

Adjustments¹

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frost-bitten smiles
 That's how it is.
 Friendly Manitoba

i'm the only
 Black person here.
 White faces, coffee mugs.
Is this what it's going to be?

It's how it is.

Back home, pass your neighbor, say hello. Here you don't do that.
 Fakegrinjustpass
 It is how it is.

We're seen as persons to stack cans in pyramids, tires in pyramids, mop around the pyramids

waitingforajob

waitingforajob

waitingforajob

waitingforajob

Call my royal name and mispronounce it.
 How is it?

Surprised I speak English. Happy I impressed you. Sad your bar's so low.

Oh, you speak English well.
 What do you speak?

Yes, it's my first language.
 I speak English.

Stereotypes.
Hurdles you have to overcome,
slows you down.
Sets you back.

I wish

educate
sensitize
the people.
exposure,
education,
some people know the difference.
That's how it is.

EndNote:

¹ To create the above found poem, *Adjustments*, I drew from the transcript of a focus group of newcomers to Brandon, Manitoba. The focus group was part of a larger case study, research project examining newcomer integration and education in Brandon, Saskatchewan, Canada.