

MARILYN PATRICIA YEARWOOD

Spaces of my Empowerment

I am...

a woman
a mother
an educator
a storyteller
a poetry writer
a granddaughter of a village woman
healer,
who was a mid-wife leader
a daughter of a Black Caribbean woman,
who was the village philosopher and
advisor
a daughter of othermothers,
like women spiritual leaders,
godmothers, neighbours and Indigenous
women leaders

they say I can't be from here
for my accent is nowhere there
I'm asked where are you really from?
can't I be Canadian?
why, Black-African-Caribbean-
Trinidadian-Canadian
Never just a Canadian!

I am...

a sister
a friend
a researcher
a social activist
a revolutionist
a granddaughter of an Orisha leader,
who was the grandson of a Yoruba elder
a daughter of a Black Caribbean man,
whose grandfather left West Africa as an
adventurer
a daughter of a Yoruba elder,
like other West African ancestors,
who were never taken as slaves from
Africa

they ask me when last I went home
which one should I justify as my own
for them to know that I was home?
can I not be here and be at home?
should they inform me where is home?
can't I be always at home wherever I go
roam!

I am...

a lover
a twin
a student
an antiracist activist
a Black feminist
who prefers to be a womanist
a simple mother with a daughter,
who wants to know about her great grand
mother the midwife healer
a storyteller for her Yoruba Orisha great
grandfather,
who was an African bamboo dancer
a dread, not long, not blonde, not brunet,

but a locks head
with friends from Jamaica, Sudan, Nigeria
and Somalia

please leave me alone whenever I go
home
for I am always at home when I roam
with my ancestors on our throne
the village woman healer and the Orisha
leader
together with my Black Caribbean father,
the philosopher and adviser
where I am a daughter, a woman, a
mother and a researcher.

Marilyn Patricia Yearwood is a PhD candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. She is from Trinidad and Tobago, and lives in Canada.