

Why I became a feminist

The day my brother rescued me
drenched & dripping with lies,
their sheer sweaty musk,
I was contemplating
being swallowed by a copperhead,
a sluice pipe, the whole vastness
of the Dark Hollow pond
behind the school house, the one
no one knows the bottom of.

All of a sudden, I believed
in the old Testament,
full weight of the yellow sky
spotted with thunderclouds,
blue gray & freshly furrowed.
As if I came to the clean rind
of earth a mewling calf, then
woke to realize I was hollow
& ruined, ready for slaughter.

What did I know of enemies,
how they are made & kept
fueled by sorrow turned sour.
What I saw was a white VW
driving down the hill over
& over, my boyfriend at the
wheel. Leaving me behind.
The shift toward her. Me
turning even then. Toward spite.

Hell if I know, my brother told them —
all the hill kids after youth group —
when asked who wrote the slur
in the middle of the road.
Her father buying a gallon
of black paint, walking slowly
past the dirt road right below
the church, slopping it over
my heavy damning words.



Ellen Stone teaches at Community High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her poems have appeared recently in *Passages North*, *Rust+Moth*, *Lunch Ticket*, and *The Collagist*. Michigan Writers Cooperative Press published Ellen's poetry chapbook, *The Solid Living World*.

