

# Generations

*Jayce Dawson*

I started smoking at fourteen  
I did it for a boy,  
The same boy painted my face  
And taught me to walk in 9 inch heels.

Visited by elders  
Who look like leather and lace  
And lines in their face from the years of  
Fighting

They tell me  
Fuck the expectation  
Fuck the norm  
Fuck whatever systems there are

And I am lucky  
I am so so lucky  
Because when i got arrested  
My face wasn't washed out in a mop bucket

I'm lucky  
Because my friends names aren't patches on a quilt  
Tucked away in the charity closet  
Next to the box of glitter  
And the overdue accounts

I find myself saying  
Fuck the expectation  
Fuck the norm  
Fuck whatever systems there are

Is my face lined yet?  
I hear stories of of kids  
Who's teachers bought them binders  
And rainbow bake sales

But the kids outside the bar still only look fourteen  
Do I look like leather and lace?  
Am I doing it right?  
Am I going to make something great for these kids?

I hope so