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My name is Star Sakeena Doane and I was born in Clearwater, Florida in 2004 to an East Indian Jamaican mother and a Caucasian Father. I have been to Jamaica several times to experience my mother's background, however, I would love to see the Eastern part of India (Bhutan, Bihar, Bangladesh, and Nepal) where my great- great-grandparents came from as indigent servants. My maternal grandparents were both born in Jamaica and the great thing about them is that my Momsie was raised as a Muslim and my Pops as a Hindu. They had this wonderful marriage for forty-six years so I know that Muslims and Hindus can live together happily. Both families were best of friends and helped each other send their eldest to college to help better the entire family and community. My grandparents knew each other their entire lives. At my Momsie's funeral we had a service that included both Hindu and Muslims religious rituals and there were no objections.

Visiting the plantation that my grandparents and great grandparents resided, with the mountains in the background, was sad yet incredible because the condition they endured before building their house was brutal, no running water, no indoor plumbing, and no electricity but goats roaming freely. My great-grandfather and his children slowly built his house over the years with lastly an indoor bathroom around 1975. Unfortunately, even now many Jamaicans are still without indoor plumbing and air conditioning.

Now, I would like to introduce you to my best friend, Nydia whose family also came from a very poor country. I met Nydia while attending middle school in Safety Harbor and we

clicked immediately because we both loved singing and drama club. Nydia is from Albania and her family frequently travels there to see family and her family comes to the United States of America to visit. Her mother treats me like a daughter because Nydia and I are always together. In fact, we are both currently attending the University of Florida and will be roommates in the Fall of 2023. I think Nydia and I get along so great because our families have similarities. They both worked hard to provide the luxury and experiences that they did not get when they were young. We relate to each other and is willing to learn and attend different functions that may be different than the normal American parties. There are no judgements, silly remarks, or feeling embarrassed because your family uses the wrong pronunciations or words to describe an object or situation. If we dress in traditional or modern respective outfits from Albania or India, we do not feel embarrassed or ashamed just empowered to be part of tradition.

Every time I go to Jamaica, I am grateful for all the sacrifices that my grandparents have made to come to the United States. I am grateful that I have a diverse family and best friend. I believe all this have made we more open minded to different cultures and I try not to take things for granted. Mostly, I have learned that a community is stronger when they work together to accomplish goals and hard work can accomplish your dreams even when you started from nothing.