

LEARN FASTER BY ANNA HURTADO

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LEARN FASTER

By Anna Hurtado

She knew that she was pretty,
With her ringlets and smooth skin,
Her green eyes cast sultry beneath lashes
Still she wore clashing colors and these strange
Gold and red track shoes
That had belonged to her mom
She wore ripped jeans and pilly black tee-shirts
Worn enough to show the training bras
Her grandma had bought her
from the Rack.
Her friends accused her of wearing makeup,
Pointing out her thick, dark lashes and
Naturally groomed brows and her
Flushed cheeks
And she made it into
A Thing
That she didn't
It became important that she didn't
Being pretty was one thing but putting effort into one's appearance
Was another.
She had been taught from dubious sources
that Those Women
Were not as self respecting, smart,
Tough
As they should be.
But then high school came around and
She realized she was old enough
To wear a crop top so she did,
Bearing her slim bronze midriff
To an appreciative world
And it became a game.
Can I get this boy to like me?
How about this one?
The answer was almost always
Yes.
Maybelline Waterproof Mascara
In its pink bullet
Made her lashes appear even longer
And her eyes more dramatic
Concealer hid the occasional zit and
She liked to smooth metallic powder on her eyelids
When it was a special occasion
She forgot what it her eyes looked like without the waxy shellac
Of mascara.
Eventually her body became especially curvy
In places and
Boys wanted to be close
To those places
She had her pick
without really considering
If she wanted any of those boys
in the first place
But
A boy with small hands
Decides to make her his girlfriend
Which she soon discovers
Involves nothing but having
Your pants reached into and your new underwear pushed aside
Without asking
While you are sitting next to him
At a party with all your friends
She can't move and her mouth
Is gone
All that's left behind are lips
Glossed hopefully in light pink
completely useless
Except for as pleasure for another person
Her body quickly learns the art of
Staying very still and hoping
That it'll be over quickly.

"This poem is referencing something I think that a lot of female presenting people have to deal with as they grow up; the dangers of being wanted and how scary it can be. Most of my work revolves around my experience as a woman and about femininity." – Anna Hurtado

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TIMELESS BY TAYLOR KAYE NIELSEN

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TIMELESS

By Taylor Kaye Nielsen

I've lived in Oregon for six years, and I still don't know how to get to my college or to my favorite restaurant without using google maps. I haven't been to that part of Riverton since that October, but I still have a turn-by-turn road map to your house etched into my brain. You turn right at the church we once laid in the parking lot of, counting stars. I remember asking you that night if you'd remember this moment if we were to break up, and I remember you laughing and wondering why I couldn't just be in the moment with you, why to me everything had always been fleeting and permanent all at once, why when we were in your bed falling in love, I was burning the layout of your room into my mind and why even 10 fucking years later I still remember every detail of that god damn brown truck. The same brown fucking truck that sends panic shivers down my spine even today, three states away when it passes me on the highway. The same stretch of highway I took to escape that town, to escape that church parking lot, to escape that room, to escape that bed of yours, that same fucking bed I'm still trapped in when my current boyfriend tries to make love to me, or touch me, or even fucking just sleep next me. That same fucking bed that I'll never get out of, that same fucking tomb of a bed I'll be buried in.

"I'm just like all the other wonderful girls in this world, going through hard shit every day. But I'm still here, and I'm still writing, and that is something."
-Taylor

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TRUST BY SCOOTER MILNE

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TRUST

By Scooter Milne

A small, unassuming shop
Grittier than most store counters
But appropriately so
The smears of grease and road dust
Common decor here

The burly man behind the counter
Has as many miles as I do
Presumably, more or less
The grease on his hands
Matches the cash register

Here's when I begin my fight
With an opponent
Who doesn't know he is

"Do you have this in stock?"
I give him a small paper
With a part number
Scrawled in pink marker

"What model?" he asks
I tell him, the numbers instead of name
"Year?" "Two thousand"
Not that it matters

"Oh yeah," he smiles,
"Did you need one?"
He doesn't check
"No, not yet, maybe later"

I've just won this battle
And he doesn't even know
I won't be here again
Because he spoke to
My boobs, not to me

I can tell, because
I know more than him
Nobody ever needs this part
It's not in stock

Not anywhere
Telling me he has one
Is a straight-up lie
I know this shop
Isn't trustworthy
I try elsewhere

Scooter is a first-year student at LCC. She is pursuing an AAOT, and hopes to transfer and work on a BA in writing in the future. In her spare time, she likes to work on fanfiction, and study animation for fun. She is the current President of LCC's GSA as well as a peer writing tutor.

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