffrind er mwyn helpu gyda'r broses adnabod.

Yn 2004, cafwyd cyfatebiaeth DNA, a bu'n rhaid i Sedin a'i fam adnabod y dillad ar gorff. Dyma'r dillad roedd ei dad yn gwisgo y tro diwethaf i'w ffrind ei weld yn Srebrenica. Heddiw, mae Hamdija wedi'i gladdu wrth ochr ei fam, mam-gu Sedin, yn unol â'i dymuniad.

Yn yr un flwyddyn, cwmpodd Sedin mewn cariad â merch Fosniaidd o'r enw Selma a oedd wedi ffoi i'r DU ar ôl y rhyfel. Roedd hi'n ymweld â'i mam-gu a'i thad-cu ym Mosnia pan iddyn nhw gyfarfod. Ar ôl caru o bell, symudodd Sedin i'r DU a phriodwyd y ddau yn 2007. Maen nhw'n byw yn Swydd Hertford erbyn hyn gyda'u dau blentyn ac maen nhw wedi maethu ceiswyr lloches ifanc am y ddwy flynedd a hanner diwethaf, gan deimlo eu bod nhw'n gallu uniaethu'n bersonol â phobl sydd wedi ffoi o'u gwlad er mwyn bod yn ddiogel. Mae Sedin yn dwlu ar bêl-droed o hyd ac yn chwarae i dîm lleol.

Meddai Sedin, 'Pan gyrhaeddais i'r DU gyntaf, doedd bywyd ddim yn hawdd oherwydd doeddwn i ddim yn siarad Saesneg ac roedd rhaid i mi ddechrau o'r dechrau. Ond, diolch i bêl-droed a'r gymuned, fues i fawr o dro yn teimlo'n gartrefol yma.'

Bob blwyddyn, maen nhw'n ymweld â bedd tad Sedin ym Mosnia ac yn gweddïo. Does dim llawer o bobl yn gwybod ble mae eu hanwyliaid wedi'u claddu, felly maen nhw'n teimlo'n ffodus i wybod ble mae tad Sedin yn gorffwys. Meddai Sedin: 'O leiaf gallwn ni fod yn dawel ein meddwl ei fod e wedi cael ei ganfod a gallwn ddweud ein pader a cheisio symud ymlaen'.

Mae Selma a Sedin yn aml yn ymweld â Bosnia i helpu'r cymunedau tlotaf, lle maen nhw'n rhoi arian, dillad a nwyddau coginio i'r bobl mwyaf anghenus. Mae'r ddau ohonyn nhw'n ceisio gweld yr ochr orau o bethau gan ddweud: 'Rydym ni'n ystyried ein hunain yn ffodus iawn, fel petaen ni wedi cael ail gyfle mewn bywyd a byddwn ni byth yn cymryd hynny'n ganiataol.'

Am fwy o wybodaeth... genocideiddio yn y Bosnia: hmd.org.uk/bosnia