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## Gone Wishing

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## Girl with the Mask

Ciara M. Lanham

**This is how you load the dishwasher; this is how you fold the towels; make sure you always wear your mask, just as if there were a crowd; always wear clean clothes to school;** brush your teeth and brush your hair; don't let your smile

slip or fade because someone could be there; always lock the doors at night, and sometimes in the day; it's not safe to walk outside at night; *it's not safe here either, why should I even stay*; don't talk about your life, just talk about the work; you'll have less time to chat if you don't try to finish first; always watch your brothers; *but they ask questions*; what do you say?; *I say that nothing's wrong, that we're all safe and we're okay*; make sure your shirt doesn't go too low and that it doesn't show too much; well, were you wearing a push up bra?; could you blame them for wanting a touch?; always ask permission before you make your plans; be prepared to cancel; time for dinner, wash your hands; run and check on brother; *is he sleeping or is he dead*; we all have our problems; *but they're getting in my head*; maybe if you had more faith or prayed a little more; maybe if you didn't walk around like such a little whore; no you can't press charges if it wasn't full on rape; *I just want a way out, an end or an escape*; now look at what you did to yourself, you'd better hide those scars; CPS may come and see and then they'll take you from us and you're ours; make sure you always burp the babies; make sure the dogs are fed; now go upstairs and try to sleep; *that's too much red*; have two cups of coffee before you leave, so you're awake; never let your friends inside, you never know what they might take; what'd you do to make him angry?; what'd you do to egg him on?; you need to watch your tone with him or he might run, then he'll be gone; this is how you make the sauce; this is how you check the oil; this is how you know that kids are rotten and are spoiled; you don't need help, you'll be fine, we have bigger fish to fry; here he comes, don't make him mad, don't look him in the eye; so what you lost two babies, some people, they lose three!; *I wonder if his words would change if the recipient were not me; you don't believe in God, you say?; now, you'll surely burn in hell; better there than here, I guess it's just as well; I'll try to go to sleep; I'll try to rest and close my eyes; for in the morning when I wake I'll have to put on my disguise.*



**Gone Wishing** Emily A. Angrisano