

## FEIZIYA PATEL

### Who am I, Canadian woman?

my white washed, western flavoured, gendered other  
thriving in her crystal space between the cracks of my aging skin  
loving with the passion that awakes my inner being  
laughing in the hollow halls of my childhood memory

Who am I, Canadian woman?

I am

prisoner in my multicultural reserve like the first peoples of this land  
silenced voice heard through your mind  
colourful immigrant living across the colour line  
Arab, Pakistani, Indian, Mexican, Asian, African silhouette reflected in the pupils of your eyes  
accented voice garbled in your head  
dark, brown, black, racialized other

Who am I, Canadian woman?

I am

immigrant in purdah who veils her sexuality from your gawking men  
Philipino nanny snatched from the mouth of her baby  
hurried heartbeat of multiple lifetimes that you have never lived  
statistical blots in your immigrant research data  
undernourished refugee who starved for western freedoms  
anti-terrorist who bled for white, frail democracies

So now you know who I am, Canadian woman.

But how am I?

hungry because you won't share your bread  
Bleeding from gaping wounds on my soul  
tired shadow, your unacculturated other

*Feiziya (Fay) Patel was born in South Africa. She is a new immigrant in Canada and a migrant worker in Australia. Fay has over 25 years of international experience in higher education in Canada, the United States, New Zealand and South Africa as a professor, researcher and program manager across several disciplines. Her co-edited book, Working Women: Stories of Strife, Struggle and Survival, which reviews the challenges of women's work in a global context, was released by Sage Publications in January 2009.*

## SHEILA STEWART

### Unnaturally warm

for January, more than a thaw. The weather is wrong.  
We smile, then grimace. *Eerie*, says my neighbour. *Like March*.

An old woman rakes her lawn. The icebergs melt. Anything  
can happen. We are canaries, singing off tune, our coats

fluorescent yellow.

*Sheila Stewart's first poetry collection, A Hat to Stop a Train, was published by Wolsak and Wynn in 2003. Her poetry has appeared in such journals as The Antigonish Review, Canadian Woman Studies, Descant, Fireweed, The Malahat Review and Tessera.*