Red Lip Stick Figures

Rushing, jittery, little girls skitter into the sanctuary
relish the three hundred seconds of freedom,
before the next thirty three hundred seconds of nightmarish
imprisonment
Hurriedly enter the cramped, tiled refuge
lined up like soldiers, packed in like sardines,
anxious teenage souls await the next open stall
Giggly, gossipy, lemon-headed waif apply midday masks
and groom beloved manes
Success-oriented scholars impatiently stand
near grimy, white, porcelain oases, trimmed in rust
Red-lipped, strutting, hip-hop chicks tug at massive denim trousers,
cuddle with Marlboros in the handicap cubicle
Sweet, young thins cackle and conform
to the laws of this unfriendly land
Scowling, pierced rebels shove sweet, dainty sugar and spice aside
to be first in the conga line
While alien life forms huddle around the overflowing trash can
ponder life meaning and hair dyes
Pungent clouds of perfume, acrid human odors, and adolescent attitudes
linger and coat sterile steel walls and precious, chipping mirrors
hang heavy in the stuffy, oppressive air
behind the door with the skirted stick figure

-Amy Vaerwewyck

slight of hand
lashed inside
being without the quintessential charms
others have
just naked glimpses of a self
and then joy in sorrow's truckbed
but no one
to share with

had some friends known it all
maybe
had they wanted to

-Kimberly Campanello