

DEAR READER...

Maybe you were a teenage girl once. Maybe you are a teenage girl right now. And maybe you know and love a teenage girl, or someone who was once. If you have picked up this book, you know that teenage-girlhood is special territory, the metaphorical dark woods through which every girl must walk. There are the facts of it, sure – hormones, highschool, bestfriends, crushes, cars; all the dreaded pressures and anticipated firsts. But it is also a time of great mystery, and magic, and initiation. A time of choosing where and how to go, and becoming who you're going to become; a time of facing harrowing obstacles and great change.

In other words: totally overwhelming.

We can't control the world teenage girls will inhabit and participate in creating. But if we could give them one charm to tuck into their pockets, it would be courage. So, in lieu of a sword, or a yellow brick road, here is a book. In it we have packed poems to shock you, and make you laugh, poems that will commiserate and grieve with you; poems that will inspire you, and give you what you need to face life with grace and guts. These are the poems we wish we had had when we were younger.

They're not all easy or "classroom friendly." And not every topic is covered and not every voice represented because one book can't contain it all. We selected each one for inspiring courage through voice. In this anthology there are mothers and daughters and cackling sisters; there are spells, warnings, myths, and knowing glances. This is a gathering of some of the most captivating voices in contemporary poetry today. You are going to come out of this party with at least three favorite poems. Pinky swear.

The Editors
Karen, Rachel and Mindy