



Egypt R. Dior //



With the news of the clusters of COVID-19 circulating, it became clear that it was a matter of time until New York City would be closed down. Walks in the park became imperative. And so started our observation of the flowering trees and bushes in the park. Here is a late-budding branch of magnolia with the last stem of the amaryllis.

For my project I requested to take a different approach. Due to limited time, I did not have the time needed to master my track for autoethnography. My approach entailed questions I asked myself,

brief questions geared toward my life during my incarceration, during the current pandemic, about how my “existence” will forever be incarcerated because of how I identify. I questioned myself because within me is where I believe the answers lie. And, “truthfully” speaking, I have no acquaintances that I could ask questions during these trying times.

AutoEthno track (wav) by Egypt R. Dior ❤️ 🙏

Verse #1

What ya name?

My name is Egypt

Where you from?

From the land of the leashes

What does that means?

It means I been locked down

fed like an animal

Even beat to the ground

And this been my whole life

I been Quarantined

so the only thing

I got to show for

“Is me”

never really had friends

so I had to stay strong

Green Daysaid it best - “I walk alone”

Dark dreams (from) behind bars

ain't far

had to live in P.C.

being transgender was hard

When I tried to fit in

the haters would pull my cards

Recreation was a dub

Every sport I liked was barred

Punched in the face by peers

and police

kinda baffled

how I made it

loss tears instead of teeth

First bid did eleven

watch years turn to weeks

Now I'm even more scared
How will I make it in these streets?

Verse #2

20/20 now
What do I do?
Plus I live in a building
where it's barely a roof
Where the kids are told lies
So they rarely know truth
And the older generation
don't even care to leave clues
What the Flu didn't hit
Coronavirus
will do
Don't be scared
and act a fool
"Humans viruses Too"
If there's a God
PLEASE show me the proof!
I feel like a newborn
(Hungry, Crying, Stranded)
left in the nude
What I really mean
"Is I been stressed out"
How many questions could I ask - when I've been left out?
My **Identity** causes me to be X'd out
Thought I took the best route
Maybe I should have left town
On my knees
I pray I stay alive
Would they care if I died?
If I survive
I then asked "WHY?"
Nowadays we have a mask on
when we been wore a mask
Everyday **CHANGING a sad song**

Outro

"Now I lay me
Down to Sleep
And I pray" to the Universe

*My soul to keep
And If I die
I wish not to wake
Now I'm stuck in a Realm
Where I feel nice and safe*

Egypt R. Dior

JIE Scholars Program, Cohort 2020

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Author bio: Egypt R. Dior was born and raised in the slums of Brooklyn and the prison industrial complex. Egypt is a black trans woman and a true scholar of music, currently in the Justice-in-Education Initiative Scholars Program at Columbia University. She has goals of becoming a better individual and is currently working on projects to better humanity and open minds. Egypt lives in New York City.

Image note: Several essays are accompanied by photographs that Neni Panourgiá took of flowers at Riverside Park in spring 2020. They are meant as temporal transitional points during the time that the workshop took place, from the last day on campus in the fall semester of 2019 to the last day of class in June 2020.