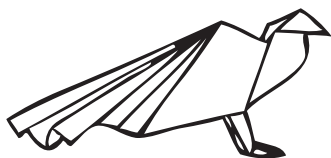


Ali Cravens

## Like I Am a Woman



I put on my costume day to day  
 Of stilettos and rouge and Vera Wang,  
 Outline my eyes and angle my cheeks  
 Guised as a delicate version of me  
 In my pretend dainty bones and wishful, thinned figurine.

Though my features smudge and smear together  
 And the fat smooths over my face,  
 I put on my costume every morning  
 And enter the feminine race.

*I am a woman*

I wail

From beneath the irregular curves that smother my middle.

*I am fragile*

I cry

From beneath the thickened flesh that enwraps my thighs.

*Look at me*

*Like I'm a woman*

*Petite and small and light  
Made of polish and lace and pearls and gloss  
And all the finer things in life*

All day this is what I scream,

From beneath the folds of fat and the chubby cheeks,

*I am a woman.*

*Look at me.*