

POL: I DON'T FORGET

SO: I STILL REMEMBER, I DON'T FORGET

POL: AND I KEEP FIGHTING

SO: AND I'M STILL FIGHTING FOR... I GUESS FREEING THE OCCUPIED SIDE.

[MUSIC1 FADE IN]

T: POLYMNIA AND SONIA NICOLAOU, MY SISTERS AND JUST LIKE ME NATIVES OF THE FREE PART OF CYPRUS.

POL: WE HAD... I REMEMBER BEING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN CYPRUS AND ON EVERY NOTEBOOK AND EVERY BOOK PUBLISHED BY THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT THERE WAS THIS PHRASE AND THAT WAS IN REFERENCE TO THE NORTHERN SIDE, WHICH IS IT'S AGAIN YOU MIGHT NOT BE TALKING ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME OR THINKING ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME BUT IT'S STILL THERE IT'S SOMETHING THAT YOU... THAT KEEPS COMING UP IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. AND ON TOP OF THAT LITTLE LOGO THERE WERE ALSO PICTURES FROM THE NORTHERN SIDE IN FRONT OF THE NOTEBOOK JUST KERYNIA OR IT WOULD BE A PICTURE OF A REALLY PRETTY PLACE ON THE NORTHERN PART OF THE ISLAND. YEAH.. I GOT GOOSEBUMPS SAYING THAT.

[MUSIC1 FADE OUT]

[MUSIC2 IN]

T: THIS IS 1974. A PODCAST ON THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS. FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT DON'T KNOW CYPRUS IS ONE OF THE LARGEST ISLANDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. IT'S ABOUT A HALF AN HOUR PLANE RIDE SOUTH FROM TURKEY. AND ABOUT A FORTY FIVE MINUTE PLANE RIDE FROM GREECE. BUT THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFIES AS GREEK. IN 1974, THE GREEK MILITARY GOVERNMENT ORCHESTRATED A COUP AGAINST THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT. AND WHEN THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT FELL THE COUNTRY WAS LEFT UNPROTECTED AND VERY VULNERABLE. WHILE THE COUNTRY WAS A MESS THE TURKS FOUND THEIR CHANCE. THEY INVADED UNDER THE EXCUSE THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED FOR THE SAFETY OF TURKISH CYPRIOTS, BUT

SUCH CONCERNS WERE UNREASONABLE SINCE VIOLENCE BETWEEN GREEK CYPRIOTS AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS HAD NOT BROKEN OUT IN YEARS. THE ISLAND WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS: NORTH AND SOUTH, OCCUPIED AND FREE.

CHRI: THERE WERE PROBABLY TIMES BEFORE WHERE IF THEY INVEDED IT COULD HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED, BUT AT THAT GIVEN TIME IT WAS AN EXCUSE. BASICALLY WHAT HAD HAPPENED IS THEY HAD THIS COUP. THE COUP ACTUALLY WAS SUCCESSFUL SO THERE WAS STILL THIS BIG HOOPLA AROUND THINGS. BUT THERE WERE NO ATTACKS AGAINST TURKISH CYPRIOTS DURING THAT TIME. THERE WAS NO REAL REASON.

T: THAT'S MY DAD, CHRISTOS NIKOLAOU. HIS FAMILY BECAME REFUGEES BECAUSE OF THIS INVASION, SO HE'S DEFINITELY A LOT MORE PASSIONATE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE ON THE SUBJECT.

CHRI: THERE ARE LOTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AROUND WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT TIME EXACTLY.

T: LIKE IN THE US OR IN TURKEY?

CHRI: EVERYWHERE. EVERYWHERE. WHEN I WAS SAYING THAT THIS WAS A SWEET MOMENT FOR THE TURKS. IT REALLY WAS. WHAT HAPPENED WAS THERE WAS NO REAL STRONG GOVERNMENT IN THE US RIGHT? IT WAS WATERGATE, NIXON WAS JUST OUSTED. GREECE WAS JUST COMING OUT OF A COUP. ACTUALLY IT WAS STILL A HOUNTA WHEN THE INVASION TOOK PLACE. THERE WAS ALSO A COUP IN CYPRUS. SO IT WAS A COMPLETE MESS BOTH IN GREECE AND IN THE US.

[MUSIC 2 OUT]

[NIGHT SFX IN]

CHRI: ONE NIGHT I WALKED UP- OUR HOUSE WAS A TWO STORY HOUSE SO AT THE TOP FLOOR WE HAD A VERANDA AND MY GRANDFATHER WAS SITTING ON HIS OWN WITH A HUNTING GUN. AND I WENT UP THERE AND I ASKED HIM "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?" AND HE WAS LIKE "I'M GUARDING THE HOUSE." AND I

COULD HEAR PLANES YOU KNOW ROARING IN THE SKIES AND EXPLOSIONS FAR AWAY

[AIR RAID SFX IN]

CHRI: THE PROBLEM WAS THE PLANES. BASICALLY THE ISLAND HAD NO AIR FORCE AND NO WAY TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST AIRPLANES SO THEY WERE BASICALLY CRUISING AROUND AND BOMBING ANY TARGET. PEOPLE WERE REALLY REALLY TERRIFIED OF PLANES. SOON AFTER THE INVASION STARTED AND AS THE TURKISH FORCES WERE APPROACHING PEOPLE LEFT THEIR HOMES AND WENT INTO THE FOREST FOR COVER.

TH: MY DAD, MY GRANDMOTHER AND MY UNCLE WERE SOME OF THE PEOPLE THAT HAD TO TAKE REFUGE IN THESE FORESTS. MY DAD WAS ONLY FOUR YEARS OLD AT THE TIME AND MY UNCLE ONLY THREE MONTHS OLD.

[MUSIC 3 IN]

CHRI: I GUESS MY MOM WAS AFRAID THAT HE WOULD DIE, AND ACCORDING TO OUR FAITH NO ONE SHOULD DIE WITHOUT BEING BAPTISED. SO EVEN THOUGH MY FATHER WAS ABSENT HALF THE-- ALL THE MALE POPULATION OF THE FAMILY WAS ABSENT ACTUALLY, THEY WERE FIGHTING. THEY STILL WENT AHEAD AND BAPTISED HIM AND ACTUALLY THE GODFATHER WAS AN UNCLE OF MINE THAT WAS WOUNDED IN THE WAR, SO HE WAS SENT BACK. IT WAS A VERY SURREAL BAPTISEMENT. IN THE MIDDLE OF A FOREST, A VERY SMALL CHURCH, NO NICE DRESSES NOT THAT MANY GUESTS, A WOUNDED SOLDIER IN HIS UNIFORM ON CRUTCHES AND I GUESS A BUNCH OF KIDS AND MY MOM AND AUNTS.

CHRI: One day reality hit hard right? I mean like 4 older persons older-you know grandpas or grandmas or whatever I'm not so sure, they did the usual stroll to the village, but they didn't realize that the village had already been captured, so they were shot. they were never found. So now what happened after that: the village was taken, the community pretty much knew that it was uhh very close to the front line, so they retreated. I remember we spent a few nights at a friend's house at another village and then umm retreated further up at the umm near the peak of

the mountain, stayed there, and gradually found ourselves going over the mountain to the south coast of the island where we we stayed there until the the war was over and my father came back back from the army a few months later.