



## Not a Stranger

The Order of the Teaspoon is a Swedish NGO, founded in Stockholm in 2006. We work with an emphasis on culture primarily by using literature, but also film, theatre and games, to raise awareness in schools and in society about our core issues: diversity and tolerance.

Through an active dialogue with children and youth, we continuously work to spread our message about tolerance and respect among citizens of our country. Our motto is therefore "Together for diversity and tolerance", and was inspired by the book *How to Cure a Fanatic*, written by the well-known Israeli author Amos Oz.

In 2014 we started the project *Not a Stranger!* - a web series of personal stories and thoughts about topics such as identity, discrimination, homophobia, anti-Romani sentiment and racism. A new contribution was presented every week throughout the year. In 2015 we will publish one text a month.

*Not a Stranger!* brings out famous as well as non-famous people who have experienced alienation and gives them a platform to tell their story. Among the writers are Swedish celebrities Rikard Wolff, Dragomir Mrcic, Zinat Pirzadeh, and Behrang Miri.

The purpose of these stories is to celebrate diversity and to give young people, and people in general, role models within non-normative groups. The first story was published on Tuesday 4th February 2014 and is written by the comedian, author and actress Zinat Pirzadeh.

The successful web series touched many readers' hearts with its diverse and personal stories, but we decided that we needed to find a way to reach an even larger audience. These stories were too important to be forgotten. We got in touch with Norstedts, a well-known Swedish publishing company, which offered to publish the book *pro bono*.

Thanks to them we can now proudly present part of our web series' stories in book form! Make sure to watch the translated book commercial on Youtube. You will find it by typing "teskedsorden", click on "TeskedsordenSverige" and you will find "No Stranger!" at the top of the page.

The book, which is entitled *Not a Stranger - 41 stories about identity and diversity*, is going to be used for teaching Swedish as a second language. As it contains stories that are relevant to students with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, it is an excellent tool for teaching language and tolerance.

The different texts represent a wide range of difficulty levels, ranging from very simple and basic Swedish to a more poetic and advanced use of the language.

As part of the production of the book, we have also released a teacher's guide full of tips and exercises. It can be downloaded free of charge on our website and helps teachers get the most out of the book. It can, for example, be used as foundation for discussions about norms and attitudes.

During spring 2015, The Order of the



Behrang Miri participating with his story in the book

Teaspoon is distributing the book for free to teachers of Swedish as a second language.

By doing so, we hope to ensure the book's continued existence, and ultimately its contribution to more tolerant and positive attitudes in our society.

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