“I’m not that Girl”

By Rhianna Fillers
Hands touch, eyes meet
Sudden silence, sudden heat
Hearts leap in a giddy whirl
He could be that boy
But I’m not that girl

Don’t dream too far
Don’t lose sight of who you are
Don’t remember that rush of joy
He could be that boy
But I’m not that girl

Ev’ry so often we long to steal
To the land of what-might-have-been
But that doesn’t soften the ache we feel
When reality sets back in

Blithe smile, lithe limb
She who’s winsome, she wins him
Gold hair with a gentle curl
That’s the girl he chose
And heaven knows
I’m not that girl...

Don’t wish, don’t start
Wishing only wounds the heart
I wasn’t born for the rose and pearl
There’s a girl I know
He loves her so
I’m not that girl...

Purple = personification  Pink = repetition  Blue = anaphora  Italics = parallelism
The English Teacher Approach

The author’s use of repetition of the last two lines in the first and second stanzas help the reader to understand kind of what this girl is going through: how she feels that she has met the right boy, but she feels like he doesn’t think she is the girl he is looking for. When the author uses personification, he paints the picture more clearly. For instance in line three when it says “hearts leap in a giddy whirl” it gives the picture of a heart leaping which helps the reader understand the joy this girl feels when she sees or touches this boy. The parallelism and anaphora in the second stanza helps the poem flow for the reader.
The Realistic Approach

I’ve witnessed this poem in my life two or three times, so I can relate to the speaker. I start to really like one guy only to find that he really likes my best friend or someone prettier than I am. I’ve thought, “I must not be what he’s looking for,” more than once, but wishing is sometimes the only thing that keeps me from tears, so even if “wishing only wounds the heart,” I will try to keep my hopes up for the right man to come along.
“I’m not that Girl”

Hands touch, eyes meet
Sudden silence, sudden heat
Hearts leap in a giddy whirl
He could be that boy
But I’m not that girl

Don’t dream too far
Don’t lose sight of who you are
Don’t remember that rush of joy
He could be that boy
But I’m not that girl

Ev’ry so often we long to steal
To the land of what-might-have-been
But that doesn’t soften the ache we feel
When reality sets back in.

a  Blithe smile, lithe limb  a
b  She who’s winsome, she wins him  a
b  Gold hair with a gentle curl  b
b  That’s the girl he chose  c
b  And heaven knows  c
b  I’m not that girl...  b

a  Don’t wish, don’t start  a
b  Wishing only wounds the heart  a
b  I wasn’t born for the rose and the pearl  b
b  There’s a girl I know  c
b  He loves her so  c
b  I’m not that girl...  b

underlined = alliteration
pink = assonance
Musical Approach

The first line of stanzas one and two are trocheeic dimeter, the majority of the rest of the stanza is in trimeter with trocheeic and amphibrach. This produces a beat type rhythm that you can tap your foot to. The author chose this type of rhythm to make the poem flow better. The beginning and ending lines are different because that’s a good way to start and end a stanza.
The Allusion Approach

The song “I’m not that Girl” has a connection with Cinderella in the sense that she doesn’t think that she is good enough for the prince when she goes to the ball and dances with him. Like Cinderella, the girl singing “I’m not that Girl” doesn’t feel like she’s good enough for this boy she’s got a crush on.
Setting: At a school called Shiz.

Protagonist: Elphaba, a green witch

Conflict: man vs. man Elphaba and Galinda are fighting over a boy (Fieyero) who like Galinda, but Elphaba likes him.

Obstacle: feeling of unworthiness

Elphaba and Galinda become friends.

Elphaba and Fieyero start hanging out.

Elphaba and Fieyero kiss.

Fieyero realizes it’s not Galinda whom he loves, but Elphaba.

Tension mounts between the trio.

Elphaba and Fieyero get married, and Galinda is a very good family friend now.

Speaker: Elphaba
Thematic Approach

People often misjudge themselves. “I’m not that Girl” is a song about a girl who doesn’t think she is good enough for a boy. As it turns out, at the end of the story, her qualities happen to be just what this boy is looking for in a girl. This goes to show that she had the wrong picture of herself in her head, causing her to be down on herself when it really was unnecessary.
Significant Event Approach

One of Stephen Schwartz’s musical’s bombed when it was showing, proving that he was not the right man for the job just like Elphaba is not the right girl for Fiyero, or so she thinks.
The Art History Approach

Sudden heat

Heart leaps in a giddy whirl

symbolic of happiness that Elphaba longs to feel

Wounds the heart

Blithe smile

Hands touch

Gold hair with a gentle curl

stereotypically, the boy would fall for the blonde

Lithe limb

this is symbolic because it means ready to bend.

Elphaba would be ready to bend to whatever Fieyero wants her to do

Lithe limb

Elphaba would be ready to bend to whatever Fieyero wants her to do

Long to steal

The images in this song help to paint a picture for the reader in his or her mind, helping him or her to better understand what the speaker is going through. This helps the meaning by putting more emphasis on things you need to see to believe.

Pink = symbolic

Eyes meet

this is symbolic because it means ready to bend.
The Structural Approach

This poem shifts from being happy to being melancholy in line 6 when it says that you shouldn’t dream. Then it shifts back to kind of happy at line 11, but goes right back to being dramatically sad at line 13. These shifts help us to see the everyday ups and downs of the average teenage girl.