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ARDISS MACKIE

Roya's Racialization: Found Poetry from a Young Iranian Immigrant Woman

white like canadians

canadians say
they are white

I always ask them,
"What do you mean by white?
What colour I am"
they say,
"Oh no, we mean
white like canadians.
you are black."

I say
"I am black?"
they say
I am brown but
they never say
"you are white."

I am here,
I am black and I am
not like canadian people

I am interesting for them

when you first see colour,
the first meeting is more
important than the others

based on the first meeting,
when they all meet Me
I am interesting for them
they all ask Me, "Oh you
speak good English
you have no accent
you speak good
you dress like canadian
girls"
lots of them told Me.

but in the second meeting
we are like separating, getting
apart

I am a foreigner in Canada
with a different culture
it is really hard to live
alone
in a country different from
your culture
because
we are not the same.

weird questions

they always ask something
different from me

they ask something
from my country:
"Have you ever seen snow?"
"Do you know which colour
is grass?"
"Have you ever seen
mountain around your city
or anywhere?"

weird questions

Ardiss Mackie is a teacher and poet living in the Okanagan Valley. Her writing has appeared in English Quarterly, Contemporary Verse II, Pedagogy Culture and Society, TESOL Quarterly, TESL Canada Journal, and the Canadian Journal of Education.