

The Eyes On Me

By Ava Alizadeh - Pearson

We just moved here from Iran. I can feel the eyes on me.

We just got to the house, it's smaller than I expected. My mom told me that I was to start school next weekend at Willowdale High School in Ontario. I don't know how I feel about Ontario yet. My mom is making us go out for dinner to "explore the area". By us I mean me, my mom and dad and my 3 year old brother. We don't have a car yet so we are taking the bus. My dad is not too happy about that. We bundle up because in fall it can be cold. Lucky for us we live right by the bus station. We don't know where we are going to dinner yet but I'll just wait and see.

On the bus I can feel the eyes on me. Our skin is pale but yellow. My mom tells me we are going to go to the mall. Apparently it has places to eat. I have never been to the mall. My mom knows I am nervous and she holds my hand.

When we got dropped off at the mall, I was surprised that we didn't die. I am also surprised that my mom knew what bus to get on. When we step inside I get a tingly feeling through my bones. There are a lot of people here. My mom tells us that we have to find a big screen and that's where we can search for the restaurants. My dad pointed out almost every single screen. Finally my mom spots it and we search for food. We landed on something called Boston Pizza. We make our way through the mall. I can still feel those eyes on me.

I noticed a store with a lot of girls lined up everywhere and I get another tingly feeling and I grabbed my mothers hand. She tells me "It's okay Leila my baby, the best way to fit in is to show you belong." My mom grabs my hand and we walk through the lined up girls. I got through it. Although I felt the eyes on me I am okay.

We finally make it to Boston Pizza and get seated. My mom said that we should order lots of pizza. I ordered cheese pizza with ice tea. I take my first bite and oh my gosh, it's so delicious. My mom laughs at my expression and then we all laugh.

My mom and dad pay and we go back through the mall and I am not that nervous anymore. My mom asks if I want to go shopping. I say yes, so my dad takes my brother back home and me and my mom go shopping. We stop literally everywhere. I can still feel the eyes on me but people were nice to us too. It's late and my mom and I are tired so we go back home and fall asleep.

I mark this day as a success. The next week is very busy. We have to unpack and decorate. My dad went to get the car. Soon enough it's the night before my first day of school. My mom helped me pick out an outfit and we hung it on the back of my chair. I fall asleep slowly. I was nervous and excited about school.

In the morning my mom does my hair while my dad's cooking breakfast. As soon as my mom is done I put on my outfit. I end downstairs and eat some yummy eggs. Everyone comes to drop off. My mom tells me again "The best way to fit in is to show you belong." I said my goodbyes and I walked into school. I can feel the eyes on me. I have my mom's advice repeating through my head. Somehow I made it through the day. Somehow I made it through the year.

It's been a year since we came here but I feel great. I have lots of friends and I am top of all my classes. I can still feel the eyes on me but I got used to it. Life is good. Remember to show you belong and you will belong.