

**Votre Guide pour Naviguer sur les Marchés, les Métros et White Supremacy à l’Era de Toi
et Ana
By Marwa Ellis**

Assalamu'alaikum

Bonjour

Hello

Where I’m from, they call me “les blancs,” “touriste,” and “française”
Where there are street markets and peddlers up and down every street
Where roses are everywhere,
And the sun is always shining

Where I’m from I’m not criticized
But criticized
For not speaking the mother tongue

Where I’m from I’m looked down on for not speaking the language
My mother is looked down on for not teaching her kids how to speak the mother language
Looked down on for only being able to teach her kids the colonizers language

Where I’m from,
I can only long
to communicate with them
in the language that I want to know
so so very much

I feel the sadness
and almost disappointment
from my mother
as she realizes that some part of her mothering
Has “failed”
As she couldn’t relay her native language to her offspring

It’s my hope
That one day
I can make her proud
Make her proud by being at least somewhat fluent in her language
I hope that someday soon I can communicate with her
in the language that she was raised with

That's where I was born.

where I was raised however...

Tell by my attitude that I'm most definitely from New York
Concrete jungle where dreams are made of

Where I'm from, we have the good eats
Pizza
Bagels
and cheesecake galore

Where I'm from, you're always in a rush
Always doing something or something happening
And never bored

Where I'm from, it's a melting pot
A place to seek refuge
A place to live in the truths of who you are
A place where you can rep your background loud and proud
A place where I hope everyone feels welcome
A place which is quickly being gentrified
A place where you learn to grow up quick
A place where you hear the scary stories growing up that are sadly true
A place where your head is constantly on a swivel
A place where, as a child you thought to yourself, well what if I lived in suburbia instead
A place where you couldn't imagine being anywhere else other than the rat-infested subway
stations
A place where you learned to look out for others as you helped the moms carry the stroller down
the MTA stairs
A place which taught you unity by saying "back door"
A place where you will always find your people
A place where you will always be respected

Where I'm from, education is greatly valued
Straight A's
Or at least something close
Top of the class
Front of the classroom
High GPA
High understanding

Where I'm from it's looked down on if you are not a doctor, engineer, or lawyer
Where I'm from, everything else is considered a "fake" or "useless" profession

Where I'm from, where you go to school is so important
If you go to school in the middle of nowhere,
You're considered lost
You're considered confused if you don't want the same things your parents want

Where I'm from, scraping your knees was never a worry
If anything, it was encouraged
Instead
The warnings went straight to
"Don't get raped,
don't do drugs,
don't drink,
and don't wear gang colors!"
Cause if not,
That's the end of ya

Where I'm from, my mom taught me to not get cheated in the markets
I was told to stay together
And with the little Arabic I know,
To yell Islamic phrases if someone was bothering me

Where I'm from, you learn how to act
How to adjust to the environment around you fast
How to know when and where to say certain things
How to switch up when needed
How to walk away
How to stand up
How to talk back
How to fight back

Where I'm from, you listen to the best music
Tried to make your own music
And definitely had a Soundcloud account

Where I'm from, life is complicated
But you learn to roll with the punches
Because that's just how life is
...Right?

No

This era is something polluted and toxic.
It is- No. We are so messed up,
Compared to the rest,
I'm just saying.

In this era,
White supremacists,
Who should really be called "TERRORISTS,"
Are not called out for what they did,
To the population they've killed.

Innocent people,
innocently killed,
because someone of them allegedly killed.

It doesn't matter,
What YOU did,
In YOUR life,
This is DIFFERENT from the rest.
As long as you are THEIR color...
You've KILLED.

A lot of people tell me actually,
"You're not from Africa,
you're WHITE."
"You're not Muslim,
you don't wear the HIJAB."

Well,
I have something to tell you.
Stop saying "you" to me.
Because "I" am NOT you.
Stop saying I am not something,
Because "I" am NOT you.

But you see, The problem ISN'T "you" and "me,"
The problem is the environment that forces us to say these horrific things.

It's the racism between the races.
The inequality between the faces.
The injustice served to you because of what ONE person...
"did?"

It's NOT right,
And we MUST stop this.
Cause you never know...
You, could be the next one
to endure this.

After much consideration – and fear of the repercussions – I've made the decision to shed light on ONE of the many acts of white supremacy we see being committed today. Open your hearts and listen, as there is no difference between my story and theirs except for the fact that I never have to ask myself whether I would get to live to see another day.

Where I'm from, the campuses scream with defiance,
Voices united, testing the violent silence.
Students, professors, all taking a stand,
Against the crimes in Gaza,
Hand in hand – refusing to be breached –
Never ending until our message has reached
The ones who like to speak
On the lives of those they seek to cease

Where I'm from, arrests are made for speaking the truth.
Schools aiding in the siege – How could you?
Students around the world, giving up their futures,
fighting for the ones that had theirs stolen from them.
Protests rise – banners are held high with pride –
“Thank you, students in solidarity with Gaza
your message has reached”
Demanding justice, refusing to be put out of sight.

Colleges have now seen the backlash –
The power of the youth –
In solidarity, they march for justice –
For truth.

Where I'm from, there's no hiding this genocide anymore,
Students, staff arrested, yet we still declare:
"We will not be silenced, our cause is just,
For Gaza, for peace, in unity, we trust."

From New York to Gaza, the struggle is the same,
A fight for justice, a call to end the shame.

