

My Big Sister's in the Music Industry

By Helena Trifillis

Vanessa Carlton sings about white houses. I'm sitting cross-legged on the living room couch, eyes wide, watching an empty bottle spin round and round on a scratched hardwood floor. It lands on my friend Jenny and I cradle my legs in my arms, rocking back and forth slightly, watching as she leans over to kiss one of the guys, I forget his name, and thinking to myself, "She's so pretty and she's so sure."

We wake up early for breakfast at the table, hungover with last night's mascara streaked across our faces. The only sustenance I can bring myself to conjure up is a bowl of raisin bran. Never was a cornflake girl, so I scooch in between Tori Amos and the other raisin girls and force feed myself soggy spoonfuls.

As I walk the concrete sidewalks of my adolescence, I hold my back straighter and head higher, trying on my teenage body with one hand in my pocket like Alanis.

My big sisters in the music industry piggybacked me along with them as they maneuvered through the growing pains of young adulthood, weaving their lyrical tapestries with the sage wisdom gained only from lived experience. The collective cry of heartbreak, nostalgia, and womanhood transmitted over radio waves. Each voice glimmering in its own mystic haze, melodies coalescing like glass wind chimes hung on the porch of your eclectic aunt's house. Traipsing my suburban neighborhood on a crisp fall day, their voices are pulsing through my headphones, reminding me it's ok to have seemingly endless and complex emotions. After all, girlhood contains multitudes. At some point or another, we're all a bitch, a lover, a child, a mother, a sinner, and a saint. And we should not feel ashamed.