



# Amnesty International

---

## RESOURCE SHEET 4

***Bedecked*** by Victoria Redel

---

Tell me it's wrong the scarlet nails my son sports or the toy  
store rings he clusters four jewels to each finger.

He's bedecked. I see the other mothers looking at the star  
choker, the rhinestone strand he fastens over a sock.  
Sometimes I help him find sparkle clip-ons when he says  
sticker earrings look too fake.

Tell me I should teach him it's wrong to love the glitter that a  
boy's only a boy who'd love a truck with a remote that revs,  
battery slamming into corners or Hot Wheels loop-de-looping  
off tracks into the tub.

Then tell me it's fine—really—maybe even a good thing—a boy  
who's got some girl to him,  
and I'm right for the days he wears a pink shirt on the seesaw in  
the park.

Tell me what you need to tell me but keep far away from my son  
who still loves a beautiful thing not for what it means—  
this way or that—but for the way facets set off prisms and  
prisms spin up everywhere and from his own jeweled body he's cast rainbows—  
made every shining true color.

Now try to tell me—man or woman—your heart was ever once  
that brave.

© Victoria Redel from *Swoon* (University of Chicago Press, 2003)