

Change is a Part of Life

by Divine Rugwiro



My name is Divine, I'm from Zambia and Rwanda and I speak Kinyanja. I'm not a citizen and most of the time I get treated differently because of that.



You guys may think it doesn't happen to me because I'm young but it does.

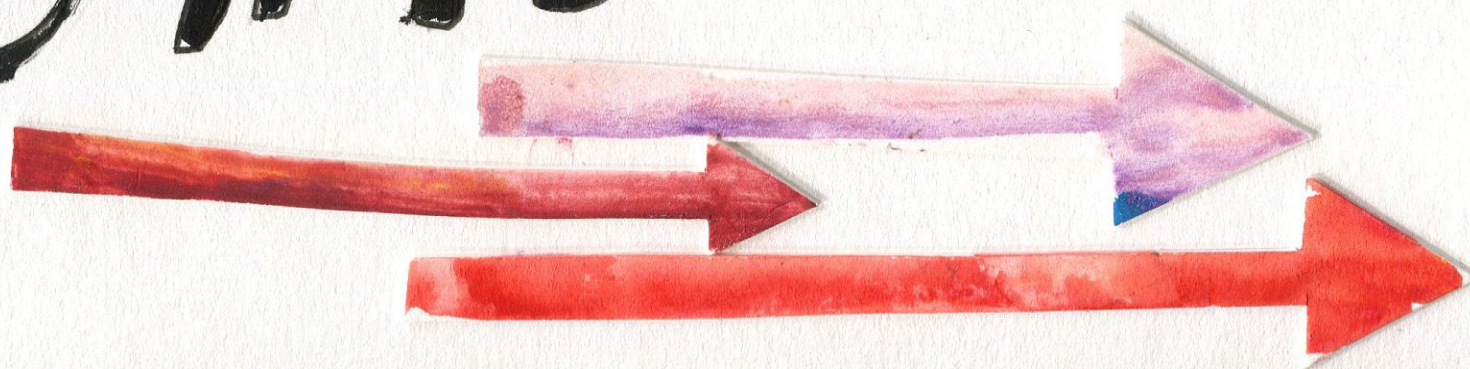
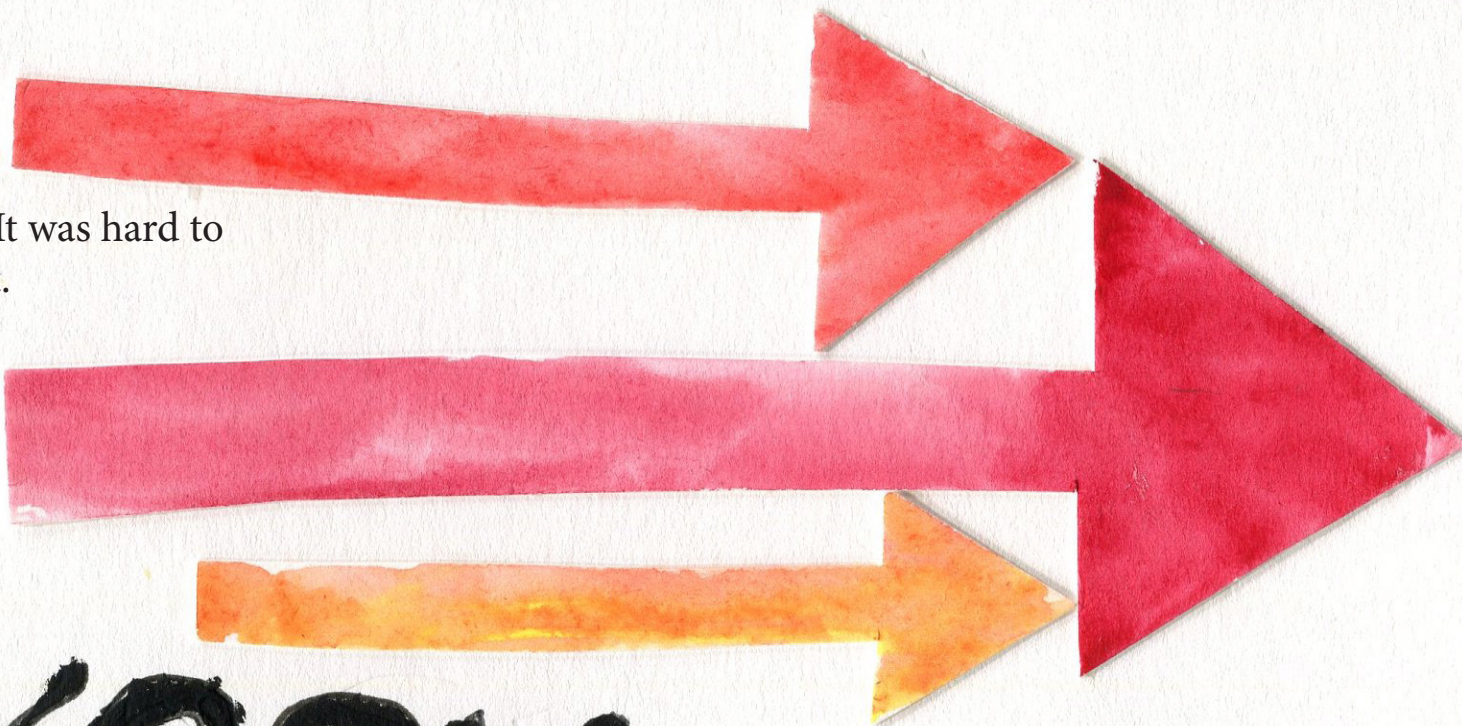
I hate the fact that people look at me differently just because English is not my first language!!



So this is my journey.

My family suffered A LOT to get here!!! It was hard to come here just because we were different.

Journey Begins



I was young coming here but I know my mom suffered a lot because my father died and she was the only adult who was taking care of 5 children.

She is still taking care of 5 children.

I really look up to her. She is my hero because I know without her I wouldn't be able to be here, meet new people, make friends and speak English.



Now we are going to talk about me.

I speak 4 languages Swahili, Kinyanja, English, and Kinyarwanda.

You already know my name so I don't have to say it again but I do a lot of things and I am going to let you guys know what I do for fun.

I play soccer. I started playing soccer when I was in 4th grade and it's been almost 5 years since I started playing soccer. I also dance and sing. I started dancing when I was young. The same goes for singing. I also rap but I rap for fun when I get a chance, Honestly I do everything.



Now let's talk about my siblings.

I have 4 siblings. I have one big brother, one big sister and also two little sisters but my big brother doesn't live with us and his name is Alex. He graduated in 2020, now he's in college and he goes to work because he has to pay for his house. And my big sister's name is Aline and she got married in July and of course she lives with her husband but we don't live in the same state.



And one of my little sister's names is Precious and she's the last born and she's the favorite child and she gets what she wants so basically she's spoiled. The other one is Queen and she is very full of herself and she thinks highly of herself.

I forgot to tell you guys that I just moved to Ohio. That's where I live now and I don't like it but I will get used to it sooner or later.



A day I will never forget.

When I was in Atlanta my coach and I started a team because we couldn't play soccer at school. So I had an idea and I couldn't do it myself so I asked my old coach and he thought it was a good idea so I had to ask my friends. At first they hesitated and then they said yes and I was happy but some of them were saying they never play soccer and my coach was like leave that to me.!! It took us 2 years to learn how to play and to get used to soccer. Then we started playing games with other soccer players but it was hard to find other girls who played soccer so for that time we played against boys and eventually we started playing with girls.

But like I said, good things never last forever and then some things went down because I ended up moving and some of the team players couldn't come anymore because they moved far but were still in the same state and some didn't want to come because I moved. The team went from 28 players to 10 players but now it's 4 players. That hit me hard to hear that the team had broken apart and it hurts because we all knew each other for like 5 and 6 years. I am hoping I can go back but I am happy for the memories I have and share with them.



Things I personally face.



People may say having two parents is no different from having one. Well, I am going to tell you that there is a difference because having two parents is kind of easy most of the time. But it's never easy for me because I have one parent. She does everything by herself and she barely speaks English. It's a struggle to watch my mom go through that.

When I was young, I felt hopeless, because I would watch my mom work her butt off. It was very painful, because I couldn't do anything to help. I started helping her with things in the house like cooking and cleaning, but I still feel like I am not helping her enough.



I remember hating my blackness and I remember letting it hold me back from loving myself. As I grew older, I began to grow into it and to appreciate my unique beauty myself as a black african queen. When I was around people who are lighter than me I just felt left out. I was so busy trying to be like other people, I forgot who I was. That's something I won't let happen again. God makes us different so why try to be someone whom you are not. I may not be lighter or prettier, but I know I am beautiful and unique in my own way. That is enough for me.

Well, now you guys know about my life, what I've been through to get here, and who I have become. And to those who went through things like me, keep your head up because you will get through any struggles.



