FRESH AND HUNGRY is a collection of short stories about young women who must reconcile their divided cultural identities through the dynamics of their relationships with men, standards towards infidelity, sexuality, domestic abuse, and the pursuit of their own intellectual and professional ambitions.

The collection describes the evolution of feminine identity in the lives of ten women from different cultural backgrounds at different stages of their life to show the circle of experience that forms a woman’s sense of self and the way she perceives the world around her. Each story reflects a turning point in the journey of self-discovery and emotional maturation of the protagonist comparable to the subject matter in Mary Gaitskill’s collection of short stories, Bad Behavior.

The stories are linked by one year that each of the protagonists spent living in the same boarding house in Paris. This is based on my own experience of having lived in the home of Countess de Beaumont while studying in Paris, as one of fourteen girls from contrasting societies such as Bahrain, Brazil, Spain, Colombia, Sweden, and England. My collection of stories will reflect the complexities and rivalries that underscore female friendships, particularly those that cross cultural boundaries.

The stories take place in various international locations such as New York, Paris, the Caribbean and Marrakech, exploring cross-cultural interactions, isolation, and bonds as the protagonists discover and manipulate their identity through their own cultural displacement. The protagonists experience their own lives with the sensibilities of a tourist, hungry for adventure and transformation without the constraints of home, as in
*Rules of the Wild* by Francesca Marciano, in which an Italian woman living in Africa explores her identity through two disparate love affairs.

This aspect of exploring a dual self is inspired by my own experience of being raised biculturally in the United States, as well as living and traveling abroad as an American Latina. The stories in FRESH AND HUNGRY will reveal the moment of separation with one's inherited culture and the choices a young woman makes as she constructs her future in a country far from her roots.