

# Poem for an inked daughter

JEAN WYRICK | FALL 2006

I did it too you know, just differently.  
Way back then  
when I was angry young  
I pierced my ears with a rusty ice pick,  
and willfully wore dangly earrings  
(and a smirk) to Christmas dinner.  
My scandalized mother  
referred to me for days as  
"my daughter, the dirty gypsy."  
I let my ears jingle silver music, ultimately  
dancing right over her Victorian disapproval  
out of that house forever.

And now here you are,  
fresh from a different kind of parlor,  
with that defiant dragon  
curling dark over your shoulder.  
No, of course you know I don't like it.  
Another gauntlet thrown down  
in the ongoing Mother-Daughter Wars.

But hear this, my own gypsy girl:  
I know something you don't.  
That under that fierce fire-breathing dragon,  
claws bared, ready for the next battle,  
under the skin where the purple ink turns to blood,  
your blood is my blood,  
rushing red to red, flowing in a long bond  
linking my heart to you no matter what,  
like the swirling, twisting lines  
of an intricate intimate tattoo,  
invisible, indelible, forever permanent.