

Jane Doe by Kiran

Does a doe ever rest?
Her eyes wide, ears pricked
Even as she chews, rhythmically
She listens.
Does her heart never leave her throat?

The womens arsenal is hidden;
Revealed by aunties, cousins, sisters,
Mothers in quiet lessons:

Frocks with *stockings.*
No *sleepovers;* *family* *only.*
Sidehugs *for* *male* *relatives.*
Cover *your* ----
Don't *take* *public* *transit*
No *makeup.* *Okay,* *only* *mascara.*
No *thongs.* *No* *lingerie.*
No *shaving,* *no* *waxing.*
Use *pads,* *tampons* *are* *for* ----
Ask *Dad* *when* *he's* *in* *a* *better* *mood.*
Make *sure* *you* *do* *it* *perfectly,* *or* *else.*
Don't *say* *no.* *Don't* *say* *yes.*
Definitely *don't* *argue.*
Must *shave,* *must* *wax.*
Shorts *under* *skirts*
Don't *dress* *like* *a* ----
Text *when* *you* *get* *there*
Bottled *beer,* *or* *shots* *only.*
Text *when* *you* *get* *home.*
Don't *walk* *alone;*
Don't *walk* *at* *night;*
Don't *take* *a* *cab;*
Don't *take* *public* *transit;*
Just, *don't* *go* *out.*
Don't *say* *no.* *Don't* *say* *yes.*
Definitely *don't* *argue.*
Don't *date.* *Get* *married.*
Don't *be* *too* *smart;*
Don't *be* *too* *rich;*
Don't *be* *too* *rich;*
Don't *be* *too* *rich;*
Don't *be* *too* *attractive* *(only* *for* *him);*
Otherwise, *you'll* *intimidate* *him.*
Ask *him* *when* *he's* *in* *a* *better* *mood.*

Make sure you do it perfectly, or else.
Don't say no. Always say yes.
Definitely don't argue.

The women's arsenal is broken;
Harken lessons that bleed over innocence
For there is no protection for prey.
Move in herds and listen well.
And if she is eaten, gobbled by the world-
Well, that's just natural. She probably
Deserved it.

She was wearing -----
She shouldn't have looked so ----
She shouldn't have slept over.
She shouldn't have;
Smiled or;
Hugged or;
Kissed or;
She should have;
Smiled or;
Hugged or;
Kissed him.
She shouldn't have taken that;

Drink;
Bus;
Taxi;
Uber;
Walk.
Why was she at that----, anyways?
She deserved it
He wouldn't have gotten angry if she had just;
Done it right;
Smiled;
Said yes;
Stayed quiet.
Why didn't she say no?
She deserved it.

Does a woman ever rest?
Her eyes wide, ears pricked
Even as she breathes, rhythmically
She listens.
Does her heart never leave her throat?