

# Underground Anthology

---

Volume 1 *Underground Anthology* vol. 1

Article 11

---

August 2021

## Our Friend Maya Angelou

Ibrahim UA

### Author Bio

Ibrahim is an Arab-American poet, writer, and aspiring novelist. Ibrahim's poetry is interested in exploring and bringing awareness to racial tensions, social injustices, and mental health to spur conversations and dispel ignorance on topics that are difficult to discuss or neglected. Ibrahim has a Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts in English Literature and Language with a focus on ethnic literature and has been immersed in different ethnic struggles due to his own mixed ethnicity and interest in different cultures and their struggles. In his spare time, Ibrahim enjoys reading, watching sci-fi T.V. shows, traveling to other countries, and spending time with good friends.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/ua>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#), and the [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

UA, Ibrahim (2021) "Our Friend Maya Angelou," *Underground Anthology*. Vol. 1 , Article 11.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/ua/vol1/iss1/11>

This Creative Submission is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CalPoly. It has been accepted for inclusion in Underground Anthology by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@CalPoly. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@calpoly.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@calpoly.edu).

# Our Friend Maya Angelou

From *Voices in Captivity* by Ibrahim

Because of you,  
Ms. Angelou,  
We understand  
Why the caged bird sings

But it seems  
Though you've lived  
The atrocities first-hand,  
More generations  
Of the oppressed creation  
Of God, the almighty  
Will learn the cruelties of man.

Sister Angelou, I don't believe  
Your strong heart was meant to see  
The atrocities that came to be  
Once you left my people and me—

Oh, how we Palestinians learned to sing.

We stopped crying long ago,  
and sing  
About our Palestinian blood,  
that snakes slowly into our loose, dry earth  
to nourish our scant flora for the next disappointing harvest, until a new wave  
of violence pushes more of our red pride down to reach  
The caverns of our barren water supply.

Did you hear, beloved teacher Angelou,  
That though your efforts to educate  
The world of the horrors of racism, segregation, and apartheid went worldwide, the same  
Eyes  
That read your books and shed tears  
Are dry at the face of the slaughter and the caging of the people of Palestine?

They are same eyes that fail to twitch as they hold a sniper and aim  
At a child  
A paramedic  
A mother  
An innocent  
But will return to tears  
After reading about the injustices  
In your stories that they return to  
With gently folded page corners and battered bookmarks,  
snuggled in their favorite blanket with their  
Guns  
hung up on their walls  
And the screams of my people forgotten.

Advisor Angelou, since this blockade, our country's main outputs are as follows:

Dead

- Teenagers, "accidents"
- Children, "unfortunate, will never happen again"
- Innocents, "lamentable, but necessary in attempts to suppress (insert issue)"

How do we fare, do you think?

Friend of Palestine, Maya,  
I wish you were here to share a word  
With me and my people in Gaza, the West Bank, occupied Palestine, and those others forcibly removed in  
Jordan and around the world--  
To tell us that one day, we will raise  
Our voices and our flags and speak  
About the injustices done onto us  
And our lands.

Sing, people of Palestine--  
Sing but do not cry.  
One day, this caged bird will learn  
To fly.