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**Poem Title: Let girls, be girls**

You yell "Psst!" to me  
And ask me "Why don't I smile?"  
I start to walk faster  
My heart feels like its racing a 100 miles

I keep my head forward  
Try to keep my anger in check  
Clench my palms tightly  
And try not to give the harasser an inkling his words had any effect

I start to wish I didn't have dimples  
That my body didn't have any shape  
I am disgusted that this is the only road to walk to church  
It's the beginning of a young girl's self-body hate

The harassment happens over and over  
I start to self-medicate  
I'm told to ignore them  
And that's how men are today

Then the neighbor's adult son starts exposing his penis to me  
Whenever I go downstairs to hang clothes  
The home that's supposed to be a place of safety  
Suddenly feels like a prison that I loathe

I try to focus on my studies And  
make books my shield  
It's the only way out of here  
It's the only power that I wield

Sometimes the men are in a cluster  
That each yell a crude physical and sexual description of me  
Feeling that it's some sort of display of manhood  
If it is, it's one of a low pedigree

Even now as an adult woman  
I want to scream loudly "Enough!" or "Stop!"  
But then fear overtakes me  
And I'm reminded that, that's just how some men culturally are