



## “The child from the sea”

*by Marisa de Castro, critic  
TA NEA newspaper - 2 May 2009*

Loty Petrovits has been successfully tried in all kinds of children’s books and for all ages. In her books, she does not hesitate to deal with themes considered difficult for young children, either because interpersonal relations and feelings are approached, or because social matters are brought forward, as is the case with this book, which refers to refugees. Without simplifying the problem, she places it at the level of children up to 9 years old, presenting it through the experiences of two young heroes of same age.

All started from something quite familiar to children: a dream for a trip. It was a trip which, as it often happens in dreams, led to dreadful adventures, yet in reality to horrible situations. For Fivo, it was a play trip on a plastic boat. For Hasan, the young Afghan refugee, it was a real trip, as was the case with Fivo’s great-grand father, when he had been a refugee from Smyrna years and years ago.

When the two children landed to reality, the dream had a different dimension for each one of them. They had lost their support, their reference, each one his own father: Fivo in a big super market; Hasan in the sea of a foreign country. But also Fivo’s great-grand father had a similar experience, when as a young boy he was found alone in another place, among unknown people.

From that point on, the author deals with the theme “refugees” describing it accurately, realistically, without false sentimentalism. Her story, well balanced, unfolds the perplexity of the topic in a natural and explicit way, as she presents all those elements necessary for the comprehension of Hasan’s legal and psychological situation, but also those concerning the activities of people in the receiving country.

*The Child from the Sea* introduces children to one of the very serious contemporary sociopolitical problems. It is a multileveled work, a piece of literature but also a book of social education.

*Transl. by A. Andrutsopoulou*