i grew up on the reserve
thinking it was the most
beautiful place in the world

i grew up thinking
"i'm never going
to leave this place"

i was a child
a child who would
lie under trees

watching wind's rhythms
sway leafy boughs
back and forth

back and forth
swiping it seemed
the clouds into great piles

and rocking me as
i snuggled in the grass
like a bug basking in the sun

we used to laugh at teachers
and tourists who referred to
our bush as "forests" or "woods"

"forests" and "woods"
were places of
fairy-tale text

were places where people,
especially children, got lost
where wild beasts roamed

our bush was where we played
and where the rabbits squirrels
foxes deer and the bear lived

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Lenore Keeshig-Tobias
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