

## THE TREE

It all felt so wrong, kissing, I mean.  
Wrong and dirty.  
I never felt normal, unable to mix,  
shop soiled if I did, a nerd if I didn't.  
Tampons were terrible,  
no virginity there then?  
Like the holes in my underwear,  
they were just wear and tear,  
but WHY were they there?  
I could never answer her.  
If only I had known then,  
that I was a victim of The Tree.



Two decades later, and my daughter has  
noticed the boys. Unable to cope,  
I accuse her now as my mother did then.  
WHY are you saying that?  
I question her innocence,  
with words I have learnt  
that I should have burnt,

Not saved for another generation.

A lifetime ago, my mother's trust was stolen away,  
taken by the touch of a man  
who thought childhood his to take ...  
The tree became poisoned, and in the wake,  
she grieves for the loss of her teenage years,  
and our springtime too, sabotaged by her fears.

If only I had known the truth then,  
I would have chopped the tree down.

Now, we have the truth to restore,  
and we will start, by planting acorns.  
Three generations of women, the lie of one man.  
One day soon, we will sit beneath the branches  
of a strong and healthy Oak.  
And we will laugh,  
as we rejoice in our Womanhood,  
together.