

California Stories

by Yasmine Cherif

When my parents first found out that they were going to have a baby, they quickly started trying to think of names for me. It took them almost the whole nine months to decide on the perfect name. They went through several names such as Sarah and Farah. Finally they decided on Yasmine which means “Tunisian Flower.” My parents were not actually the ones who chose my name – it was my grandmother. My grandmother always liked yasmine Tunisian flowers – they were her favorites. She told my parents, and they were very excited because they thought the name was very beautiful, and they still do! My full name is Yasmine Nour Cherif. You know what Yasmine means; Nour means light; and Cherif means noble.

I was born on Saturday, June 18, 1994, at exactly 4:30 P.M. It was a very sunny day when I finally arrived and weighed in at 6 pounds, eleven ounces. I was 21 inches long. My mom, dad, grandmother, and Afaf (a very good friend of our family) were present at my birth. Afaf was very excited and happy for my parents because he knew they wanted a girl. My parents knew ahead of time that I was going to be a girl, and they were very excited about that because girls are special! (It’s a good thing because there were two more girls after me. Their names are Mimi and Serena.) They thought I was the cutest baby they had ever seen and were so happy that I was healthy. I am so lucky to have my parents!

Ten years later, I am a student in Mrs. Gonzalez’s fifth grade class at Lowell Bayside Academy in Long Beach, California. Everybody thinks I’m a “girly girl,” but I’m not. Maybe it’s because my uniform sometimes has lace on the collar. My favorite sport is basketball. California schools make it easy for girls to be able to play whatever sport they want. Last season, I scored 103 baskets for my team. I consider myself very athletic, in addition to being pretty funny, talkative, and creative.

As you can see, I have a great life! I am happy to be living with my family in California. I can’t think of anyplace else I would rather live. My parents say parts of California remind them of Tunisia, and some parts actually remind them of some cities in France. I would love to visit those places someday, but for now, I am happy living in California where I can be close to the beach that I love so much! I guess California is what makes our family great!

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