

## Where I'm From

In the poem below, Melanie Poonai, a schoolgirl from Harrow, reflects on her identity, and all the factors that have helped shape who she is.

I am from a life filled with colour,  
From the chocolate brown that is my skin.  
I am from the sunshine yellow of my mother's laugh,  
From the red and white of my brother's favourite football shirt.  
I am from the crisp new white pages of a book,  
From the miserable grey of the street I live on.  
I am from green, pink and yellow; My garden in summer filled  
with flowers,  
From the terrifying black of the nightmares that haunt me.  
I am from the ginger orange of my buried cat,  
From the blue and gold of my ever-short school tie.  
I am from the dark oak of my grandmother's coffin,  
From the golden "Aum" pendant around my neck.  
I am from every pink scar etched into my body,  
From the red, orange and brown of a hot curry.  
I am from every identical colour of the twins I love,  
From the blue and green of a hospital ward.  
I am from all that has happened,  
And all that will be.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Melanie Poonai, 'Where I'm From' (2007), The Poetry Society. Melanie Poonai's poem Where I'm From was a winner of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year award in 2007, and first published by The Poetry Society. Reproduced with permission.

## Where I'm From

In the poem below, Melanie Poonai, a schoolgirl from Harrow, reflects on her identity, and all the factors that have helped shape who she is.

I am from a life filled with colour,  
From the chocolate brown that is my skin.  
I am from the sunshine yellow of my mother's laugh,  
From the red and white of my brother's favourite football shirt.  
I am from the crisp new white pages of a book,  
From the miserable grey of the street I live on.  
I am from green, pink and yellow; My garden in summer filled  
with flowers,  
From the terrifying black of the nightmares that haunt me.  
I am from the ginger orange of my buried cat,  
From the blue and gold of my ever-short school tie.  
I am from the dark oak of my grandmother's coffin,  
From the golden "Aum" pendant around my neck.  
I am from every pink scar etched into my body,  
From the red, orange and brown of a hot curry.  
I am from every identical colour of the twins I love,  
From the blue and green of a hospital ward.  
I am from all that has happened,  
And all that will be.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Melanie Poonai, 'Where I'm From' (2007), The Poetry Society. Melanie Poonai's poem Where I'm From was a winner of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year award in 2007, and first published by The Poetry Society. Reproduced with permission.