

## LOST

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### **Reflections from the author:**

I wrote this poem based on my life experiences and feelings I have faced being a black woman from a predominately white community. Although I had a blessed childhood and upbringing, there was always this nagging construct of being an outsider. When I was able to step out on my own, I moved to areas with more diversity and quickly discovered that I was viewed as an outsider from other people of color. For many years, this label plagued me. I felt as if my sense of identity would forever remain unreachable. It took a long time to work through the self-love process and to re-establish my identity on my own terms. I had to learn to refrain from placing myself in a box and quit allowing labels to carry weight in my life. It took time, but I finally found my way. This poem represents a piece of that journey.

*Keywords: Diversity, Enculturation, African-American, Empowerment*

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*Little black girl, little black girl... why do you look so sad?  
Is it that you're tired of proving to people you're not bad?  
Your melanin speaks volumes, and your gender does too.  
What does the world expect you to do?*

*You're torn between two worlds,  
Being black and being a girl;  
Respect is not a given virtue.  
Through all the name calling,  
And all the hate crimes;  
The world just wants to hurt you.*

*Your history is unknown and wiped out through the years.  
You manage to wear a smile to hide away the tears.  
As a victim of generational assimilation;  
You are viewed as a product of hate in this nation.*

*Where is my birthright, where is my orientation?  
Am I forever doomed to feel like a soldier out of formation?  
Growing up with faces that looked nothing like me,  
Was complete hell on my esteem and identity.*

*To white people, I don't belong- and I've always known;  
But it is a whole different feeling when denied by your own.  
Too black to be white, too white to be black;  
Never in a million years could I imagine that.*



*Drawing by: Anneline Janse Van Renaburg*

*It cut me to the core, it hurts deep in my soul;  
The weight of all this burden is taking a huge toll.  
It's time to reclaim myself; find a brand-new station.  
I want to find my roots through the art of enculturation.*

*My journey is long, but I will persevere.  
I'll keep on looking forward, and never to the rear.  
Little black girl, you matter, no matter the cost.  
Continue to always love yourself and you'll never be lost.*