

BUTTERFLY GIRL

I overheard them laughing in the hall,
Four voices ripe with confidential tones.
My best friend said, "Where does she get the gall
To pour at tea and flash those tawdry stones?
And use mauve blusher with her dyed red hair?
Another said, "She must think she's a star.
Someone should tell her what she shouldn't wear.
Next thing you know she'll buy a purple car."
I waited till they left before I cried.
They never met the cowed and damaged soul
Beneath bravura hues and painted hide,
Or knew the fears I sometimes can't control.
How fragile is the monarch's jeweled wing;
How thin the gaudy shield is to a sting.

--Glenna Holloway