



Survival Is Refusing the Rewrite

Protecting Your Truth from Revisionism

Dominant culture has a talent for rewriting harm.

It smooths what was sharp.

It softens what was violent.

It reframes oppression as “miscommunication,” “a complicated situation,” or “an unfortunate misunderstanding.”

When you refuse the rewrite, you are rejecting one of the oldest tactics of power: **changing the story so the powerful don’t have to change themselves.**

People who benefit from oppressive systems want narratives that let them keep their innocence intact. So instead of claiming responsibility, they claim authorship. They begin editing your experience — erasing what doesn’t fit their preferred version.

“You’re remembering it wrong.”

“That’s not what they meant.”

“You’re being too sensitive.”

“It wasn’t that bad.”

These phrases aren’t corrections — they’re control.

Revisionism is violence with a calm voice.

And for marginalized people, refusing that revision is not stubbornness. It’s survival.

Communities who’ve lived through historical trauma know this intimately. We’ve watched textbooks turn colonizers into explorers, watched racist policies renamed as “economic strategy,” watched brutality reframed as “public safety,” watched entire generations of harm reduced to a footnote, a graphic organizer, a single multiple-choice question.

This isn’t just misremembering.

It’s erasure.

It’s gaslighting shaped into curriculum.

It’s political convenience disguised as historical nuance.

When you protect your memory, you protect your power.

Your version of events is not a rough draft waiting for someone else to polish. Your truth is not incomplete until it’s approved by an “official record.” Institutional memory is not more valid than lived experience — often, it’s designed to be less truthful.



Holding onto your story — the real story — disrupts the machinery that keeps harm looking respectable.

It says:

“I don’t accept your softer version.”

“I don’t owe you a kinder narrative.”

“I don’t have to pretend it didn’t happen.”

“I remember exactly what you’re trying to forget.”

Refusing the rewrite is clarity with teeth.

It is saying:

You don’t get to revise the harm you caused.

You don’t get to reshape the wound so it fits your ego.

You don’t get to sanitize my memory so you can keep repeating the pattern.

This survival note exists because some truths endure only when we guard them fiercely.

And some stories stay whole only because the people who lived them refuse to let anyone else hold the pen.

You don’t owe anyone a version of your story that protects their comfort.

You owe yourself the truth that protects your freedom.