

GIRLS WILL MAKE YOU BLUSH

A play from Sweden by
Åsa Lindholm



SWEDISH
PERFORMING
ARTS COALITION

Scensverige / Swedish Performing Arts Coalition (SPAC) is an NGO with members representing the performing arts sector; the institutions, the independent artists and organizations, the universities, the employers organization and the union.

Our main objective is to facilitate and promote the development of the performing arts as well as support international collaborations and the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

The Swedish Performing Arts Coalition is supported by the Swedish Arts Council, and collaborates with the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Arts Grants Committee, the City of Stockholm, among others.

Translated by Rachel Willson-Broyles
Published by Swedish Performing Arts Coalition
scensverige.se

Printed by Enklapack, Malmö 2023

For inquiries concerning rights:

COLOMBINE TEATERFÖRLAG
WWW.COLOMBINE.SE

GIRLS WILL MAKE YOU BLUSH

by Åsa Lindholm
Translated by Rachel Willson-Broyles



ÅSA LINDHOLM

Åsa Lindholm (born 1975) is a playwright, dramaturg, director, and performer. Educated at the University College of Film, Radio, Television, and Theatre in Stockholm, she is currently a dramaturg at Kulturhuset Stadsteatern (Stockholm City Theatre). She has previously worked as a dramaturg at Gothenburg City Theatre and Uppsala City Theatre, as well as an artistic director at Teater Tribunalen.

Lindholm has written and/or directed for Stockholm City Theatre, Gothenburg City Theatre, Unga Klara, The Royal Dramatic Theatre, among others. Her plays have been translated into several languages. She has also worked with performance art in personal projects at Teater Tribunalen and with the Danish performance artist SIGNA.

She received the Ikaros Prize in 2006 for the radio production *Ett perfekt liv* (*A Perfect Life*), was nominated for the Nordisk Dramatikerpris in 2010 for her play *Omflickorkundedöda* (*If girlscouldkill*), and received the Henning Mankell Scholarship in 2017 and the Swedish Ibsen Society Prize in 2020. A production of her play *Snubben lättar på sitt hjärta* (*The dude opens up*) was selected for SPACs Swedish Biennial for Performing Arts 2019.

Girls will make you blush
By Åsa Lindholm

Coreography/director Mari Carrasco/Gustav Demoff
Set design Jenny Kronberg
Light design Johan Sundén
Costume design Farah Yusuf & MyNa Do
Mask design Daniela Krestelica
Composer Dijle Neva Yigitbas (Neva Deelay)
Traum, Maria Salah, Rita Lemivaara
Publisher Colombine Teaterförlag
Technical coordinator Kristian Nielsen
Producer Katta Pålsson

Original production: Unga Klara, Västmanlands Teater,
Carrasco Dance Company

Original ensemble:
Bianca Traum, Elin Hallgren, Ellen Nyman, Malin Cederblad, Rita Lemivaara, Sandra Medina

The becoming of a woman is one of the most important and urgent topics that you can possibly talk about. How does society relate to a girl that takes her physical steps out of childhood? Is female sexuality as gentle, fragile and non-existent as they say? Why is menstruation so stigmatized that even in tampon commercials it's shown as transparent and blue?

Girls will make you blush is a combination of dance and theatre that moves within the minds and bodies of girls during puberty. An energetic, fast-paced and funny performance wherein the voices of young girls are loud and shameless. Direct and disarming with a serious sense of humor.

**WE'RE NOT SORRY - WE'RE THE
MOTHERFUCKING GIRLS!**

D So what do you call it?

E What?

D I mean, you know, it, like, your privates.

F My privates?

D What do you call it?

E Uh, nothing special.

D What about you?

F Nope.

D Come on, share. What do you call it? Do you say coochie?

E That's what they call it at, like, preschool.

D So what?

F So you say coochie?

D Maybe not always.

C Vagina.

E Oh, eww!

C What?

E That's such a gross word.

D Doctors use it.

F What if your doctor said privates?

E Eww even more.

C What if your doctor said coochie?

F Fucking pedo-doctor.

F I mean, how often do you really talk about it anyways?

D Are you joking?

F Why would I talk about it?

D You have to talk about it.

F Why?

C What if it gets itchy?

D Or it hurts?

C Or it's horny?

F My coochie is horny, who says that? Like it's a person.

D No, maybe not, but what, is it sick to talk about your genitals?

E Your "genitals."

D Quit it, why do you think all these words are gross?

C Cunt.

F What?

C I say cunt.

F You do not.

C Yeah I do, I say cunt.

F When did you ever say cunt, I've never heard you say cunt a single time.

C Cunt.

D But cunt is what you say when you're mad.

C Cunt cunt cunt.

E Eww.

D Now what's the problem?

E I just pictured something nasty.

C What was it?

E I mean, you just don't talk about stuff like this.

C I do.

D Me too.

F I don't want to say coochie; it's too precious. Like a porcelain serving set.

C So say cunt.

F Cunt sounds hairy.

E Whory?

F Hairy!

E Oh.

D Do you have hair?

E Do we have what?

D Hair! Do you have hair?

E Eww.

D Quit it!

C Of course we have hair.

F What? Speak for yourself.

D Come on, how old are you, of course you have hair.

F Maybe we wax.

C No way!

D Maybe the hair's there for a reason.

E Just think of all the stuff that would get caught in it, ewwww!

D Give it up, how long do you think the hair is?

C It's only, like, this long.

F I shave off everything except for a tiny bit right here.

D Why?

F Don't know. I just do.

D But you don't know what to call it.

F Well like . . . I know, but . . .

D It has to be pretty, but no fucking way it gets to have a name.

C Cunt, it's called. Cunt.

E I refuse to say cunt! That's gross!

C Is not.

E Yes it is, that's the kind of thing gross boys shout at you downtown. Why don't you smile, you fucking cunt?

D Take away fucking and you've taken away the bad word.

C Smile, cunt.

E I don't know, exactly.

C Why do we make our cunts look pretty? It's not like we show them off.

D Don't we?

F It's so they fit in our clothes.

D What do you mean?

F Well, like thongs, so nothing sticks out.

D But why do you wear thongs?

F So there's no panty line.

E Under your pants.

C Who cares?

F So it doesn't look like you have a fat ass.

E So it doesn't look like you have four buttcheeks.

F Instead of two.

E A camel toe, so fucking ewww.

D A camel toe?

C Like, a camel's foot, it looks like a cunt. If you wear like super tight pants, people can see the shape of your cunt through them.

D Like this?

E Ewwwwww!

D Look at my camel toe, my motherfucking camel toe . . .

C Um hello, so did you shave the camel?

E I don't know you.

Not saying much.

Watching.

Acting like I'm not looking, not noticing.

But I see it all.

My body is stiff. Protecting itself. But inside it is raging.

Inside, I dart across wide spaces. I am lightning.

What you see isn't me. I'm not ready yet.

I am under construction and the image I'm aiming for is there inside.

My face isn't supposed to look like this; it will be much prettier later. And my body, it's not finished yet, it will fix itself.

So please don't look at me too closely right now. Wait until I'm done.

Then I will stand in the center of the room, not invisible in a corner.

A First question.

B Okay.

A You're out in public —

B Okay.

A And suddenly you feel something between your legs —

B Uh . . . okay?

A It's your period starting, and there's tons of blood.

B Okay . . .

A It just keeps coming.

B Okay . . .

A What do you do?

B Uhhhh . . . How much blood?

A I mean like several liters.

C Hold on, do you know how much blood comes out during an entire period? Huh? Half a deciliter! You know that?

A Sure, but for this example there's more, okay?

C But no one bleeds that much.

A You don't know that.

C Come on! Ask a doctor. Or anyone.

B Can I answer the question or what?

A Yeah, answer it.

C Look, if that much comes out you have to lie head straight to the hospital because it's like dangerous to lose that much blood.

A Oh my God, stop, you're ruining my whole game!

B Okay, go on.

A Let's start over. If you like get blood on your pants while you're at a friend's, what do you do?

B Run home without saying goodbye.

C Throw my pants in the fire.

A What fire?

C Well, like if there's a fire somewhere nearby.

A Totally normal.

D But then wouldn't you be naked?

C No, I would have changed clothes first.

A Okay?

E I always have pads and extra underwear with me.

B I've bled through every pad in existence. I can't go mountain climbing. Or, I can, but I always have to plan it out and know when I'll be on my period and when I have it I'm always scared scared scared the whole time that someone can tell, or smell it, but I have no freaking clue why . . . what would happen, why can't we just walk around and let it flow?

A Okay, you forgot to bring a pad, what do you do?

B Ask a friend.

C Go to the school nurse.

D Stuff a bunch of toilet paper in my underwear.

E Take a sock from my gym bag and put that in my underwear.

F Cry and go home.

A That would never, ever happen to me. I always have a pad with me and even when I'm not on my period I use a pantyliner. I mean, a perfumed pantyliner. I don't want anyone to smell me. The most disgusting thing ever is when you use the bathroom after some old lady and the whole bathroom smells like old lady cunt.

I would like die. I will never smell like that. The worst thing that could ever happen to me is if someone said I smelled bad — down there.

There is crotch perfume you can buy, except not in Sweden, but you can order it online. I have used regular perfume, but that didn't go so well.

B What happened?

A I don't want to talk about it.

D I don't think you're supposed to put perfume down there.

A If you want to smell, I guess that's your choice.

C It's supposed to smell! Seriously.

B What is it supposed to smell like?

C Meat.

B Meat?

A Unfortunately, I'm a vegetarian.

C If you put perfume down there, you'll ruin everything.

F Then why are there perfumes for it?

D Because people are sick!

Period etiquette:

* Do not discuss menstruation with anyone other than your mom, your doctor, and your best female friends. You might possibly be able to discuss it with a male partner in a long-term relationship, but that totally depends on how he feels about it.

* Keep all signs of menstruation hidden. Don't leave any spots of blood on the floor, towels, sheets, or chairs. Make sure that nothing leaks through your clothing and that no edges of your pad are visible.

* Menstruation is dirty, gross, and shameful, and so it must be hidden.

* The socially acceptable practicalities of menstruation cause anxiety and irritation for women.

* A woman who doesn't hide her menstruation is not normal.

I'm on my period right now. Blood is flowing from between my legs

Oh, you think that's gross? Why? Blood is clean. Blood is life.

Admit it, you too like to stick your hand down there, like this.

Do the bloody hand

Horror movie, Carrie when she sticks her hand up out of her grave

It's not tons of blood, just a little now and then

If I move, it might gurgle and then make a little puddle

I sit in the bathtub, and then it's like a long red string in the water

They say the blood water is supposed to be good for your skin

They say girls are extra smart when they're bleeding

That's why people hid them away in the olden days

Because when the girls were bleeding they couldn't be controlled anymore

because they realized that everything the men said to them was false They

say that blood is a superpower. Witches used to bake bread of our blood

and give it to those who were going to war

These days we don't give our blood away anymore

Because now we're the ones at war

They say that any place you happen to spill a drop of blood, you have the lawful right to own. They say that soon we will have spilled so much blood that we'll own the entire world.

They say that blood is what makes you a woman. But I say it's the woman

that makes the blood.

All of a sudden I think about what they look like naked
And then I can't stop thinking about it. Naked, they're naked. Don't think about their genitals, at least — Agh! Now I'm thinking about their genitals In great detail. Hair. Size. No, this is so mortifying!

My teacher, we're supposed to have a progress meeting
And then I picture him naked

One time a song on the radio made me horny. No one had even touched me. I just got horny all on my own Well, what was I supposed to do?

I was the only one there

Sometimes I touch myself and pretend it's someone else.

But sometimes it's just me

And I don't even need anyone

I draw a picture of my own face I kiss my own mouth

A Where are you going with that fat ass?

B I'm going out on the hunt, this fat ass gets phat love.

A Are you an ass-lover or a tits-lover?

B Ass-lover, of course

A Who

B Him

A Oh, him

B And there, total tits-lover, hello, hi, come on, look over here

A Oh no, how adorable

B Face all red

A So cute

B It's nothing to be ashamed of, you know

A No, we swear

B It happens to all of us

A You can train it not to do that
B When you get a little older, more experienced
A Someday
B In a few years
A Oh God, I'm all sweaty
B I know, right?
A But I am
B Well take off your shirt then, just do it
A What? I have to cool off, don't I?
B Show your boobies, just do it
A It's not my fault they're so freaking awesome, is it?
B No, right, obviously not
A I mean I hate wearing bras
B Bras are for old people
A People who are like twenty-five, thirty
B Like old-ass wrinkly pancake boobs
A Ewww
B The pencil test
A What
B Where you can stick a pencil under your breast and it stays there, so sick
A But that's impossible
B Not for old ladies
A Ewwww
B Oh, you've got your Victoria's Secret
A Mhmm, yeah, I've got five of them
B Ohhh
A What are y'all staring at?
B I know, right?
A A person can't get any privacy even in a locker room

B Just sick

A Can't change clothes in peace and quiet, everyone has to take a peek

B Can you hide me while I change

A Okay

B And don't look

A Okay okay

B You looked

A No I didn't

B Yes you did

A Yeah, but I didn't see anything

B But you wanted to

A Yeah but, I mean, no I didn't

B Oh my god, like, how disgusting, what the fuck is wrong with all of you

A Listen, not everyone has gotten theirs yet

B Well that's not my fault, I'm not some porn star you can all just stare at

A No

B No, exactly, so quit it

A Well, and you're hot

B Okay . . .

A Maybe that's why we look

B Okay but and

A Must be nice

B No, because you know what, you're not the ones I want to be looking, like,
ewww A But it's a compliment

C It's normal to look at each other

B Fine, then go ahead, go be normal with each other instead and leave me
alone

A You can kiss your female friends without being a lesbian

D Or you're a lesbian

B Who here has kissed a girl — are you kidding
C Nope
B Have all of you kissed a girl
A Told you
B I don't believe you
A Then don't
B So do it, prove it to me
C Never
B Just do it
D You don't kiss just because someone tells you to
E The mood has to be right and stuff
B I mean, I didn't know it was so normal
A No, but it is
F It's super normal
B Can't you kiss me? Just so I don't feel left out
A I mean
B You don't have to use tongue
A Okay but
B What
A Not in front of everyone else
B Where
A Let's go over here, behind here
B Okay, hold on, we'll be right back
Where am I? I can't see myself anywhere
If you're to be believed, you people in charge
Who are you?
If you're to be believed, it seems that I'm all wrong Don't fit in
Look the wrong way

Too tall

Too fat

The wrong shape of nose The wrong hair

The wrong feet Never cute

Always different from you

Always sticking out, but in the wrong way

Sorry sorry I say sorry even though I didn't do anything

I look like this and other people look like this I should see myself

See myself everywhere Because now

If you're to be believed, it seems like you don't think I should exist?

How a woman moves:

A woman doesn't open up her body in her everyday movements She sits, stands, and walks with her limbs close to her body

She doesn't stretch She doesn't reach out

She doesn't bend down She doesn't lean over

She doesn't exert herself physically until she is sweaty and red in the face.

She doesn't make use of the space she has access to

A woman concentrates one movement on one body part Her body is a burden which she must drag around. At all times a woman must protect it against attack.

"Do you think you're special or something" "Do you think you're pretty or something" "Oh my god, what a huge fat ass"

I know so fat

You know you want it Oh give me that ass Take it if you want it

Aw, you're way too tiny for me anyway Not you, not you, not you, and not you I am a queen, got it

I am a motherfucking queen What are you staring at

Haven't you ever seen a pretty girl before
Ohhh ohhhh you waaaaaant me Come on, come on
Skinny thing
Don't talk to my friend, okay I'll eat you up
Where are you going
This place is for adults you know Grow up and come back in five Five years,
that is
What do you want with me, do you want me or Go ahead and stare, that's
all you're getting Come on then, you wouldn't dare anyway Weak as you are
Poor
You think I care what you think
I don't give a shit

I can get whoever I want, got it
See these, good, you're not getting any closer than that to a pair like this
Look but don't touch
Why are you holding your hand there, are you trying to hide something
What, you like me that much, oh my god, and here I was about to sunbathe
topless Too much for you, huh
Go see the little girls instead, they like to play
I don't play like that anymore
I only play in bed — oh no, what did I tell you! Slut
Bitch Naughty girl
Oh spank me spank me Oh oh oh
Are you blushing
Sorry 'bout that
We're just playing around a little
Don't play with fire
If you can't handle the heat

What a saying, right?

I am:

"Oops, excuse me, I didn't see you"

I am:

"Oops, she can talk?"

I am:

"Oops, we forgot to put you on the class roster" "Oops we forgot to put you on the guest list"

I am the girl who only has friends who don't know me in real life

I am the girl who will never be kissed I am the girl who no one remembers

I stand in the corner when you stand in the center

I dream about a boy who is super cute, way too cute for me, and I make him crush on me harder and harder until he is totally crazy in love and then, when he's so in love that he can't even think or defend himself, then I'm going to shit all over him and treat him like crap. And when he says he loves me, I'll laugh. I'll be super mean and I'll laugh, and I'll walk away.

A Okay, everyone has to say something that has inspired them, who wants to start?

B Me, I can?

A Okay, go ahead.

B So, I read a book by this girl named Strindberg and it was so freaking good.

C Excuse me?

B What?

C Did you say a girl named Strindberg? B Yeah? So?

A What's the problem?

C Strindberg was a man.

A Maybe it was a different Strindberg then.

B Yeah, anyway, she wrote this book called The Red Room.

C Yeah but that's that Strindberg.

B Okay?

C The man.

B But, I mean, as I understood it, Strindberg was a girl.

A Doesn't matter.

C It matters an awful lot!

A To who?

C To Strindberg!

A Okay, give him a call then.

C He's dead!

B I mean —

C What?

B She's not dead.

C He! Is dead!

B Excuse me, but I just read a whole book by her and I should know if it was a girl who wrote it, right?

C But it wasn't.

B How can you be so sure?

C August Strindberg is a very famous MAN!

A Have you met Strindberg?

C No! He's dead!

A So you don't know, you're just guessing.

C I'm not guessing.

B Me neither. I mean, I hate to say this, but I don't think a man could write like this.

A Tell me more.

B Well, like the language, it moves between abstract and concrete, it has this blend of earth and air and I relate to it so much —

C The Red Room was written by August Strindberg in 1879. That novel was his big break! His!

A Do you believe everything you read online?

B I'm thinking of changing my name to August, it's such a pretty name. D It is really pretty.

A Shall we move on?

D Yeah, I can tell mine. I'm really inspired by a female playwright I discovered. A Awesome.

D Yeah, she's written tons of plays, many of them with historical themes. There's this one play about a princess for example that's really good.

A Which one is that?

D Her name is Hamlet.

A Cool.

D Akún aw lá akún.

C Why did you say that?

D It's from the play. It's Arabic. To be or not to be. Really deep. Life or death, which should you choose. Most of her plays have typical girl-talk themes like that. So I would say that Shakespeare, she's my greatest inspiration right now.

There is a lot of hair on my body

All over

On my arms Toes

Legs

The insides of my thighs Chest

Belly Upper lip Chin Cheeks Eyebrows

I wish it were white hair instead of black. I hate albinos. You have it so good. While you put all your energy into changing the world, I'm going to put mine into waxing my body hair. I have to say, that was a really good plan you all came up with.

I'll do it later.

Later when my face is smooth and pimple-free. Later when I've gotten rid of my double chin. Later when my hair is long and glossy.

Later when my arms are muscular. Later when my belly is flat.

Later when my thighs don't touch.

Later when my butt is firm.

Later when my teeth are bleached. Later when my nails are long.

Later when I don't have back fat.

Later when my calves are tight.

Later when my kneecaps are fat-free. Later when my tear ducts are smaller.

Later when my lips are swollen.

Later when my body hair has been eradicated. Later when my fingers are wrinkle-free.

Later when my nose is snot-proof. Later when my breath is pre-perfumed.

Later when my breasts can hold themselves up. Later when my cheekbones have been moved up. Later when my eyelashes are longer than my nails. Later when my nails are longer than my tongue.

Later when my tongue is bump-free. Later when my shoulders are fat-free.

Later when my head is bigger than my body.

Later when I can use a macaroni noodle as a bracelet. Later when I can live for a whole day on one raisin.

Later when I'm too tired to laugh at your jokes.

Later when I'm totally perfect but also totally, totally wrecked and totally totally exhausted. Then I'll go out and do everything.

Then I'll show myself off.

Hi . . . I'll say.

And that's all I'll have the energy for.

Better and better and better and better It will only get better

It will get better In a few years

You'll see, it will get better

For you, too

The hell it will, it will get worse

Worse and worse and a body I don't even want

A life I don't even want to live

Genitals I don't even want to have

What did you call me? What did you call me! No Don't say it!

Don't say anything! Don't call me anything!

I don't want to be one thing or the other

I want to be Axel Oxenstierna Nils von Fersen

Queen Christina King Carl Gustav Abraham Lincoln Martin Luther King

Michael Jackson Missy Elliott

Tina Fey Lindsay Lohan

Mark Levengood Muhammad Ali

Serena Williams Olof Palme David Bowie Justin Bieber Gudrun

Schyman Linda Lovelace Greta Garbo Ingmar Bergman Robert de Niro

Victoria Beckham Kim Kardashian Alexander the Great Socrates

Sten Sture the Elder Maja Gräddnos Batman

Batgirl Batwoman

Batboy, Batbat, Batbatbat with a bat and a fucking bat

A What ARE you?

B No one can tell what you ARE.

C How am I supposed to introduce you if I don't know what you ARE?

D Don't you get it, everyone's going to avoid you.

E Because you're weird.

A Because we can't tell what you are.

B You have to choose, you can't just not choose.

C Because that makes it really really hard for everyone!

D If you don't tell what you are —

E Then we'll make you.

A We'll make you choose.

B We'll take off all your clothes so we can see the proof.

C And then we'll write the proof on your forehead. In permanent marker.

D You can't walk around being something you're not. You are what you're born as. Period.

E You are what you're born as. Period.

F Yes, I am who I am, and if you force me, if you rip off all my clothes, if you write on my forehead in permanent marker, if you lock me up, if you legislate against me, if you forcibly sterilize me, if you forbid me from having a family, if you refuse me healthcare, if you refuse me food and shelter, if you forbid me to work, if you call me filthy, if you call me an animal — you will still never be able to change who I am. Do you remember Nelson Mandela? She was a great leader of her people. She never gave up. Even though she was imprisoned for many years. Do you remember Mahatma Gandhi? How she fought for the rights of her people without ever lifting a hand in violence. And Rosa Parks, do you remember him? The man who refused to sit in the back of the bus. The man who refused to agree that he was worth any less than someone else. They fought for their rights and we fight too, every day, to be who we want to be. So let me be me.

Shining eyes Shining skin

Her heart beats; I can feel it but I can't see it

I know there is a heart in there, lungs, blood vessels pumping

Liters of blood are in there, making her skin warm when I touch it

How far can you throw

How far

How do you throw

Do you throw like this or with your whole body

How do you throw with your whole body

And she shows me

Her whole body flashing like lightning before my eyes Bam, she throws

Far, far, far

And her heart, her blood, her heart And I get warm between my legs.

"What are you doing?"

NOTHING! I'm not doing fucking anything! I'm just standing here.

"Why do you look so grumpy?"

Do I have to be happy?

"Shit, why are you so angry?"

DO I HAVE TO BE HAPPY TOO???

This is my face. It looks like this.

You can't tell me how my face should look.

No, it does not make me happy when you comment on my appearance. I never asked for your opinion.

I never asked you to approach me.

Yes, I'm angry.

Because I can never go out.

If I don't look busy.

Read a book. Talk on the phone. Read the paper. Talk to a friend.

Radiate hatred. That works too.

If you succeed.

I try. To radiate hatred.

I'm standing here.

Why is it so hard to leave me alone? What motivates you?

What is so fun about talking to someone who doesn't want to talk?

What is so fun about someone who says no? Do you get off on coercion or something?

Has society made you so sick that you think it's sexy?

You are disgusted by people who dare to show that they want you.

You are the hunters, not us.

So get out of here, go hunt, and don't come down the street just to bother me. I'll stand here as long as I please. And don't you fucking bother me.

B I got hair under my arms when I was nine. So I never took off my shirt.

Once I tried to shave, but I cut myself and blood spurted all over the bathroom.

E The hair on my face was so dark that it looked like a beard. Do you remember that boy in South America who had a coat of fur all over his body. That was me.

F I even had hair on my chest.

C I had such long hair on my hands that I used to braid it during class.

A I got breasts when I was seven. And they were covered in hair.

Curly hair.

D I gained twenty pounds every time I got my period. Then I had anorexia for three weeks until my next period.

E I killed my hamster when I had PMS.

F I bashed my dad's car with a baseball bat when he said I seemed PMS-y.

B I called in a bomb threat at my school.

D I invaded Russia.

B I had such bad periods that I had to use three tampons at the same time.

C I had to wear my little brother's diapers at night so I wouldn't bleed all over everything.

D I used a roll of paper towel.

B My cramps were so bad I had a personal anesthetist who would put me to sleep when the pain got too bad.

A I used to leave my body during my period and look down at myself from the ceiling.

E I once died of anemia. Then they renewed me.

F You mean they revived you.

C I had so much baby fat that I could use it as an inner tube when I went swimming.

E I was so skinny that I was invisible from the side.

B I once cut myself on my own ribs.

A I had the most pimples of anyone at school.

C I had so many pimples that you couldn't see my mouth.

D I had seventy pimples on my butt.

E I had a thousand pimples on my back. I used to rub my back against sandpaper.

F I filled the bathtub with my dad's vodka, because I heard that alcohol was supposed to dry them out.

A I used to eat toothpaste.

B Aren't you supposed to put it on your skin?

A Yes, but I didn't find that out until years later.

C In my family, it was so shameful to become a woman that everyone had to wear black when I got my period.

B My family hired professional house-criers who sat around crying during my entire period. A When I got my period, I had to live on the balcony so no one would see me by accident.

F My mom baked a cake with the blood from my first period.

D My mom smacked me in the face.

E My mom said, "What have you done, you filthy whore?"

F Uh.

A Okay.

E Sorry. Maybe that was going a bit too far.

A Know who is so hot?

B Nope.

A Yeah you do. Me!

B But look at me — so fucking hot!

A Yeah. Mega hot.

B Like, we are so hot.

A Know who is so ugly?

B Nope.

A Yeah you do. Me!

B But look at me — so fucking ugly.

A Yeah. Mega ugly.

B Like, we are so ugly.

You don't know anything about me

Because if you knew, you wouldn't call me those words

Because it has nothing to do with who I am

It's just about the way I move and the way I exist in this space

Threatening you

I'm not interested in listening to you

I don't want to sit in the bleachers, applauding you I don't admire you

I don't care about you I don't obey you

I am so far ahead of you that I can't even hear the pathetic words you're shouting after me

The only ones who hear are your moms, and they are ashamed of you You call us dirty words

You insult us if we speak up

The only ones here who have sold themselves are all of you

You have sold yourselves to what is old, obsolete

You think you can do what people have always done, throughout time But it won't work anymore

You think you can violate us unpunished

But you can't

You are the losers, you end up at the bottom And the words you roar from
the depths

Who cares?

You're just angry

Angry and scared Because we are up here.

And you are down there





This is a publication was made by Scensverige
Printed by Enklapack, December 2023
scensverige.se

GIRLS WILL MAKE YOU BLUSH

Åsa Lindholm

Translated by Rachel Willson-Broyles



**SWEDISH
PERFORMING
ARTS COALITION**



Read more
Swedish
plays and
excerpts in
translation