

Dear Straight Men

by Dakota Parks

after Denice Frohman's 'Dear Straight People'

You are not invited
I know that may sound exclusionary
Almost like being told no
a word which must be foreign,
odd, maybe “queer” to you
You are not invited
To eye fuck my girlfriend
while she is standing right next to me
You are not invited to
cross-interrogate us
asking
“but, how do you do it?”
“but, your fingers are so small.”
“but, why use a plastic reproduction
when you could just have the real thing?”
You are not invited
to offer your golden dick
on a silver platter
to fuck the gay out of us
You are not invited
to this holy trinity
me, her and some divine entity
me, her and definitely a vibrator
me, her and stop fucking asking
about a threesome, man
You are not invited to
search Pornhub for lesbian porn
then turn around and vote
to strip our rights away

I remember when I first came out to my mom
And she told me, without skipping a beat,
“I’m so glad, you’re not a man, because
it’s easier that way, you know...
people think it’s sexy... two women together.”

Yeah, I know all about that
So sexy, they either want to bash
my teeth in or make a man out of me
the minute they calculate that
I am not her friend, sister, cousin

She is all shea butter glimmery

three beers tipsy
red mini skirt and five-inch heel bravery
and I know, all she wants to do
is pull me onto the club dance floor
and show me what her ass looks like
in a different spotlight
I reluctantly agree, assuming position
of watching for men that are not invited
Men, who will grope, coddle, cop a feel
At the climax of her favorite song
she is so lost in kaleidoscopic energy
that she doesn't even notice me
face palm a man's entire face
to push him away from us
knee another man in the groin for
trying to shove his way between us
His elbow hitting my throat
as he mouths the word "move" to me

At the beach,
studying for finals
she is spitting thesis statements
at me, while I chew on poetry
sticking blades of grass in her bikini
my favorite form of flattery
Obnoxiously taking photos
of her body while she shakes
a notebook at me
When I look up,
too foolish to assume we are alone
there are eyes glued to us
five contractors
painting the same wall of a condo
with absolutely not a drop of paint
on their brushes
they are definitely not invited

On the subway in Chicago at 2am,
she laces her hands between mine
trying to anchor herself to a
false sense of security
maybe if I was a man, this is
how she would signal to the
group of men staring at her
that she is mine
but I am no match against

eight drunk men on the L
so, I pull away from her

My car is broke down in East St. Louis
we are waiting for a tow truck in the snow
at a biker bar full of more drunk men
I know all she wants to do is ease the tension
She wants to full-body laugh and lightly
brush my arm at a punch line
My eyes tell her not to touch me
But we haven't been dating long enough
for her to know my body language
when she brushes her hands on my hips
at the pool table, I tell her firmly now,
"You know I don't do PDA—it's not safe."
She erupts into anger
red, hot fury spilling from her mouth
screaming that I am ashamed of her
demanding that she is going to walk back to
Iowa by herself in a snowstorm

She has never dated a woman before
Who am I to tell her these rules?
Who am I to tell her our love is not authentic?
Who am I to tell her we have to prove our love is authentic?
Who am I to tell her this isn't a phase?
Who am I to tell her when it's safe to kiss me?
Who am I to tell her what defines safety?
Who am I to tell her she has an entire fucking lifespan to live
encountering men who are not invited?
Who am I to tell her that men will always think
they are invited, privileged, entitled?
Who am I