

“OUTDOOR EID”

FOR LESSON

*Eid and Ramadan
in Brooklyn*

NARRATOR **Nsenga Knight**



KNIGHT Growing up, **Eid** was so much fun. Like, Eid was — first of all, it’s in Prospect Park, so I think probably when I was younger, we were just in the summer months, I mean, and, you know, that only lasts for so many years, right? It was in Prospect Park and there was, like, a lot of drumming. This was, like, the early years of hip-hop, so people — you know, whoever was rapping in the community was, you know, doing their thing. All right. There was food. You know, everybody was having their own picnics and just, sort of, moving from one picnic group to another picnic group and just visiting. You know, adults would give children money, candies, barbecuing. It was just, like, so much fun.

And then kids — you know, as kids, we would go off into some kind of trail or, you know, I guess we — we probably considered to be the wildlife or something, you know, [laughter] like where the ponds were, you know, and just — just have fun. So, it was definitely a time where you saw people who you hadn’t seen for a long time and just saw and met new people — you know, met new people from different communities because it was all the different Muslim communities from Brooklyn for sure, but there were probably other people coming from other boroughs as well to be in — in Prospect Park. And you had — Yeah, there’s performances, and there was the communal prayer. You know, everybody prayed together. No idea who was giving, like, the **khutbah** really —

ALI Was it organized? You said people from all over Brooklyn, was it multiethnic or was it primarily African American?

KNIGHT Yeah, that’s a good question because, honestly, I remember Black people. I don’t so much remember other people, but that doesn’t mean they

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EID

a Muslim holiday. There are two Eids in the Muslim calendar. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the month of fasting in Ramadan. Eid al-Adha commemorates the sacrifice of Abraham.

KHUTBAH

a sermon or religious talk delivered by a Muslim leader

weren't there. They were probably there as well. And that's — that's a good question, because I really wonder how was that, sort of — how was that, sort of, set up.

But it — it was also — I think for me, it was also, like, a nice way how you sort of realized who had certain talents, you know? Like, Brother Idris — that he drums. Like, you would then be like, “Oh yeah, that brother who you just see around, like, they drum,” you know? Or like, “So-and-so, maybe they sing.” Yeah, because — because there was like a talent show aspect of it. So — so aside from the, like, the park thing, once we were more so indoors, they had certain acts, you know, in the community. Like there was a brother, Salim, who was like the calypsonian, you know? And so, there was — I forget the name of the brother. There's a — another brother who always drums.

And, like, you know, as we got older, there are certain sisters — like, older sisters. You also felt that was a time where, like, older sisters, they could dance, right? Like, a younger sister couldn't dance so much, but, like, the older sisters, you had some, like, Tina Turner acts, you know? Like — because you're like, oh, she's older, don't nobody care, she could — There's, like, a veiled older sister who would do a Tina Turner and the kicks and everything, you know? [laughter] Like, so much fun. I mean, Masjid Khalifah definitely for the indoor Eid, they — that — that mosque had it down for, like, the indoor Eid, you know, once we started moving indoors.

You know, but the outdoor Eid was so much fun, and I think it's something that — it feels like people just never really — even though we've had summer months, it doesn't feel like people ever really got that back, you know? But in a sense, that was like our generation when — when we were little, when I was little, you know, younger than ten and my parents were like in their thirties, you know? And so now, it would be, like — like my — you know, me and my generation and

our kids, we would be the ones to do that. I mean, I've seen some things on Facebook about Prospect Park Eid, but I'm not sure. Like, my dad said he hasn't, you know, seen one or been to one, like, since, you know? But the Eid is definitely a big deal.

And I think because of the seasons — once it moved inside in a — I don't know. I remember for a while kind of being at a loss. We're like, "What are you going to do with the Eid?"

BIO Nsenga Knight was born in 1981 in East Flatbush. While she was growing up, her family attended mosques in Bedford-Stuyvesant, including Masjid At-Taqwa and Masjid Abdul Muhsi Khalifah. As an adult, Knight became active in New York's fine arts community, creating exhibitions and performances that explore various facets of her identity as a Black and Muslim woman in the United States. Her formal education includes a bachelor of fine arts from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and a master of fine arts from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Knight moved to Egypt in 2017.

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