

Scoop

by Matt Potter

“Do Afghanis *eat* ice cream?” I ask.

Her muscled biceps chaff inside regulation short sleeves as we tour the distribution point. “Yep, they love it.”

I'm unconvinced. Actually, I am not sure of anything here. I've left my assumptions at the front gate, beside the green wire fence that is being built around the refugee camp perimeter.

“Do they even know what an ice cream scoop is?”

We leave the open boxes of ice cream scoops and she swaggers, walkie-talkie on hip (I walk) past boxes of spatulas and cutlery sets and wooden spoons and serving spoons. I peer at the saucepan sets and chopping boards and springform cake tins as we pass those too, and stare open-mouthed at the walls of electric kettles and toasters and drinking glasses and tea towels stacked opposite.

But those ice cream scoops call me.

“What about the other groups coming here?” I ask. “Were they asked what they wanted in these houses?”

She turns and looks at me, like I've suddenly come onto her radar.

“They've been living in motels and barracks, some of them for more than a year,” she says, as if I'm an *Introduction to Refugees* student at the local community college. “They'll get their own houses here and they're gonna love it.”

I look at the set of her chin. And decide now is not the time to suggest, in my Activities Coordinator role, that I take them shopping for kitchen utensils they might really use.

