

Nubia, Abdala, and the round of applause at 21:00hrs

By: Giusette León García
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Her name reminds me of Martí: “My mom cries. Nubia needs me (...)/ Good bye! I shall go to defend my homeland!”

The dramatic poem where young Abdala is torn between his mother and his motherland comes to my mind when I read her name: Nubia Aballí Leonard.

She is a nurse. And she worked for fourteen days caring for patients testing positive for Covid-19 at the Military Hospital Dr. Mario Muñoz, in Matanzas.

The photo of the article shows the day when Nubia and her co-workers left the isolation facility just to spend another two weeks ruling out the chances of infection — so real it scares me — in some of them.

I am more scared than any of them.

The group’s pediatrician, Dr. Pedro Caballero, is confident and satisfied

with the work done:

“We were responsible for the caring of nine patients. It was an amazing experience. Patients were treated very well here at the hospital. We were all safe here. We cared for each other.”

Then, I embrace Abdala’s verses that portray Nubia’s will to serve, risking her own life, to save others’:

“I am really pleased to see patients going home with no affections at all and happy with our work. And this is an absolute achievement for us.”

She, them, and many others, have chosen their homeland before their mothers’ care, their children, their families, and the urgency of life itself.

Behind those face masks, these exceptional human beings breathe courage and threat those who are usually seeking blemish in this wonderful work.

Nonetheless, they — as shining stars — see the lights. No money in the world can pay their effort. But Nubia, such a warrior and so distant of her beloved ones to heal others’ pain, on behalf of each of them, just asks to being accompanied:

“I just want to tell the people that, please, never stop applauding at 21:00hrs. It makes our hearts burst.”

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
