

[report this ad](#)LOVE
VERA WANG

SHOP NOW ▶

DESIGNED FOR
ZALE
THE DIAMOND STORE®the **TOAST**By **Shing Yin Khor** on July 2, 2014 in **ART**

What Would Yellow Ranger Do?

This post originally appeared on January 10, 2014.

196



2,984



Tweet

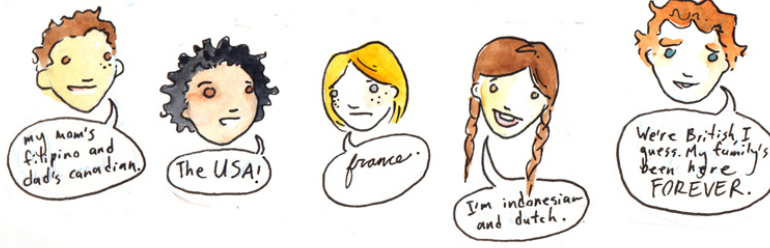


The first few times it happens, it doesn't register at all.

I'm at an International School in the Philippines, and almost everyone is from somewhere else.



- is the question, and the answer is -



The gender roles seemed so innocent then.

We play Power Rangers at recess.

The blonde girl is the Pink Ranger.

The black kid is the Black Ranger.

I am the Yellow Ranger, because I am yellow.



I am sixteen when I move to the United States of America.

"Where are you from?" they ask.

"Malaysia." I answer.



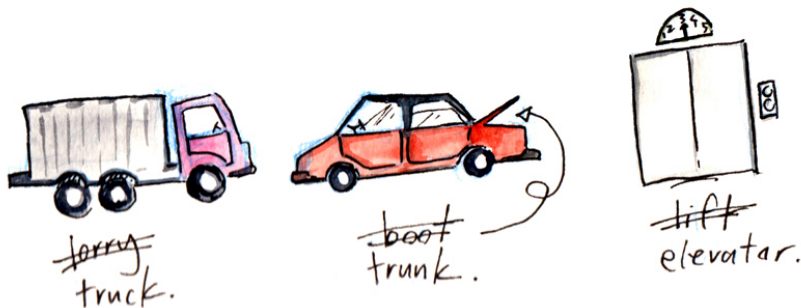
"Huh. You look like you're from China."

"It's a SouthEast Asian country." I explain. "Chinese people comprise about 25% of the population."

Something simmers under the surface, something angry and rebellious, but I'm too busy desperately trying to lose my accent to notice.

Years later, I'll hear my old accent called "cute," but I'm sixteen now, and all I want to do is fit in.

I switch the words lorry, boot, and lift in my vocabulary to truck, trunk and elevator.



They suggest I take the ESL class; I've spoken English my entire life.

I start to understand why it hurts.

"Where are you from?" is the question, and the answer they expect is "Not here."

The faces on television are white, white, white and Will Smith.

For us young Asian girls growing up in the '90s on a steady diet of American media, there was only Yellow Ranger. There was only Trini Kwan.



She is my goddess. Jesus Christ is white, but Trini Kwan looks like me.



There is this elderly man that visits me at comic book conventions.

"Where are you from, girl?" he asks.

"Malaysia, but I'm Chinese." I am polite at conventions.

"Oh. My ex wife is Vietnamese." He tells me a story that starts by referencing *Good Morning Vietnam* and ends with alimony payments.

"It's so nice to talk to a nice Vietnamese girl."

He sighs wistfully, and doesn't buy my books.





- the cashier at Home Depot asks.

"Malaysia, but I'm Chinese."

"Wow, you speak English so well," he says.



The Yellow Ranger probably wouldn't subject the man to a screeching apoplectic screed about goddamn American diversity, so I don't.

It becomes a game to find the right answer.
The one that will end the conversation the quickest.



I'm sitting at a bar alone
and I do not want company.



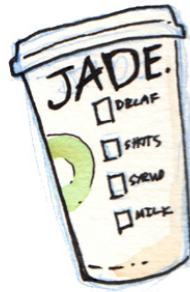
The question is not where I
live, but where I get my
slanty eyes and dark hair and
brown skin from.

I am sick of being expected
to tell nosey white men
where I'm from.

"What's your name?" my barista asks. "Hey, where're you from?"

"Jane." I say, because no one's name is ever spelled correctly.

"Jade. I like it. Very exotic." he says.



Yellow Ranger is calm and polite, but I'm starting to embrace being an angry person.

I'm not sure I can really be like Yellow Ranger.

He says - "I love Asian girls. You're all so tiny and exotic."

I hear - "I reduce Asian women into crude caricatures of submissiveness but it's okay because I liked Miss Saigon and my ex-girlfriend is Korean."



- he says. no doubt imagining something sweet and gentle and perfectly Oriental.



It didn't last. I don't think he liked tea with cream and sugar.

"I'm from Los Angeles," I say, even though I know what they mean.



I've been here for ten years, the longest I've spent in one place.
 "I'm from Los Angeles," I say, and it isn't a lie anymore.

Los Angeles is home. I'm from Los Angeles.



My husband is a tall white man, of Italian, German and Irish ancestry.

No one asks where he's from, and if they do, the conversation ends when he says "State College, Pennsylvania" or "Los Angeles."

"It's just a question. It's harmless." he says.

If you spill your coffee on me once, it's no big deal.

But when I get coffee spilled on me every damn day, can you blame me for being pissed off when you spill your coffee on me too?

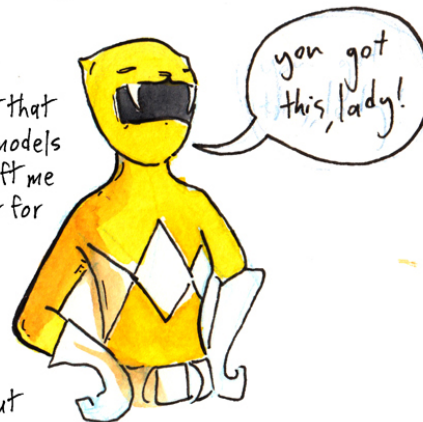


"Where are you from? I love exotic girls like you."

I'm from Malaysia, and I live in Los Angeles and it is none of his business. "Exotic" means "You look different, you don't belong, you aren't from here, are you?" "Exotic" means "I want to objectify you, make jokes about slanty vaginas and bad driving."

Yellow Ranger would smile politely, and walk away. Or kick him in the nuts, I don't know. The Power Rangers didn't really focus on character development.

And then, I also consider the fact that the lack of representational role models in American popular culture has left me dependent on a fictional character for guidance.



Don't get me wrong, Trini. You're badass, and you know kung-fu, but I think I got this one.

"I'm going to shove my tiny exotic fist so far up your ass that

you're going to have the most exotic rectal prolapse in the western world, dickbucket." I say, and I pronounce all the words correctly.

"Jeez. I was just curious. What a fucking bitch." He is appalled at my behaviour.

I've hurt his feelings. I don't care.



— the end —

Tags: literally perfect things we are happy to publish power
rangers shing yin khor yellow ranger

\$

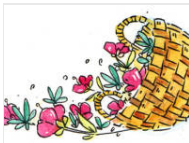
1.00

LIKE THIS ARTICLE? TIP THE TOAST!

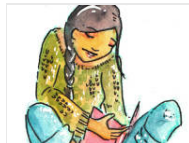
YOU MIGHT LIKE...



Ode on an
Abandoned



CONTINUE?
Y/N: A Short



After Amy
Tan: An Asian



Schrödinger's
Cat Speaks

Shopping Mall Story

American Literature Roundtable

Shing Yin Khor is a cranky Hufflepuff, and also an illustrator, writer and sculptor. You can follow her on **Twitter**.



PROMOTED CONTENT



Are You Bible Literate? Take Our Quiz to Zoo



Bill Nye Changed Sides...Should The Huffington Post



Psoriatic Arthritis: What Real Patients Health Central



The Creepiest Cults in History. #2 will Taboo News

Recommended by

ADD A COMMENT

Comments (190)

[Login](#)

Sort by: [Date](#) [Rating](#) [Last Activity](#)



Dancing Narwhal · 123 weeks ago

+85

This was perfect and amazing.

[Reply](#) [3 replies](#) · active 123 weeks ago

[Report](#)



Hayley · 123 weeks ago

+55