

For the women who came before us

by Elizabeth Wright Veintimilla

“Yo quisiera haber tenido las fuerzas
para decir *algo* cuando tenía tu edad”
I wish I had the strength
to say *something* when I was your age

My mom admires me because
I go to protests
I share my opinion
I built my life the way I wanted to.

It makes me happy to know
she admires me
but I hope she knows
how much I admire her.

She didn't go to protests forty years ago,
but she joins me now.
She didn't share her opinion when she was younger,
but now she defends and protects mine.
She once couldn't build her life the way she wanted to,
but she supports me as I build my own.

Who brought you to the world
Who birthed you
What happened
before she gave birth to you?

It is not my story to share,
but I think that's why
she once said to me,
with a lot of pain and regret

“Yo quisiera haber tenido las fuerzas
para decir *algo* cuando tenía tu edad”
I wish I had the strength
to say *something* when I was your age.

Tell me
what does justice look like
for the women who came before us?

Elizabeth Wright Veintimilla is a gender specialist and feminist advocate from Quito, Ecuador. Having been raised by a widowed mother, she learned early on about the importance of women's autonomy and self-reliance. Her areas of interest and expertise include sexual and domestic violence, reproductive justice, migration and mental/emotional health. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Hampshire College and a Master's degree on Gender, Violence & Conflict from the University of Sussex. She is the creator of Picture Her Story and Me Voy de Casa, and currently leads a transnational feminist co-mentorship program with the Society of Gender Professionals. Ely is currently based in Stockholm, Sweden and recently joined RFSU, an organization that runs projects and programmes to promote access to sexual and reproductive health and rights — both in Sweden and internationally.