

An Immigrant's Story

MARCELLE ANTOINETTE

RACHMON

From Haifa

To Flint

[Signature]
4/17



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Marcelle
Antoinette
Rachmon
from Haifa to Flint

UN PARTITION PLAN - 1947
AND
UN ARMISTICE LINES - 1949



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Before I was born...



I remember the stories.

My grandfather built a shed behind the house. They lived in it. He refused to give up on their home.



My mother and
father grew up
as neighbors.

They eschewed the
traditional matchmakers.

They married for love.

We lived in my father's parents'
home when I was born.

But a few years later,
in around 1968, dad
wanted to leave the country.

He was a highly skilled
welder. So he left the
family to find work overseas.



b. 1964 MARCELLE
antoINETTE
Rahmon

ARRIVING
FROM
HAIFA



Pane,

I was put on a
and my

**WHOLE
LIFE
Changed!!**

((I didn't know I was leaving
Haifa, my home, for good...))

**WELCOME TO
TORONTO**
1970



The Apartment

The furniture was used and
the mattress smelled bad.



Dad had put Faygo RedPop in the fridge.
I'd never had that before.



I was
ashy and
quiet child.
I relied more on family and a few
friends
for companionship.

I was
traumatized.
But I finally opened
up as a teenager.

the immigrants were more
accepting and welcoming
of each other. But there was
quite a lot of discrimination
from the white population.

Toronto was very multi-cultural.
Dad found places to shop for the food
we were
familiar
with.
But to others
it smelled
funny and
looked funny...



SCHOOL

SCARY



I shut down,
I quit talking...
felt ISOLATED,
OUT-OF-PLACE.

I hid my food a lot.
It smelled...different...
it looked funny...

[The 1st day of school was scary.]

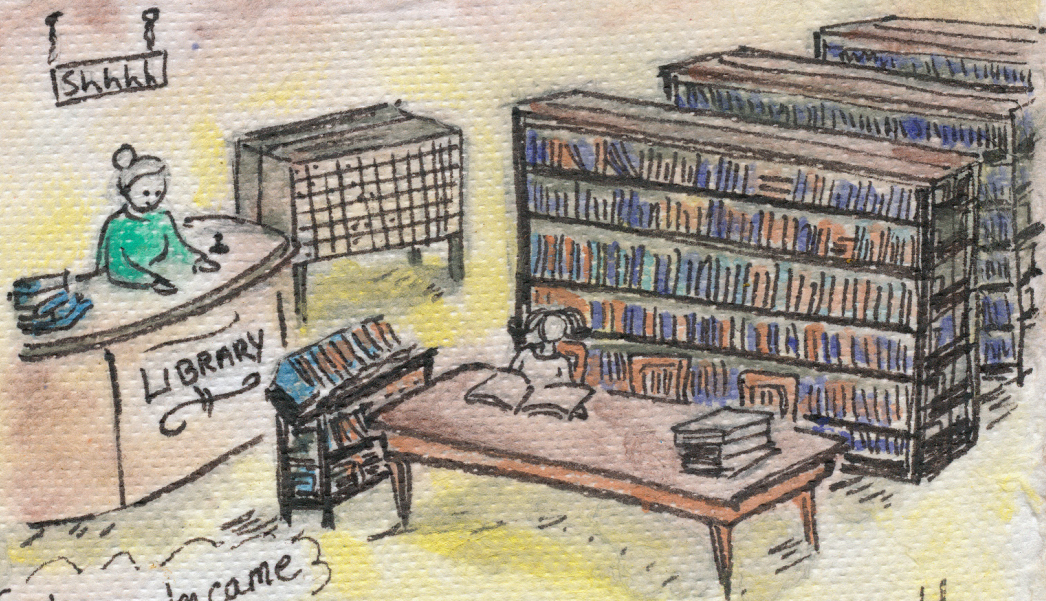
I learned English
in about 6 months to a
year but didn't talk...

1970's

I learned to speak French
from our French neighbors.

We lived in the immigrant
ghetto...

45 GREENCREST
Scarborough
village



{ the library became }
{ my safety }
{ zone... }

I went to the library around age 8 years old for something to do. I made friends with the librarian. I read. I fell in love with education...

To this day, I always go to the local library when I travel.

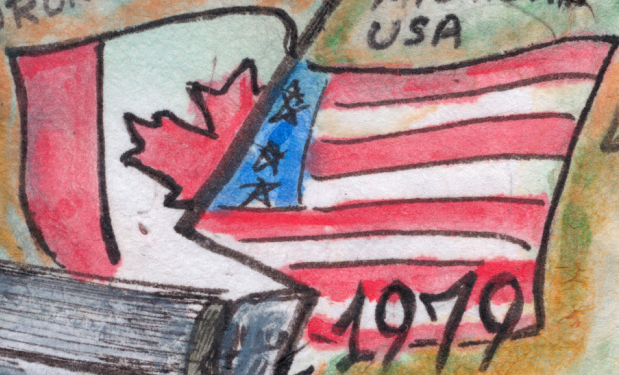
I felt this was where I belong... it was my second home. I could get away from the world by just being there...



I came out of my shell...

SCARBOROUGH,
TORONTO, CANADA

FLINT,
MICHIGAN
USA



FLINT
DAVISON

We emigrated from
Scarborough to
Davison so my
father could work
as a welder for
GM. But it
seemed so
rural
to me
so...

GM



[Puberty and Immigration
COLLIDED.]

...isolated.

I shut down
again.

I remember how far
everything seemed.
But I'd saved my money
and bought myself a red
bicycle. I rode it everywhere,
especially to a small shopping
mall on Dort Highway,
and then... to the
library.



Started 1984

stopped IN and OUT
I found focus...

I finally got my
NURSING
DEGREE 1991

HURLEY
HOSPITAL

NURSE
FOR
25+ years



In H.S., I
finally came
into my
own, the class
clown. I play-
ed soft ball.
I graduated.
after a few
fits +
starts
at
Mott,



DAVISON
HIGH SCHOOL

my friend told me to try
nursing. I graduated in 1991 and went to work at
Hurley! I plan to retire 8/1/2019. But I'm still
learning... studying more at Mott. They've been good for me!!

[1996] When I finished High School, I didn't do well on the ACT.
Mott was my only option. The 1st couple of years didn't go
so well. I didn't know what college was about.



MOTT

has been such
a wonderful place
for me. Mott has
given me everything!



after waiting on tables,
my friend encouraged me
to go back to school.
It took 3½ years to finish
my nursing degree in 1996.
Now I'm back studying in the
substance abuse program...
[2017]

2017 4/12



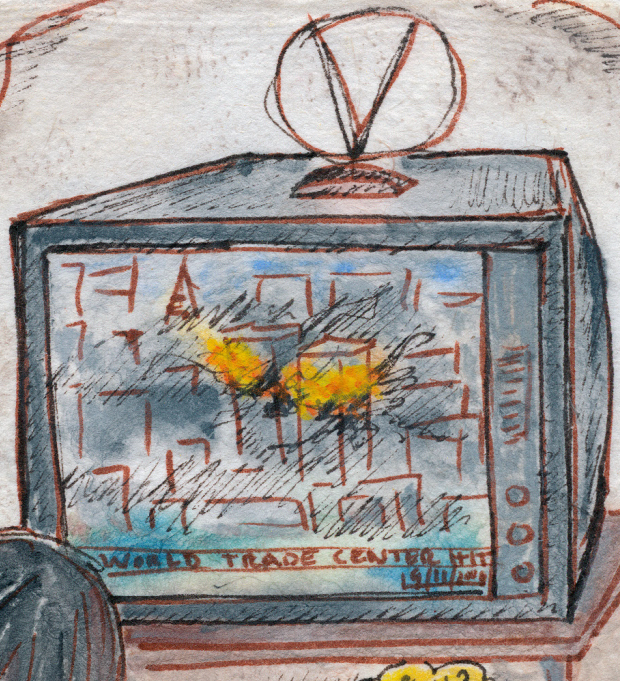
There's always a part of me
that wonders... but I've assimilated.

People don't think
about what we've
given up... family,
language, peers...

Everybody has the same
goals, needs... We should
be tolerant of each
other, learn more when
meeting different people.



Are you okay?



Are you ok?

Are we okay?

I'm still working
on feelings of...
isolation...
of being an immigrant.
Nowadays (2017)
Patients sometimes
say things in front
of me.
Most of the time,
I say nothing.
But sometimes, I try
to explain... but I'm there to
take care of them.

the
prejudice...
it still exists...

{ 9/11 was particularly difficult, especially for Arab Americans... }

MDin

"I just want to make
it better. Life..."

I want to make
others' (lives) better
in the midst
of working on
myself."





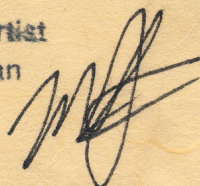
"We're one
Human
family..."

... Let's
reach out
and help
one another."
~Marcelle

COLOPHON

**An immigrant's story:
Marcelle Antoinette Rachmon,
From Haifa to Flint**

Mara Jevera Fulmer, artist
Grand Blanc, Michigan
April 2017



About: This piece was created as part of the "Facing College" project at Mott Community College, Flint, Michigan, in conjunction with the national Facing Project initiative. In a recorded interview, Marcelle told her story of her life from childhood to adulthood coming from Palestine and finally settling into the Flint area. This book represents my interpretation of her story in a series of illustrated panels. Any inaccuracies are entirely my own.

Book Details: Two-sided accordion book made with davey board, various handmade and commercial papers, mica (cover), watercolors, pen & ink, and transfer images.

