

White on White

by Tami Canaday

Um, yeah. White on White. Or is it really white when I'm not white? You understand what I'm saying? *(a beat)* I can go anywhere, anytime and I'm considered . . . ? What would you say? *(a beat)* A white? An Asian white? An Asian? Can I be all three? One. Just one. But, it doesn't matter to me. It's like being a woman. I'm one all the time—not that I can't hang out in my masculine. We can be either, right? On the inside at least? Kaboom. *(laughs)* I never think about being a woman unless I'm insulted or complimented for being one. But as an Asian? The compliments? Unconscious. One man at work pulled me aside recently and said, "You look like Margaret Cho or is it Marie Hirono? Or, "Yes, this is it! You look like an older version of Tao Okamoto." Dude, I don't look like any of them. I didn't go up to you, white on white man, and say you look like Tom Hanks. Or is it Ron Howard? Or, an older version of Daniel Radcliff. Why? 'Cause all white people look alike. No, no! And the insults? To tell me I'm smart without knowing me is an insult. *(a beat)* I am smart. But here's a little tip—not all Asians are smart. No . . . it's true. Most of us are though. *(laughs)* White on white is an illusion. Just like whatever you're projecting on me is an illusion. *(blows palm of hand outward toward audience)* Take it. Own it.