

TRANSCRIPT:

## Return Date: UNKNOWN

a BYkids film  
THEIR WORLD THEIR FILMS

*In February 2022, Russian forces invaded Ukraine. Tens of thousands have died. Millions have been displaced internally and millions more have become refugees. This is the story of one of them.*

I miss my home.

I miss my friends, my family.

I miss my balcony, my room, my school.

Kashtan trees.

Playing basketball with my brother

and just sitting in his car.

I miss trips to the Black Sea.

I miss anything that has to do with aviation because I love planes so much.

I miss the forest near my grandma's place.

I miss Kyiv.

I miss my dad.

I miss my country.

### Return Date: Unknown

**Tymur:** This is me, Tymur. I'm 17 years old from Kyiv, capital of Ukraine. But now I live outside my country because of the war.

This is my brother Vova. He's a pilot and a filmmaker.

This is my mother, Olha. She's a journalist. She doesn't like to be in front of the camera, so you're

not going to see her a lot.

This is my father, Andrii. He's a journalist too, a war journalist.

The war broke out in my homeland. I didn't expect this at all. Like in the evening, you're having fun, and the next morning you wake up when your parents tell you that your hometown is being shelled. It took only 12 hours to change completely everything.

On 24th of February, 2022, the Russian army invaded my home. Millions of people became refugees like me. I escaped war along with my mother. My father and brother are still in Ukraine. Men in the army age cannot leave without a special permit.

When the war started, we thought the entire world would help us right away. But it didn't. Europe is dependent on Russian fossil fuels. If the Europeans resist the war and fight with us, how would they heat their homes, if the Russians would cut their gas supply.

All of this could have been avoided. If we would use renewable energy instead of coal, gas and oil. I didn't know when and how this war will end and when I will be able to come back home.

I'm making this movie to show what war did to my friends, to my family. It's also a chance for me to meet my father, who is now on the frontlines of the war.

My father, he went to Iraq, he went to Afghanistan. He went to a lot of war zones. But when you get war in your own country, it hits you in another way. We are having this conversation, everything seems so good, and then he says, oh, no, no, there is a bomb coming. His job really matters right now, showing the world what's going on in Ukraine. He was recently injured in one of the Russian bombardments.

## **Ettal, Germany**

**Tymur:** Right now I'm in Germany staying in the monastery, a beautiful place in the Alps. I still feel like I don't belong here. I feel lost. What the hell I'm doing here. I want to go home. But you can't do this thing. And that's the most sad thing here.

**Andrii:** [Speaking Ukrainian from a battlefield] You know, Tymur, this place means a lot to me. Exactly one year ago, we stood here and filmed Kulbankino Air Base. It was such a nice moment of pure joy and now there is a war here. Now there are a lot of burnt Russian armored vehicles and I stand here and you are thoughts of kilometers away from me.

Freedom is the most valuable thing a person has. Remember this: A person without freedom cannot be a person. A person without freedom is a slave. A person without freedom cannot be happy.

**Tymur:** My brother used to bring me with him to the airfield and that was the place where I first

saw an aircraft. It was so close. And I think that was the start of my dream. Then I had the opportunity to fly an aircraft myself. We've got this, you know, uh, little flights, near Kyiv. The moment you got this opportunity to control it, those feelings are beautiful.

There are other refugees like me that have found asylum in this ancient monastery in Germany. Some of them my age.

**Bohdan:** [Speaking Ukrainian] For us, the first day of war I was playing on my computer until late. My parents woke me up. They told me, "Explosions! Run to the basement to hide!" Next day or a few days after, there were explosions at the power station. After we left, Russians started to take people who protested to the basements. They came out of there pro-Russia.

It was scary when they shot Grad missiles because it has an unpredictable trajectory and they can hit your house, you never know. I don't hate all citizens of the Russian Federation but I can't stand Russian military men. It won't end well for us. War always set the development of a given country 100 years back.

**Tymur:** After Bohdan I met Angelina to get another perspective on how one experiences war.

**Angelina:** In the first day of war, we woke up at 5 in the morning because of the explosions. We started to call our family asking what's going on. We didn't understand what happened. In the beginning, my mom worried about me because people were talking about looters and what could happen to girls. After that, my mom and I decided to go to Germany. And now I'm here.

I don't understand why such a thing happened, why kids, women and in general all people of Ukraine should suffer? Soon everything will be fine. All of us will go back home. We'll build and develop our country and everything will be fine.

**Tymur:** [Speaking Ukrainian in a video post]] Dad, I saw the video that you sent me. A year ago we were there together, we were happy and having fun. All our family was together. Now when the war came to our home, you understand how these moments are precious and how happy you were back then. I hope we can share our story with everyone. I'll see you soon! Love you! Glory to Ukraine!

**Tymur:** [traveling by car to Poland] Now I'm heading out to meet my father. We managed to get him a special permit to leave Ukraine and meet me halfway between here and there. This is the footage of street fighting in Severodonetsk, which is now the place with the most rapid hostilities are going on right now.

## **Warsaw, Poland**

**Tymur:** [Speaking Ukrainian] This home means a lot to me because when I left my country in the beginning of the war it was the first place I arrived. It was the first place where I felt warmth - even though you are far away, you feel close. You look at war-torn Ukraine and you don't know what the future holds.

In the first few days I wanted to go back home. That is why my mom was very afraid and quickly hid my passport. I found it very quickly and the plan failed. Now I can laugh about it, and it sounds funny, but it wasn't funny back then. I felt so much hate, and such helplessness that the only option I could see back then was to go back to Ukraine. I didn't know what could possibly help me feel better. If I could go to Ukraine right now, if nothing would stop me, I would go for sure. I will go right now. I think about it all day, everyday.

**Tymur:** Other teenagers from Ukraine are away from their homes right now but still manage to help others - like Arina.

**Tymur to Arina:** [Speaking Ukrainian] So tell me, how did the war change you?

**Arina:** [Speaking Ukrainian] I don't feel that I got used to war but war changed everything around me absolutely everything I see everyday. My mom and I realized that, because she works for the Ukrainian government and I'm an anti-Putin activist, when the Russians come it'll be the end of us. So we had to run away.

When I arrived at Warsaw, I started to work with my friends from the Youth Strike for Climate. Our main aim is a total embargo on Russian fossil fuels - coal, oil, and gas - all over the European Union. For us as climate activists, very obvious was the connection between fossil fuels and sponsorship of the totalitarian regimes like in Russia. It's a brutal dictatorship. The European Union supports Ukraine but every day pays €900 million Euro [about \$973 million USD] to Russia for fossil fuels.

**Tymur:** €900 million Euro everyday... almost € 1 billion Euros per day.

**Arina:** Yes, it's almost €1 billion Euro everyday. It is a very good moment to finally carry on the energy transition in Europe and to switch to renewable energy sources. We have a lot of faith that we can change a lot, and that changing the system is possible. It cannot be done by one person alone, but could be done by even four people - like our group. But young people when united have incredible power. This is what I believe in.

**Tymur:** [traveling by car] There was a massive shelling of Kharkiv yesterday. 15 people died. It was all of the rockets, and everything came out of Russia. They shelled us from their territory.

**Andrii:** [reporting the news] What we see here is revenge. Revenge for their inability to accomplish their military objectives. And I think that a country that commits such crimes, such as an outlaw country and a terrorist state, will answer for its crimes. And so those people who give the orders to kill peaceful civilians will surely be put on trial.

**Tymur:** It's hard to talk about it. You just don't want to say anything. It's just hate and it is the hate and that is all that you feel... Give me a second, sorry.

### **Ukrainian-Polish Border**

**Tymur:** I'll see you soon! Love you! Glory to Ukraine!

**Andrii:** [watching Tymur's video message] Glory to the heroes!

**Andrii:** [in his video reply] You know, since the war started, through the month of wartime, you've become a deeper person. You show empathy and you understand what's going on around you. We are lucky that we are healthy and alive. We love each other. We support each other even though we're thousands of kilometers apart and I hope to see you soon. I love you very much!

**Tymur:** [watching the video from a hotel] That is really good to hear such words from my dad and to realize that we're close to him right now and that he's coming. Yes.

**Tymur:** [on a dirt road near the border] We're meeting my father right now on this driveway. So we got one shot to do it right. I think I heard my father's voice just a couple of seconds before.

Yeah, I can feel it!

**Tymur:** Good afternoon, sir. I got the better parking place there just follow me.

**Andrii:** [embracing Tymur] Oh!!

**Tymur:** Can I welcome also the other one?

**Andrii:** The other one? Sure, here's your brother! [Looking at Tymur] Tall, handsome. Hmmm! Let's go!

**Andrii:** This is your school certificate. [Reading the certificate] "Tsaplienko, Tymur has got..."

**Tymur:** I had to finish my high school studies on Zoom. I couldn't celebrate my graduation with my friends and teachers. Most of us escaped to other countries because of the war.

**Andrii:** Most important message, I think, is to get more education. Uneducated people are very easy to manipulate, are very easy to believe in, you know, in superstitious things, in unfair things. It's easier to assure them they are better than others. This is the only way to change this world, I think.

**Vova:** [Noting a plane flying by] In Ukraine we don't, we are unable to see any planes in the sky, just Russian military planes.

**Andrii:** Since February 24, yeah.

**Vova:** [Speaking Ukrainian] My love for aviation, my passion, has quieted down, because the only aircraft I see in the sky is the military aircraft. Not just military planes, but planes that shoot bombs at us. So now aviation has changed for me. Now it's all about loud noises in the sky, and a serious threat to one's life. And now that we are on our way to Antonov Airport, I have this feeling that once I see again the usual civilian airplanes, I will want to fly again.

**Tymur:** [Speaking Ukrainian - Viewing planes with Vova] We had planned to film the Mriya airplane but we didn't know war was going to break out. Everything was ready. But the AN-225 Mriya - the company's flagship plane, the biggest plane in the world - was bombed by Russian forces on the third day of the war in the Hostomel Airport and so all our plans were ruined. But nobody can destroy our dream, the dream of a Ukrainian nation about peace and freedom.

This is an opportunity for me to try again during this difficult time of war. I can reconnect with

aviation, which is my passion, my dream. Exactly like the name of the plane, Mriya - "dream" in Ukrainian.

**Tymur:** I fulfilled this vision of filming the planes that I love so much along with my brother. I really can't wait for this war to end and for me to go back home and learn how to become a pilot myself.

**Tymur:** [viewing the news] Today, my hometown was shelled again by the Russian military. 15 rocket launchers. They hit civilian buildings, including a building that is a couple of blocks away from my home, where I spent all my life. It's horrible.

**Andrii:** Before this war, there was always a safe place in the world called home. Now we don't have a safe place anymore in this world. We feel ourselves a bit homeless, not protected.

**Tymur:** [at the Polish apartment kitchen table] When do you expect us to go back home?

**Andrii:** Seriously?

**Tymur:** Seriously....

**Andrii:** I don't know. Because the situation in Ukraine is getting worse. Nobody knows the result of this war. I believe that we will win, but it could be a victory on ruins. I don't want you to be part of the ruins. You are my life and I don't want to lose you. That's it. That's why I didn't know when or whether you come back to Kyiv.

**Tymur:** I felt a lot of hatred inside me and that feeling it curses and poisons you. What you might suggest? How may I handle it?

**Andrii:** I advise you not to lose your energy for hatred.

**Tymur:** Well, it's easy to say.

**Andrii:** Try. It is not easy to do.

**Tymur:** Yeah, that's not the part I'm asking about. I'm asking about the part where, how to handle it? The energy goes for hatred anyway.

**Andrii:** Do something! People need help. People here, abroad, you know, millions of Ukrainians who live here, they need help one way or another. So just, you know, just direct your energy this way.

**Tymur:** [on the balcony] Unfortunately, I do not know when I'm going to meet my father again. Like we can't make plans that further right now because of the situation ongoing. And this is, well this is tough, yeah. Just say goodbye and yeah. I'm trying not to think of it a lot but yeah, it's hard to say goodbye not knowing when he's going to come back. How much time are we going to spend away from each other? Yeah, so...

**Andrii:** [Speaking Ukrainian] Tymur, my son, you can't even imagine how happy I was to see you. And what a blessing to know that you are safe. But the thing is, I can't stay with you in this safety. While there, in Ukraine, people need my work. There, in Ukraine, it is difficult for me without you and your mother. When I return from an assignment on the frontlines, I enter our apartment and it is empty without you. Home is where the family is. I am alone. I am without you in Ukraine, as in an endless, lonely assignment.

But if you had been there with me, I would have felt much worse. It is probably hard for you to imagine that there is no safe place in Ukraine now. I will do everything for you to return to a peaceful country.

I'm going home now. Although no, not quite. Home is where you are, my dearest people in the world. I don't know how long we don't see each other again. But that day will surely come. I know, believe me. It's what keeps me afloat, you can't say otherwise. Love you. Very much.

[00:25:04] CREDITS ROLL