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Title: Back to Armenia with love

Details: The story is about two Armenian guys Nareg Dekermenjian and Nikol Barbarian, who were born and raised in various corners of the world and who returned to their homeland through Birthright Armenia/Depi Hayk foundation to live here for some time and to apply their knowledge and skills for Armenia's benefit. They live in host families and try to adapt to the Armenian reality. Besides serving the homeland, they also acquire new experience and skills.

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1/ Story Pitch:

The story is about two Armenian guys Nareg Dekermenjian and Nikol Barbarian, who were born and raised in various corners of the world and who returned to their homeland through Birthright Armenia/Depi Hayk foundation to live here for some time and to apply their knowledge and skills for Armenia's benefit. They live in host families and try to adapt to the Armenian reality. Besides serving the homeland, they also

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acquire new experience and skills.

2/ Shotlist: Narek is in the office of “Aleppo” NGO. He works with “Aleppo” as a volunteer, he deals with various duties. Nikol is in the apartment of the host family, he talks to his host Mother, then he has his breakfast. Following this, Nicol enters the organization where he volunteers. He takes the Armenian language lesson. There is a large number of volunteers in the office of the foundation who have come to Armenia through “Depi Hayk”. They listen to Nareg playing duduk.

3/ Script:

Live – Nareg plays with the beneficiary of the organization, who has a mental illness.

Nareg has been volunteering for “Aleppo” NGO for six months already. He was born and raised in Syria. It is 10 years since their family has left for Australia. Nevertheless, he has never considered himself to be Arab or Australian.

Voiceover (Nareg speaks with accent) I used to say that if the day comes and I decide to join the army, I will do it in neither Syria nor Australia, but Armenia. If God created me Armenian, I want to be an Armenian, and if I am obliged to defend a country, I want it to be Armenia.

In order to defend Armenia it was necessary to first of all experience it; and 26-years-old young man found one of the best options: he became a volunteer of “Depi Hayk” foundation.

Synchronous- I wanted to initiate an activity in order to share something instead of obtaining something. We are used to get, to receive things, we are not used to give and to share.

The entire process was enough for Nareg to get to know and to fall in love with the homeland of his dreams in real life, with its bad and good features. 1700 Armenian families (6000 people) from Syria are registered in “Aleppo” NGO. It is a great pleasure for Nareg to support those families and to support an Armenian in general.

Live – Nareg invites one of the beneficiaries of the NGO to enter the room in order to get the support.

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Live- Nicol enters the kitchen. He had his breakfast and talks to his host Mom.

Nareg is not alone in his desire to experience the Motherland. Nicol is also one of the volunteers of “Depi Hayk” foundation. It has already been a month since he spends almost every morning having breakfast with Yengibaryans’ family.

Live – Host Mom and Nicol are around the table; they speak about Nicol’s knowledge of Armenian language. Living with a host family is one of the core principles of volunteering. It helps to adapt to the Armenian reality much more easily (It provides one with the opportunity to understand first hand and up close reality Armenian reality).

Voiceover – From Canada, the US, France, Britain, Lebanon, Belgium...

Liza sais that they have hosted 12 volunteers within the last 4 years and lists the countries where they have come from. Each of them is welcomed in their family as their own third child.

Live – Nicol enters the office where he volunteers.

Nicol’s knowledge in economics is highly appreciated here. Apart from daily volunteering experience, he also gives Spanish language lessons in the Masis youth center twice per week.

Live – Nicol takes his Armenian language lesson, he learns some new things.

Three times per week Nicol spends his evenings in the office of “Depi Hayk” foundation, where he participates in Armenian language lessons together with other volunteers.

Voiceover (speaks Armenian with accent)– I can write and read, I understand a little bit, I have learnt a number of verbs during the lessons, I think that I will speak Armenian much better in some months.

Apart from everything, the volunteering opportunity given to the Armenians living in various corners of the world is a great opportunity for them to make friends with their compatriots.

Voiceover – Anush is my friend from Uruguay; Daniel is a new friend, I got acquainted to him when I came here. He is from Washington; he speaks several languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Armenian...

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Reducing geographical distances between the Armenians who live outside their statehood, affording them an opportunity to be a part of Armenia's daily life, to know Armenian environment is the main function of the foundation. Sevan Kapakian, Director of the foundation, says that they simply spark the fire, and let the fire get its natural form.

Voiceover – It is up to them to decide how this experience will evoke the Armenian spirit in them- whether through preserving the Armenian identity or returning back to Armenia, whether through inspiring the others. They are the ones to choose the ways.

The foundation launched its activities in 2004 by bringing 50-60 volunteers to Armenia. Currently there are 220 people here (overall 1500 young people from 47 countries).

Live –Nareg plays duduk.

Despite all the linguistic and dimensional barriers, the sound of duduk reaches the heart of every single Armenian. All the members of “Depi Hayk” know, that apart from daily activities, new contacts and openings, they are in a venue where they always meet and share something new.