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## (Untitled)

Deema Hindawi  
*Humboldt State University*

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# *Untitled*

*Deema Hindawi*

My mama left Lebanon  
But never did she leave her culture  
Never did she leave being Lebanese behind  
Always teaching her daughters  
You are Arabs before you are Americans  
Teaching us Arabic  
In a place that almost always told us that we must speak English  
Feeding us food that we grew up learning as foreign  
Teaching us mannerisms that made us different  
Made the way we were raised somehow wrong  
Because our culture has more discipline  
More unity  
More care  
Than America has ever shown us  
Making us always different  
Until we decided to be different to the Lebanese  
And Somehow  
More American  
And less Lebanese  
Even though I left the dialect so many times  
Calling my mama  
YAMA  
And going from riz to tinmin  
And lebni to roba  
Code switching not just my behaviors  
And understanding all dialects in one setting but struggling one  
dialect at a time  
But anyways the Lebanese always said we were different  
That we hold ourselves differently  
That we walk differently

Even though I know how I should kiss my mother's hand and place it  
on my forehead out of respect  
And always keep my legs on the ground  
And I still hesitate before I lay my legs on anyone  
But we can never hold the phenotype  
That is assumed to hold the American identity  
Even being born in America can't change that