

# Play My Hand

*by Dee Allen*

---

When it came to classroom projects  
And the teacher asked students  
To choose whomever they wanted  
To be on a team with, I was

Either picked  
Dead last

Or passed  
Over entirely.

Only once  
During a labour studies class in college

Was I  
Chosen first

In a group classroom project.  
First pick  
At the business end  
Of an Italian chick's finger.

She wasn't my type.  
She wasn't a Goth [ as I lived then ].  
Probably wanted me for something  
Other than a classroom project.

Didn't feel like  
I won anything.  
Didn't feel  
Accomplished that day—as a fifth wheel.

I play my hand  
With the marked cards I'd been dealt

Bound to cheat me  
Out of a real victory.

---

[ For Marjorie Lotfi. ]