

Louder

She had a voice

Of that she was sure

But long ago had it retracted

Itself into her delicate stature

She was eleven

Not yet a woman

Still no longer childish

Kitchen battles and swinging fists

Had hardened her soul in its place

Hands over ears behind closet doors

She felt safest in silence's embrace

So she let not an opinion slip out

From between her pinkish lips

Rather, she tucked them away

Hands hung near hips

Eyes glued to the floor

Beneath her surface brewed

Dreams and thoughts

Of so much more

Years had past

She had long ago broke free

From the off-white walls

That had once kept her contained indefinitely

Now twenty-two

She remains muted

In each class she sits in the back

Stagnant and secluded

Oh, how she wishes

To speak her mind

But every time her lips start to move

Not a word can she find

The silence she once craved

Now, kept her tethered

Her greatest deficit

Her confidence had been weathered

In the mirror on a brisk October night

She decided for herself

She, too, deserves the right

To not be talked over or hushed

The next day was crisp
Fall was evolving into winter
she smiled to herself, slightly curling up her lip
As she stepped into her eight am lecture

The law professor blinked
Was that a look of confusion or surprise?
Maybe both maybe neither
He couldn't believe his eyes

Her hand
So pale, small, and slight
Not at her side but in the air
Confidently- witnesses might've added

"Yes?"

His

Voice

Echoed

As it escaped her throat
With regret her voice began to quiver
Only at first, just for a moment
A boy a few rows ahead began to snicker

But she blinked away tears
Fought back against the silence
That quieted her for years upon years
Triumphantly she uttered,

“I

Do

Not

Agree”

With what he had contested
The roundish man before her smirked
“Louder, dear” he jested
He had heard her

To her feet she rose
Opening her mouth to speak
Her mind poured out
Louder than ever before