

Forward Motion

She says he says she says she says
that our new student isn't what she seems.
They told me she covers more with that dress
than just hips and thighs and bare knees.

They talk about “her” always with air-quotes
and call her all sorts of unsavory names.
She's pointed out and mocked by her peers
like a hunter with a rifle aimed at his game.

Murder and betrayal of fellow students
seems to be the topic on most of their minds.
The depth of high school cruelty, I suppose,
is deeper than one ever could find.

They told us to stay away from “her”
because what “she's” got is a disease
in “her” mind and “her” body and with God
of course that is why “she's” never at ease.

I could never quite figure out why they said
that she was a freak of nature, that she's wrong.
How did they even find out about this thing
that she had kept secret for so very long?

All because someone found a letter on file
her secret's come out, and it is so strange.
Once a girl who was thought as funny or kind
now is a creature trapped by this change.

One day I decided to reach out and meet her
(even though they warned me to keep far away).
At lunch last week, I saw her seated alone
and I sat next to her to ease her dismay.

Like a hammer falling crying down
the story's puzzle found its place.
She told me her side of every story
of people saying those things to her face.

She already felt so alone and discouraged
having been born wrong, her body not home.
Everyone's tormented her for all of her life.
It's no wonder why she felt all alone.

“Forward Motion” - Jimmy Rich

She revealed how she envied me and the others,
how we'd never know the burden she carried.
She only wanted to be herself, she said, but
the reactions to that have been very varied.

And from that day since, I stuck by her side.
Always will I keep the two of us together.
The rumors and name-calling targeted me next:
but it doesn't matter; we have each other.