

Almost Another Country

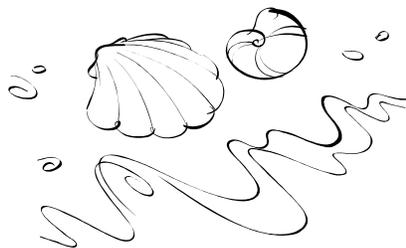
by Philippe Lajeunesse

As a young child, you do what your parents want you to do. The first time I moved, I was six years old. I felt like the place I used to live in would vanish when I moved. Gaspésie was a beautiful part of the Quebec province, but now, I had to prepare my journey to the big city — Montreal.

When I first arrived, I was totally confused. My habits seemed so different from the other children. My house used to be situated on the highest hill of my town, Amqui, with pine trees surrounding it. Now, I live in an apartment surrounded by grass, cars, and other buildings. I came from a fisherman's region where nature was one of the most important aspects of our lives. Now, I see a bunch of stressed workers talking on their cell phones, wearing these gray costumes suits and strangled by ties. Is there anything more impersonal than the city? In Amqui, everyone knew everyone by their occupation, their family, or from their neighbourhood. There was no way of avoiding someone, and somehow you felt closer with your community.

After my family and I arrived, my mother introduced me to the metro, the bus, the people, and the city. Of course it impressed me. The train and the buses were driving me crazy. However, there was something else that caught my attention — black people. It may sound stupid, but I had never seen a black person before, and it fascinated me. I was looking at a lady, and she looked so different from me. I am not a racist because I'm the first to protest when one of my friends is racially judged. However, when I was young, my first encounter with coloured people just surprised me.

My background isn't that impressive. I came from a small village where everyone had his or her own business and gossiped about anything they could. Still, I will always have good memories about how it felt to live in harmony with nature.



Philippe Lajeunesse will be studying Social Science, International Studies Major. He wants to obtain a Bachelor in Journalism and become an international reporter.