



***Next Generation Chinese Canadian Anthology***

***By Tesicca Truong***

*Walk with Me*

I am so tired.

Tired of the anti-asian racism.

Tired of living in fear.

Tired of the hate.

Tired of not being Canadian enough.

Tired of not being Asian enough.

Tired of being told to stay quiet.

Tired of being told to keep our heads down,

While our humanity is being eroded,

While our Black, Indigenous and siblings of colour are harmed,

While the world burns, our planet is plundered

While land, food, and people are disrespected, violated over and over.

The weight of silence

Carried for generations

On hunched backs

Sealed lips

Grin and bear it.

But I can't stay silent any more.

The burden is too heavy to carry.

I'm bursting at the seams

Rage, grief, hurt, pain pouring out.

My presence on Turtle Island, these stolen lands, is political.

I'm the product of displacement, political instability.

A child of immigrants and refugees.

A silent settler no more.

Enough is enough.

But I can't walk this path alone.

Our elders have forged the path

Crossed seas

Built proud gates to welcome us home on unsundered lands

Been spat on, shoved, driven out

Paid the ultimate price.

Come walk with me.

*Liminal Generation*

We are known as bananas  
Yellow on the outside  
White on the inside  
Battered around until brown and bruised

We are the translators  
Our heritage lost in translation  
Mother tongue stunted and shamed  
Fluent in code switching

We are the third culture kids  
Hapas, mixed, halfies, hyphens.  
We're not half this, half that  
But already whole.

We are bridges between Middle Earth and Turtle Island  
Tying cultures together  
Stretched thin across the chasm  
Trying to weave worlds apart together

We suffer in silence,  
As we've been taught.  
To choke down the bitterness  
No sweetness without hardship.

We are rootless  
Carried on the currents of time  
Searching for an anchor  
A fresh boat to belong  
Home.

*I'm not yours*

I'm not yours

To fetishize  
To project your sick and twisted fantasies  
Demure, submissive bullshit

I'm not yours

To assume meek because of my stature  
To presume voiceless because of my softness  
To judge as naive because of my care  
My unwillingness to deceive  
To mistake my silent rage as agreement, consent  
I'm hurting and healing

I'm not yours

To call too Canadian  
Or to deem not Canadian enough  
To question my intelligence because of an accent  
Clues to my connection to culture

I'm not yours to claim in your multicultural tapestry

A trophy emblematic of your diversity,  
Your generosity to include  
To assuage your white guilt  
To placate the marches swelling in the streets

I'm not yours

Not a pawn to pit against one another  
Model minority used to divide and conquer.

We're not yours.

Not your Indigenous peoples.  
Not your land.

I'm not yours

To define  
To refine  
To unwind  
To remind

I'm not here to defy.

I'm here to just be.

To explore.

To be free.

Let me go.

Let me be.

I'm not yours.

*Things I only partially understand...*

To save face  
But at what cost?  
What is the price of silence?

To eat bitterness  
To taste sweetness?  
Until we choke?

Respect our elders  
But how about our youth?  
Can we earn respect without the sands of time?

A spider's web of family ties  
Spun tighter than silk?  
Does the tightening knot choke?

Blood runs thicker than water  
How deep are the cuts?  
When is filial piety too much?

Gold mountain. Gum San.  
A better life?  
Where is home really?