



My

Way



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**This is a close community, where  
every house is always open to guests.**

**Hello.**

At the beginning of the century, precisely on  
July 27, 2002, EBBAHENNA, MOHAMED LEMINE  
YESLEM, was born in Nouakchott, the capital of  
Mauritania's Arafat Province; in my family, I was the  
firstborn child.



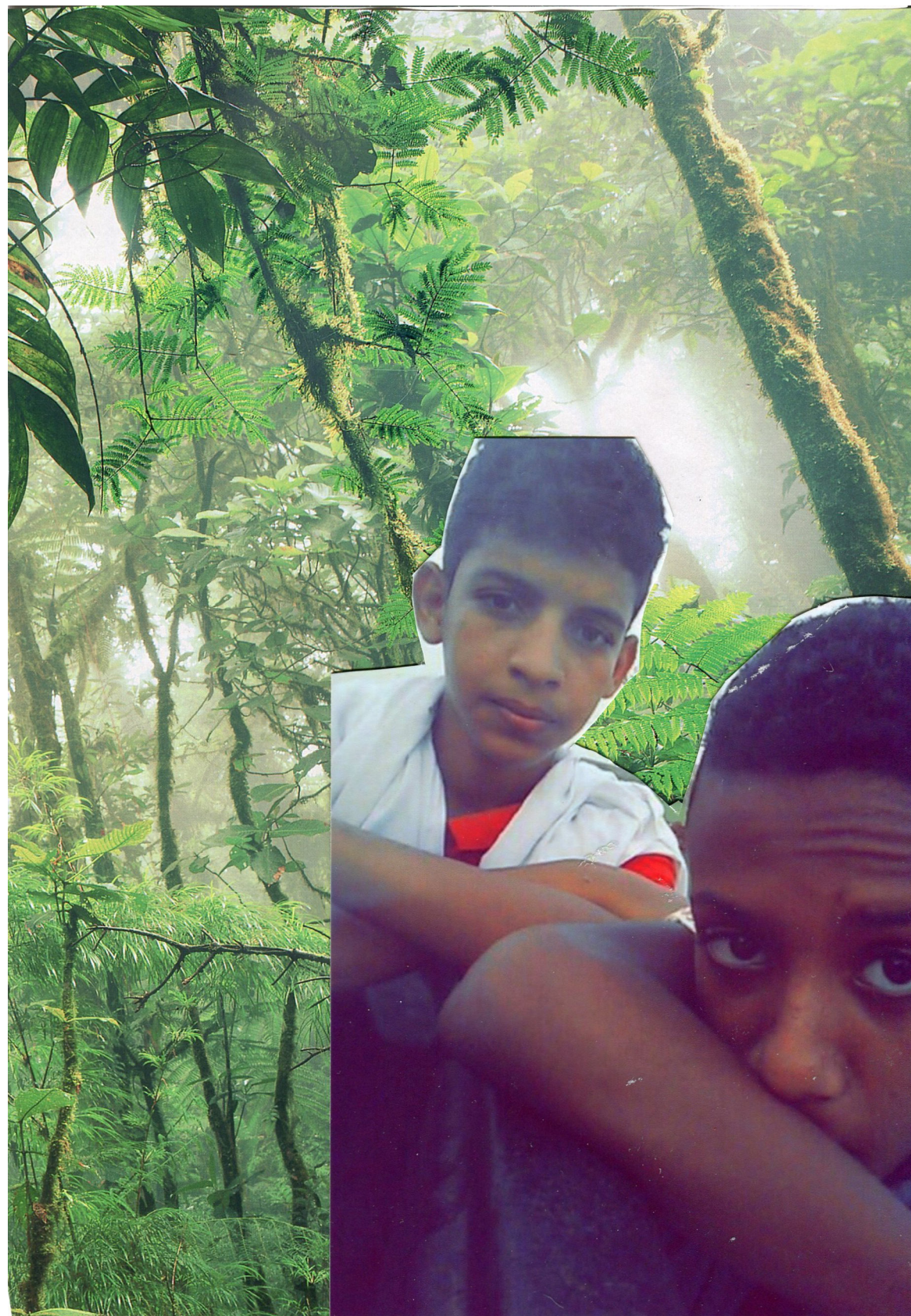
## **My Start**

My family used to live in Kiffa, a city more than 370 miles from the capital, and it's the birthplace of both my parents.

After second grade, I moved to the capital (Arafat) to live with my aunt for further study because education in the capital is superior to that of other states; every summer, I come back.







When I was in fifth grade, my aunt, who was like my mother, died, and I moved to my younger aunt's house; it was a challenging year for me even though I had to leave my neighborhood, childhood friends, and my school, everything changed.

After a year, I moved in with my uncle to live.



I transferred to the new school, where I finished middle school, and subsequently, my mother's wish came true.

I passed the Entrance Exam for Excellence High School, one of the best institutions in Mauritania, and it was every student's ambition.

This was a novel event in my life because it was four years before the most significant occasion in my life.

## **Kiffa**

It is the village I come to every summer to see my parents and my father's family, in a place far from the technology and noise of the city, where you wake up to the sound of cows and the beauty of nature at sunrise and feel psychological comfort.

This is a close community, where every house is always open to guests. These are beautiful memories, and it was the only place that stole my tears when I left.





I still remember those moonlit nights on a plateau of soft sand with my dearest friends, happiness and tranquility filling the place, wishing time would stop.

However, this peaceful and prosperous life does not last.



**THE most significant occasion in my life.**

We can always learn valuable lessons from life, and even disasters have a hidden profit that we often overlook. My relatives and friends always laughed at me when I told them I was going to the United States, even though I didn't think I'd ever travel. Strangely, I traveled to the United States because of something that happened three years ago.

My family traveled to the United States for better medical care for my sister, during which time I was in ninth grade. My family traveled first, while my brother and I stayed to finish school.





## **When my world changed**

June 7, 2019, was the day I bid farewell to the land where I grew up, and I have feelings mixed between grief and happiness.



At 12:15 a.m., I'm in the car heading to the airport,  
looking out the window at the streets as they are empty,  
and imagining the beautiful memories of this simple  
place.



I arrived at J.F.K. Airport to begin a new phase in my life...

New York City, the city that doesn't sleep, or the Big Apple. The town I only see in movies, yellow cars, skyscrapers, hanging bridges.

I thought for a moment that I was dreaming, everything was different, even different air. Where you were and where I am now.





And three years later, I'm now in 12th grade, three years in which I've learned a lot, and I've known beautiful people who have changed my life.

Despite my weak language and lack of communication with people, I've never felt weird.



## Best Decision

I was constantly cursing my luck in this life, and I wasn't satisfied with my reality because I simply didn't know what he was hiding for me tomorrow.

I've rushed into everything. I didn't know what was best for me, and I didn't think my challenges and difficulties taught me and made me with people I love and love me. I'd like to thank you, Mr. Parker, for not putting me in the 11th grade in 2019; this decision upset me at first because I will not graduate in 2021.

This decision made me find the angel, made me wiser, rational, and ready for college.

It's what made me know my favorite teacher,

Ms. Alexander, and I took her class two years.

And this last year that brought me together with the best people in my life, OGs, my friends are my brothers; you've made my life wonderful.

And there are great people here that I will never forget.







## Angel

There was light in all this darkness, and there is hope for tomorrow to be beautiful and that all these difficulties are what built my character. My school counselor was someone who helped me see my worth. Mrs. Porter (McKee) made me discover myself and see the bright side of my life. I'm grateful for the circumstances that brought us together.

Because of her, I applied to three universities and was accepted into all of them. She helped me chart my path to success, and my passion came back to me again. I do not know how to thank her. If I collected all the languages of the world, I wouldn't be able to find a word to describe her. With all my love and respect for you (you are the greatest, and I love you), you are the best, and I am now fully prepared to take on a new and exciting experience.





My best  
friends  
~

From the day I was born to the moment I breathed now,  
I went through a lot of difficulties and challenges from  
which I learned there is no way to give up,

this life wasn't fair, I didn't choose to be poor or rich or  
even where I was born, but I decide how to live my life.



