

Phenomenal Woman

BY MAYA ANGELOU

Pretty women wonder where my
secret lies.

I'm not cute or built to suit a
fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.

I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man,
The fellows stand or

Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.

I say,
It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me.
They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.

When I try to show them,
They say they still can't see.

I say,
It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile,

The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.

I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing,
It ought to make you proud.

I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
the palm of my hand,
The need for my care.

'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Society today is always changing the idea of what perfection is. The poem *Phenomenal Women*, by Maya Angelou tells a secret about the unrealistic idea of perfection, and the concept of self-love. The portrait I used is of my friend, with her fist powerfully in the air. I chose this picture because it shows a fire that every woman should have. As for the hippie effect, I chose this because I believe that the time period was a good example of a time for feminism and women to really push themselves forward in society. Maya Angelou's view is to have women push themselves to love themselves. She believes that all women are phenomenal, and all women should believe that they are phenomenal. Women are taught to dislike themselves today, and Angelou is telling women to rebel and actually like their style. With that, my piece inspires women and girls to be phenomenal.

Sophie Lyons

Stamford High School – Grade 11