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To my little sisters, on the day you outgrew me

Mallory Fitzpatrick

John Carroll University, mfitzpatrick19@jcu.edu

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To my little sisters, on the day you outgrew me

By: Mallory Fitzpatrick

To my little sisters, on the day you outgrew me.
I laughed at the jokes and smiled for you but
my heart broke just a little for you too.
Because now that you are taller than me you will be other things too.
Emily Bronte wrote that to be a girl is to be
“half-savage and hardy and free” and
I see it in the way you are unafraid of your passion, hear it in
the pounding of your drumsticks,
the squeak of your basketball shoes on the gym floor, as you somersault over
another girl.
Girls, you are still girls and I dread the day you stop being girls.
(I still remember the feeling of girlhood,
bark beneath my hands and asphalt against my bare feet and
some days I feel the ache for my girlhood in the pain between my legs.)
Once you stop being girls you become
Young Women
And once you are a young woman.
Oh, my darlings.
The world is full of wolves and they would like to eat you raw.
So be wary and watchful, because
I am not home these days to watch for you.
But when they whisper in your ears as you walk through the woods, do not listen.
Show them that you have claws too, keep them sharp and ready and
look out for each other.
Lone wolves cannot stand against a pack.
I cannot stop all the wolves.
But if you hear them howling, know that I walk the woods too, and
I have teeth of my own, and they are sharp, even if I am short.