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## Like a Lady

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## Like A Lady

When I was growing up  
surrounded by six similar  
sisters, mother told me to smile,  
to sit, to speak like a lady.  
She urged me to giggle, let men  
open my doors. I did,  
until Emily was raped,  
Mr. Gordon walked out and left his bride  
with three children and food stamps, Michael  
blackened my eye.

Now I tell her  
just because my hips have curves  
no one has the right to call me "babe,"  
just because I shave my legs  
no one has the right to shave my salary,  
just because my shoulders aren't broad  
no one has the right to hit me.

She smiles at me and agrees,  
like a lady.

*Gigi Mulvihill*