

erroneous idea was, and is, dangerous, if only in its blinding of people—whether the hosts or the recently emigrated—to the potential energy to be found in differing ways, differing philosophies, differing cultures. My association with Claire and her “Canadian-ness” showed me that one culture can indeed enhance another, and vice versa; and that the result of such a so-called “complex” union can be something enduring, rich, and positive. In an adult reconsideration of the choice I made for assimilation at the cost of my ethnic culture, I repeatedly wonder if this choice did not come at too high a price. With a mature view of the harmony possible in distinctness, I would have to say that the “economics” of my choice was that I made a more expensive decision than if I’d kept at least the best of my ethnicity, my difference.

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JOAN BOND

Ladies of Eaton

Mid-afternoon
you see them in Eaton’s restaurant
seamless women, fifty-ish
wearing New York labels on knitted suits
diamonds woven on long fingers,
nails and mouth lacquered fire-hydrant red.
Their throats are filled with the gravel
of lost children, abandoned lovers
husbands with gray faces.
You hear the conversation
dangling in the air like weathered chimes.
Cigarettes cocked, the smoke
drifts past their rippled skin
their auburn hair, rises in a rivery haze
disappearing
like girlish dreams.

Joan Bond is a prairie-born woman who has lived in the Maritimes for several years, and who will be returning to the prairies. She has been published in Pottersfield, Portfolio, Prairie Fire, and Dandelion.

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