Mila Miller

**ANIMATION : CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS**

**ADA**

*Character description:*

* Ada’s a teenager, about my age (17 years old). There is nothing she cares more about than her little brother. She’s very brave, but even when she’s scared, she doesn’t let it show so that she doesn’t worry him. She’s extremely protective of him, almost like a second mother. She always wants him to be reassured, which is why in the 2nde sequence, she hugs him in a comforting way to calm him.
* Ada doesn’t have many friends, maybe one or two at best that she knows from school, and she loves and cares for them but spends most of her free time with her brother. When she doesn’t have school, she spends most of her days helping her parents farm and try grow food, or helping the neighbors when she has free time. The village where she lives (in Uganda), loves her because she helps out a lot, and she’s very smart. People love to talk with her and see her point of view on things. She’s happy where she is though, she doesn’t want to move.
* She also has a deep understanding and love for nature. She knows a lot about animals and plants, reads a lot about them. She doesn’t necessarily learn a lot about global warming, but it’s obvious for her to protect the environment, because she’s learnt to care for it. She lives simply and in sobriety, and doesn’t care at all for how other “developed” countries live. Every night, she reads stories to her brother telling him about Uganda before the climate and biodiversity crises, and tries to give him her passion for nature.
* Also passionate about painting, she loves to go out after school in the plains with her brother and paint landscapes, or paint people she loves. The plains are completely dry because of global warming, (we’re in 2070). That, and the loss of biodiversity lead there to be hardly any animals there left to paint anymore, although they used to be there. Ada loves to imagine how these places looked years ago before the crises’ struck Africa, and paints imaginary beautiful landscapes with the animals she learns about in her books, that don’t exist in the wilderness anymore. She paints with many colors, and is very talented.
* She is very calm, and nearly never gets angry, especially in front of her brother. All she wants if for him to live a simple life away from harm, which is why she’s worried about emigrating. She sort of wants to keep him in a little bubble away from the terrible aspects of the world.
* She’s nostalgic about her old village when she arrives in France, which is why she says in the last sequence: “You knew, and you could have stopped this”. When she says this, she’s talking to the audience watching the animation, she’s actually looking at the ‘camera’ directly. This sentence means a lot to me, because I heard it in a small film about global warming, and it really got me emotional, and pushed me towards wanting to make this documentary. It’s quite provocative, but it’s quite true. When she says this, Ada means that us, as the population living in 2023, still have the opportunity to act and change things, and limit the consequences of global warming, especially for the countries like Uganda that will feel them first, and the most. Only if we don’t, life will look like the one on the plains, dry and without life. In this scenario, we would have failed to change things around. That’s why it’s very important for me to see a certain anger, disappointment, and sadness in Ada’s face during that moment. The aim of that moment, is for the audience to feel guilt, before the documentary starts and shows solutions. Then at the end of the documentary, the animation would show what could have happened if we’d acted now (beautiful plains full of biodiversity).
* Ada doesn’t feel hate for the rich countries responsible of the climate crises (like France or Italy for instance), but does feel a certain hate for the past populations that could have acted in the past but didn’t, (so us now), in these countries. This means that when she looks at “us”, I’d hoped to see that anger.
* She has a strong will and personality, and always says what she thinks, except when she wants to protect her brother. Her emotions always show clearly on her face.

*PHYSICALLY:*

Ada is dark skinned and middle sized. Physically, I really wanted her to look like Vanessa Nakate. Vanessa’s actually a young famous climate activist from Uganda that I admire a lot, and I thought it could be really amazing to give Ada some of Vanessa’s traits, because they have a lot in common. Fernanda did a great job with the sketches, I thought Ada’s haircut was quite nice and looked like Vanessa’s, but I’m open to ideas. She is quite thin for the 3 first sequences, because of the lack of food.

For what she’s wearing, I’ll attach a document with what I imagined. Ideally, I imagined her wearing the same colorful yellow and brown clothes throughout the whole animation, so the audience can quickly identify her, and same for all the other characters.

**ADA’S BROTHER**

*Character description:*

Ada’s brother is very curious and naïve. He’s about 7, and admires his sister a lot. He sees the world just like his sister tells him to, so sees it as beautiful in spite of everything going on. He understands a little of the climate crises from school, and knows how hard it is now to grow food and find water. He doesn’t feel ready though to move, but knows he can’t stay at home because it isn’t safe anymore. He seeks reassuring in his sister, because for him she is always right. If she’s happy so is he, and if she’s worried, so is he.

*PHYSICALLY:*

He also dark-skined, and I didn’t have any person in mind I wanted him to look like. He is very short in size, short hair and with a very simple and “kind” face. I’ll also attach some documents of my ideas on what he’d look like. Same as Ada, I thought he could wear the same clothes, sort of stripy and saturated, so he’s recognizable. He is also quite thin for the 3 first sequences.

**THE ELDERLY MAN**

*Character description:*

* This man is quite old, in his 70s. He has a very strong personality, and looks extremely tired from the lack of sleep and from the emigration trip. He believes he, and all the other African immigrants have a right to start a new life in Europe, because it wasn’t their choice to leave, and global warming is mostly caused by the rich and developed countries.
* He won’t listen to anyone telling him to back off, he is determined to pass the barbed wires. He feels for and relates to the other immigrants, and is entirely on their side, and despises the European, and especially the military keeping them away from the border. He loves his past life in Africa, and was the last of his village, because of the lack of food, to move away from Africa.
* When he arrives in France, all he wants is food, he hasn’t eaten anything for days. That’s way he’s desperate to pass the border and tries to open a hole through the wire. When the military woman says she understands what the immigrants are going through, he takes that as a provocation. He sees all the French military as the cause of his pain. I got inspired from this response by a speech from Greta Thunberg (Swedish climate activist), the one at the ONU meeting. This is the part of the speech: <https://youtu.be/gEanyDxn0UY>. In it she repeats 3 times: “how dare you?”, so I used that small phrase again to create a link between this near future, and now. I wondered if it could be possible for him to have the same expressions as Greta in her speech during his.
* As he speaks, his anger rises, he turns to the camera after saying “how dare you”, and then continues to the audience. The words he uses mean a lot to me, because they’re exactly what I imagine future generations saying to me in the future if no one acts. I was hoping his speech would be very intense, that he would get carried away in it, looking very intensely and angrily at the audience.

*I know this part may seem too much, but the aim is to start the documentary off very intensely so people listen carefully to the scientific information that will be given after it, because they’ll have in mind their guilt from the animation.*

*PHYSICALLY:*

He is dark-skinned, very thin, wrinkly but good on his feet. He still has enough physical strength to open a hole through the barbed wire. His hair is grey, and he is wearing scrappy clothes. Again, documents can be found with some ideas of what I imagined. I pictured him as a character from a French animation called Kirikou, that takes place in Africa. You can see pictures of him in the folder.

**ADA’S MOTHER**

*Character description:*

* Ada’s mother loves her children, but is quite a strict mother. When she’s quite uptight sometimes and asks a lot of them, Ada is more caring towards her brother. She’s a very hard-worker, and beautiful woman, always wearing colors. Everyday she works in the fields with village members, but refuses for her children to work with her because she wants them to go to school. They help her on the week-ends, and help her with the meals. She still leaves them quite a lot of freedom, but punishes them hard when they disobey.
* She is very respectful and traditional, and her family has always lived in the same place. She loves her husband, and both of them took the decision to emigrate, as they were out of food and water and couldn’t live on this way. She expected Ada to understand straight away and explain the situation to her brother, as she’s so reassuring towards him. Only, her son overheard them talking about the immigration war in Europe, and saying they were going to have to move.
* Ada’s mother is a very brave and objective woman, who’d do anything for her family. She hates to leave her village but doesn’t see another option.

*PHYSICALLY:*

She’s about 50, dark-skinned, with black hair, quite tall, thin and very elegant. She wears a lot of jewelry, and colorful clothes, even though the conditions on the boat aren’t ideal for them. She loves colors, and has the color orangy-red associated to her. She wears a colored headwrap and her hair is tied up. (see the attached documents). He also shows signs of tiredness: outlines in the 3rd sequence. She always looks confident and strong.

**ADA’S FATHER:**

*Character description:*

* He is a lot like his wife, loving and caring towards his children. He listens to her a lot, and doesn’t have as much authority as she does on their children. He also is a hard worker in the fields, and is always ready to help. He’s very calm and always tries to see the positive in things. He listens more than he talks, and doesn’t have as much of strong opinions as his wife or daughter.

*PHYSICALLY:*

He is dark-skinned, slightly taller than his wife, a little wrinkly, and doesn’t have grey hair yet. He’s about 50, also quite thin, and always looks calm and wise. I imagined him wearing simple clothes, greyish or brown, nothing too colorful to make Ada and her mother stand out.

**MILITARY MAN:**

*Character description:*

* He comes from France, and always wanted to serve his country since the start of the war due to emigration. He’s the typical physically strong man that never thinks and pushes through. His only way of communication is screaming and pointing his gun, trying to intimidate, he never tries to solve anything through conversation.
* He doesn’t understand or care for the emigrants, he sees them as enemies and feels powerful in front of them. He’s ready to shoot anyone of them at any moment, he feels superior and loves to scare them. His movements are exaggerated and his anger is also disproportionate. The aim is almost to make him funny because of how the anger would deform his face.

*PHYSICALLY:*

He’s very big and muscly, bald, about 40 and extremely furious, for no real reason. He’s dressed as a French military. See documents attached.

**MILITARY WOMAN:**

*Character description:*

* This woman is very brave, and interested in politics. She grew up in a privileged family, but stays sensitive to social issues and wants to help out as much as she can, which is why she signed up for the army. Since she’s been in, she’s been quite seriously shocked by the war. Instead of brutally attacking “enemies”, she always does her best to show she’s not a bad person, and tries to talk to the emigrants. In the 3rd sequence, when she saw everyone was lifting their guns, she quickly tried to explain that hurting the emigrants wasn’t her choice.

*PHYSICALLY:*

She is quite fit, about 30 years old. She has red hair, and her nice and kind face makes her look innocent. The army doesn’t look like her place, she seems to stand out of the angry military and she doesn’t really seem ready to fight. She is wearing a French military uniform. See the documents attached.

Of course, I’m completely open to ideas, if you don’t understand some characters or think some shouldn’t be as what I described, feel free to suggest ideas. Also tell me if I forgot anything!