

When people look at me,
They see I'm different from others.
My religion, my color, my blood.
They think I'm not educated.
But I'm proud of myself.
For not giving up.
For loving my family.
For wanting to help my country.

A

Where I'm From...

I am from a river
from mountains and valleys.

I am from the joyful,
bright sunlight.

I am from the plumeria,
the flowers.

I'm from kindness and hard work,
from grandma and mother.
I'm from cooking rice and eating chicken
and from washing dinners.

I'm from quiet and shyness,
and from "Be brave."
I'm from wrist-tying.
I'm from Mae La and Thailand,
Bamboo and sugarcane.
From falling in love.

Paw Lay

People see that I am Muslim
That I am a stranger
That I am dangerous
That I am inexperienced
And that I do not have
Many goals because I am a girl.
I am strong, emotional
I am powerful and passionate about helping others.

I will go to college
I will become a human right's lawyer
I will have an impact on this world
I will prove people wrong

Nada

I connect with my old memories of Africa and I feel invincible because of what I overcame

a Survivor

I am an African young lady
Who has faced difficult challenges
Including surviving the civil war
Bombs, fire, death surrounded me
Then there was starvation.

No one could understand what I have through or how I survived from it

As a little girl.

Sometimes I open the book of my life to an old page
To go back and see all there and see all the bad, the good, the terror that I went through.

I question myself sometimes, but when
I look to my left side there is no one who could answer me.

Look to my right side,

And, look to myself again

And find answers because

I, Merveille, the owner of the story and also the story teller,

I am who I am today

Because of all the challenges I went through

I survived and learned from those challenges

I am Merveille Kouekabakilaho.