

My Skin

"You are hairier than my dad"
I remember what my mother said,
"Have thick skin"
But, I put my arms in my sleeve
And bought razors the next day.
My skin isn't thick.

"Where is your red dot?"
I remember what my mother said,
"Have thick skin"
But I looked down to hide my shame,
For I would never be like one of them.
My skin isn't thick.

"Go back to where you came from"
I remember what my mother said,
"Have thick skin"
But his remark hurt,
For they all laughed at me.
My skin isn't thick.

My skin is like a sheet of paper
Even human hands can tear it in two
You look through it and see my veins
See the pain and self hatred I carry with me

But what I wish I had realized then is
It is my ancestors' skin.

It is the skin of the people
Who gave us spices
My skin is like
the road they gave us, silk

I have thick skin,
My mother was right.