## I was raised on Lebanon-Samer Asfahani

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## Samer Asfahani

I was raised on stories of a paradise city in a pleasant and fertile land Where the mountains, rivers and seas played as backdrop to life I heard of a city so beautiful, so true that it could only be compared as the Paris of the Middle East
It's a peculiar thing to love a country that does not raise you, a love formed from the nostalgia of your parents' generation
To be raised in one home, but pine for another
It is a not a unique situation, the plight of the Lebanese diaspora to have more of us outside the country than in
An entire generation raised on a Lebanon that no longer exists, trying to understand their part in a Lebanon that does Witnessing a domestic generation fight corruption and strife on an unfathomable scale while we fight adopted injustices in adopted nations To witness death and destruction on a city you love but don't understand And how to respond; a Lebanese Brit living in America Through donations, through social media, through prayer? An apt reaction to pick up a pen to write about my father's country, one for which he has used an ocean of ink on a forest of paper
This tragedy is the crescendo in the suffering our country has faced in recent months, and recent years
While it is unclear how, or to what end; our distant generation is coming of age and must have a role to play
Why so would such events pain us, why so would we feel so much for a home that was never our hearth
To go beyond memories and nostalgia, beyond thoughts and prayers And back to the Lebanon we were raised on

