

WHERE
WE
COME
FROM

BILINGUAL TEACHERS

CSD 15

BROOKLYN, NY

2000

Where I'm From

I'm from a one-way street, narrow, but my playground.

I'm on the third floor, left.

*In my bedroom, my bed is my desk where I would kneel
to do my homework and pray for a better life.*

*I'm the daughter of Genel and Evelyn, yaucanos, proud
Puerto Ricans; my mother's first, my father's third.*

"La universidad te dará independencia."

Become your own person, my dad always said.

Pasteles on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Delivery on Fridays.

Mavi on the fire escape, alcapurrias de yuca in the frying pan.

I'm from an honest and humble family life.

*A story similar to that of many,
but its details are unique and mine.*

Evelyn Ruiz Willis

Llegué

Vengo de una calle de árboles.

De ahí vengo yo.

*Piano en espacio grande
esperando su música.*

De ahí vengo yo.

*Un camino hasta lo último de casa,
un jardín.*

De ahí vengo yo.

*Vengo de Gloria y Mariano,
canciones de mi madre.*

De ahí vengo yo.

Bolero y guitarras.

De ahí vengo yo.

*Ana, what do you want to be
when you grow up?*

Quiero ser maestra.

I want to be a teacher.

De ahí vengo yo.

De yuca, ñame y yautía.

De ahí vengo yo.

Anna M. Charriez

I come from...

*I come from Sunset Park,
a small community rich with culture.*

*I come from 5th Ave.,
where I shop and eat helado de coco.*

*I come from 47th Street,
where I learned to speak Spanish.
It is the street that named me Kelly,
Raquelita, and Raquel.*

*I come from the brownstone
that had a family filled
with love, dreams, and sadness.*

*I come from the single mother
who lived in Sunset Park.
Who, slow and tired, walked on 5th Ave.
That cooked in the brownstone
and became my friend.*

*I come from the mother
who struggled to give me
what I needed
and who gave me strength.*

*I come from the mother and the community
that showed me culture and that
motivated me to reach for my dreams.*

Raquel

I come from...

*I come from a street
in a tropical paradise.*

*I come from a house
with marble floors... wooden shutters.*

*I come from the memories of my childhood,
the courtyard on the side of the house.*

*I come from Arturo y Dora,
rebellious lovers
from two different worlds.*

*I come from the voices of two
uneducated parents who knew
first-hand the value of education.*

*I come from bistek, papas fritas,
arroz con frijoles negros.
Although far from home,
never forgetting our roots,
our culture, our language.*

*I come from hardworking parents
who don't know the meaning of the words,*

"I give up."

Carmen de Armas Demoleas

¡Yo soy María Teresa Nunziata Jaramillo!

Yo soy de una calle de piedras y polvo.

*Yo soy de una casa de portón verde
y chambranas y avalazos.*

*Del sonido de la máquina de coser
que me recordaba'
"Mamá está trabajando
para nosotros comer."*

*Yo soy María Teresa.
De una abuela ojiazul y orgullosa.
De María Teresa, la tía,
linda y esbelta.*

*Yo soy de "¡que pecado!"
"estudía fuerte" y
"trabaja, trabaja, trabaja."*

*Yo soy de masamorra y sopa de cuchuco,
comida de esperanza para un esposo futuro.*

*De los recuerdos de mis padres muertos
y de sus principios de
trabajo y honestidad.*

I am from...

I come from a street that engulfed and whistled in the night the vibrance of city life.

I come from a white door that led me to the path of light and beautiful promises of love and devotion.

I come from a pink room full with childhood fantasies and beauty, that led to the beautiful bond of a child with a friend.

I come from true love, respect, consideration and success of two beautiful parents, Margarita y Ramón.

I come from my mother's determination and strength.

"Alexandra, you can succeed. Try harder, don't give up."

Each stumble is just a walking step up the ladder to true success.

I come from words: "Walk proud and forward in life.

We will always be by your side'" whispered my mom.

I come from a fortress of strength, determination, and confidence.

I come from the belief you can conquer all your dreams.

Alexandra Román

I come from a street.

A two-family house in Boro Park.

I come from a six-room apartment on the second floor.

I come from my very own little room.

*I come from Eduardo and Francisca,
marriage separation.*

*I come from teachers that told me that I
could be whatever I wanted to be.*

*I come from arroz, habichuelas, chuletas
y piraguas.*

*I come from very hard work and
academic achievement.*

I am from...

*I come from an unpaved road in Farallón,
Puerto Rico, that led to the mountains, orange
trees and silver rivers.*

*I come from a small wooden house, the color
of blue.*

*I come from my Grandma's balcony,
just rocking in a seat,*

*I come from Juan and Leonor,
campesinos.*

*I come from Milka, luchadora, amorosa
cariñosa, exigente.*

*I come from -No vas a hacer nada
hasta que termines la escuela-*

*I come from arroz con gandules, pernil,
y café.*

*I come from faith, hard work, expectations,
honesty, love, family and happiness.*

Mayra Rivera-Vásquez

De ahí vengo yo

Yo vengo de una ciudad señorial
llena de plenas, bombas y vegigantes.

Elegante como una danza.

De ahí vengo yo.

De una plaza llena de leones,
hombres y mujeres nobles.

De ahí vengo yo.

De una casa rosa
llena de tertulia y música.

De ahí vengo yo.

De una madre fuerte y valerosa
que me enseñó a ser guerrera.

De ahí vengo yo.

De un lugar lleno de risas,
tesoros y cafetales.

¡De ahí vengo yo!

Awilda Ortiz

Vengo de muy lejos
Más allá de lo moderno.
Desde el -Despierto con el gallo-
al olor de los huevos,
la avena y la maicena.
Con el café hervido
en la lata sopa.
Vengo de "Dios bendiga este hogar"
el letrero en la puerta

hasta

- Despierta, que es hora para la escuela-.
- Aprende niña, el idioma, que yo no sé nada-.
- Plancha la ropa, limpia los zapatos,
piénate el pelo-.
- Prepárense, es hora de ir a la iglesia-.
- Pero, Mamí, fuimos ayer, ante ayer
y esta mañana-.
- ¡Cállense, niños! que Dios
nunca nos desamparará.

La educación, la familia y Dios
guían sus vidas-.

Así fue.

De ahí vengo
y para allí voy.

L. Rodríguez-López

Where I Come From...

I came from a mother of great strength.

I came from a place of great beauty.

I came from a father que era "mujeriego".

*I came from a neighborhood with a lot of
variety.*

I came from the direction of a great man.

I came from the emotion of the emotionless.

*I came from the love that today sets me
free.*

Wanda L. López

De dónde vengo

*Vengo de una vereda
Que me lleva hacia el camino.
Mi casa es una casa vieja
Llena de muchos amigos.
Mi cama es muy acogedora
Pues fue el lecho de mi abuelo.
Mi nombre es muy común
Como el de mi hermano y mi abuelo.
Estudia y supérate
Eso decía mi padre.
Aprende inglés
Me decía mi madre.
Arroz con huevo frito
Era lo que me encantaba comer.
Y los viernes los T.V. dinners.
Eran lo que yo quería comer.
Le agradezco a la vida
Los padres que me dio.
Porque ellos me enseñaron
Que yo soy un regalo de Dios.*

Josephine Arroyo

Where I'm From

I come from another world of this earth.

I come from the country with many bicycles.

I come from the family always eating rice.

I come from a lovely and happy family.

I come from the flowers that people use
to call me.

Yin Yin Liang

*Yo soy del único árbol que había en mi calle,
lleno de esperanza.*

*Yo soy del patio de mi vieja casa,
lleno de cachivaches traviosos.*

*Yo soy de la portada de un pasaje oscuro,
lleno de misterio.*

*Yo soy de una "familia errante" sin raíces,
llena de sabiduría.*

*Yo soy del ruido de tenedores en la boca,
llenos de "papa la huancaína" y anticuchos.*

*Yo soy del pasado y del presente
lleno de incertidumbres y esperanzas.*

Y alegrías.

Y llantos.

Y risas.

Y carcajeo.

Yo soy yo.

Anonimo

Yo vengo

*Yo vengo de una tierra cálida
donde no se conoce la nieve
ni el frío.*

*Yo vengo de una casita pequeña y feliz
donde pasé toda mi niñez.*

*Yo vengo de un atardecer tranquilo
donde todo era estructurado y alegre.*

*Yo vengo de un puerto
donde se come pescado y mariscos.*

*Yo vengo de "Estudia y progresa,
esa es nuestra herencia"*

Anónimo

Where do you come from?

I come from the street Juana Saltitopa.

I used to say "Juana salta y tapa".

I come from a very lively street.

I come from a big corner house that everyone can see.

*I come from the corner of the gallery
looking down and looking up.*

*I come from Doris, very strict,
religious and self-righteous person.*

*I come from "you have to learn
because I won't be with you all the time".*

I come from yaniqueque, jalao, mango y pasteles.

*I come from "que van a decir los vecinos"
way of thinking.*

*You have to do the right thing
otherwise you get una pela.*

*Most of all, I come from
high expectations.*

Iris M. Manners

Where I Come From...

I come from places
unseen and unheard of.
Of places clear and clean,
loud with life and quiet with song.
I come from a yellow and white,
3-bedroom house that looked east
toward the rising sun.
The mornings were always the best.
I come from Olivia and Roberto
who didn't know each other well enough
to make their marriage work.
I come from "berenjena" and "pollo frito",
"arepa" and "café negro".
I come from laughter, tears,
happiness, strife, struggle, tenderness,
understanding and faith.

Annabell Martínez

¿De dónde vengo?

*Yo vengo del pueblo de los come coco,
Del pueblo donde la mayoría
Son negritos cocolos, orgullosos de su piel.*

*Yo vengo de una casa
Construída por manos pequeñas,
Pero es tremenda casa.*

*Yo vengo de una familia
Que era y todavía son
Bien estrictos y protectores
De sus nenes.*

*Yo vengo de Pipe y Yolín
Soy una de las intocables,
De las Yankees, de los Lópiz.*

*Yo vengo de "estudiar para que
En el día de mañana se puedan
Defender si su marido les faltan"*

*Yo soy de la casa del café,
Del dulce de coco y del pastel.*

*Yo vengo de una casa donde hubieron
Muchos sacrificios, mucho trabajo,
Mucha disciplina, mucha dirección,
Mucha tradición y mucho, mucho amor.*

Yolanda Mallette

I am from pebbled, dry, dirt malla roads.

I am from a little pink house filled with people, laying in the immense grassland of my grandparents.

I am from "la cocina" enveloped in the warmth of the "fogón", surrounded by family stories.

I am from the land of the "lucha" that lives, dances, whose spirit is not yet oppressed.

I am from "que pena con los niños" world where victories were surprises for some and battles for others.

I am a mango girl sitting up in the shadows of the trees, burying my cries in the wings of the birds and trunks of the trees.

I am a girl letting nature be my solace.

Australia Fernández

I come from a small village in China where everybody knows each other.

I come from a two-stories old house where my grandparents used to live.

I come from a bamboo chair where I used to lie down to count the stars.

I come from my grandma – she takes good care of me.

I come from the good smells of my mother's cooking.

I come from structure and discipline in school.

I come from poverty and honor.

I come from the name Adalgisa Adrianna Betances.

I am Isa.

I come from the home that stood across from where blue-eyed people gazed at my strong black eyes.

I come from the open cracks that breathed in the glorious air.

I am from the window that invited the sun's rays to imitate semi-circles forming rainbows.

I come from the sweat of a dream that through me was realized.

I come from "Nunca mire atrás".

I come from the salt that boiled at 260 degrees on the metal "olla" above the stove.

I come from my grandmother's tries, my mother's pride, my father's strive.

I come from the name Adalgisa Adrianna Betances.

I am Isa.

Where I Come From?

I am from the busy avenue where cars come and go but seldom stop.

I come from a four-room apartment barely big enough for my family, but one that housed many others.

I come from the rocking chair where I would recline and it would fall and almost break our backs.

I come from Juan y María, campesinos felices, humildes y sinceros.

I come from -Dios te bendiga, La Virgen te acompañe, y ¿qué pasó con los otros 5 puntos en tu examen?-

I come from arroz y habichuelas, pollo guisado y lechón asado.

I come from the lack of know-how where love and laughter were always found.

M. Quiñones-Antonatos

¿De dónde vengo?

Yo soy de la calle Betances.

Donde yo podía cruzar el río de un brínco.

Soy de un país pequeño.

Soy de un país tropical.

Soy de una isla rodeada por el mar.

Soy de donde canta el coquí, qui, qui.

*Soy de la que llaman la Perla del Mar,
¡Borinquen!*

María V. Román

I come from...

*I come from a street
that is number 13th.*

*I come from a house
with a beautiful porch
where I played with
my friends.*

*I come from sadness,
struggles, triumphs and
great achievements of life.*

*I have faith that I am
heading to a wonderful place.*

Anonymous

Where I Come From...

I come from a street that leads to the horizon.

I come from an apartment building, first floor front, where all my family lived and it owned

I come from a living room with lots of windows where I could see tall buildings and lots of people.

I come from Ana and Luis, very hard-working parents.

I come from "Try your best all the time and you shall succeed".

I come from "Pay attention or else".

I come from arroz y habichuelas and sometimes meat.

I come from struggles, discipline and honor.

I come from a wonderful family.

Luis Pérez

**I come from Santurce, Río Piedras, Santo Domingo,
then Chicago.**

From a street between the alley playground and busy Ogden.

**From the second floor apartment next door to 15 Henderson
playmates; from the back porch transformed into magical
worlds.**

I come from Aurora, from Marcos.

From staid hymns in Spanish and soulful black gospel in English.

From “¡Respetá!” and “Eramos pobres, pero éramos felices”.

From fifarrañita, Johnny cakes, pastelillos and casave.

And Del Campo’s pizza.

**I come from generations of emigration, migration and
immigration.**

**From braving a sense of being alien, foreign,
The Other.**

I come from Strength and Courage.

Albamar Sánchez

I

I come from a street that led to a channel. A street named Coffee and like the name "coffee", there were faces of many shades, like coffee.

On that street, I lived in a house. Unlike the other houses, I had to walk down an ally. It seemed so far and detached from the street.

I lived upstairs but the bathroom was downstairs, shared by another family.

*I slept in a room where I had to walk in a "U" shape to reach.
I slept like a sardine with two other brothers. I felt so good when I finally had my own bed.*

I come from a family with scarce resources, where rice was steady and meat a treat.

Joseph Couret

Where I'm From

I come from the Feb. 27 Ave.

I come from a mango tree.

I come from a big house.

A house where I laugh,

I cried, I had fun.

I come from Dulce and Juan.

Dulce, triste y temerosa.

Juan, bondadose y emprendedor.

I come from you're the oldest one, you have to set the example (do everything right).

I come from arroz, habichuelas y sanchocho and in the afternoon, piña, guayaba, limoncillo y mango.

I come from fighting with myself because I don't want to be sad, I want to be happy.

I come from love, courage, never give up.

I come from una lucha constante por ser mejor cada día.

Anonymous

Where I come from...

I come from a third floor apartment building, where memories were made.

I come from a beautiful room with a canopy bed where I spent special moments.

I come from Luciano and Blanca, who are very dear to my heart and who molded me into who I've become.

I come from rice and beans, spaghetti and mashed potatoes.

I come from poverty, but the richness of a special family. I come from honesty, determination, and the courage to pursue the impossible!

Judith Vega