

to the 'other' girl.

to the girl who says she's not like 'other women':

i get it.

you're afraid. terrified. you don't want the boys to single you out. you want them to think you're in for the ride. you want to win the game, so you do your best to hide that tube of lipstick you swore you wore only once at senior prom and wear that baggy sweater like armor.

it's clever. really. you get them thinkin' that you like the jokes that slip from the rooftops of their mouths with use of awkward grins. at three in the morning, you'll make a break to the McDonald's downtown and they'll pass judgment with their fingers coated in Big Mac sauce about how girls these days are girly, much too girly. feminine.

feminine.

it's a dirty word 'cause they say so, and you wonder why but you're not like the others' so you never question. you accept.

you associate.

you associate femininity with the stick thin images of celebrities played out in the latest issue of Seventeen magazine, with half-naked women are laying over, well, anything, with how there's just too much talk about designer jeans and the fashion scene, and with an interest that you believe is better suited to abstract things.

so you make yourself out something better than. see, you will say as these boys clap you on the back, you certainly *aren't like those other girls* because you've elevated yourself to not buy into such silly ideas.

careful, though. those are the hands of enemies that lay upon your hipbones, hands that will break you, hands that will make a toy out of your bruises and ask if you liked that by morning's light.

you will remember those hands as the ones that held you up for being the 'other woman'.

you will remember, because, you will be hollowing yourself out at your bedside. you will say something but they'll all wonder if you were 'begging for it,' even though you never dressed like the girls you used to tear down. you will remember how the shower burns your flesh while you wonder where you miscalculated, then realize no clothing could ever hide you from their wrath.

when you do, you will collapse.

and rise.

you will sift through the broken breastplate you made your shield and pull out that tube of eyeliner you hid since you were fifteen. you will do what you can to live and raise your fist with other women because we were never your enemy. you may hate that you didn't get it, but i'm not angry.

you were hoping to win the only way you knew how.