

If I Kiss That Girl

by Heather Fowler

Because she is waiting, seated on my hotel bed, making comments about my sonic white toothbrush being a vibrator, telling me she's bi, gorgeous with her poly-amorous discussion and long brown curling hair, with her fawn-like face and delicate breasts, with her enjoyment of having both nipples touched, she says, stroked, gently, as her clit is sucked-if I kiss this girl, my tongue will move in her mouth, I will absorb her with my lemon drop martini breath hovering like vapor on her pink tongue gliding over mine as I inhale her exhaled past heartbreaks of yesteryear's asshole, her quick breath, her inability to decide a permanent major, her willingness to keep poor men actors as pets if they please her, or possibly the coy way she reads Proust's Swann's Way, not the Davis translation, while drinking red wine from a thin stemmed glass because that is the only way to absorb those long, full sentences like you mean it, like you'd live in them or with them in those rainy little-boy gardens, meandering with the murmuring quality of a wandering stroll through a twilight mind that only penetrates a good translation, which she does not have. Because If I kiss the girl, these things will belong to me, her struggles, her concerns, her enigmas, as she will belong, for the moment, in my arms, on my tongue, in my hair, and on my hands, becoming a part of my history, my lifetime, my amorous disconnect with the world and inability to hold onto her (or anything so beautiful) for longer-though I would like to heal her wounds with gifts of orgasm, deep listening, and full-body spoons, one after the next-but I cannot kiss her. She his half gone already, slow boat to China gone in my mind, a drifting barge, yet her breasts press into mine. We stand in doorways. Her face pauses. A doe. A deer. A dear. Thin, beautiful lips. She wonders if I might lean in. And I want to. But, let me just think about kissing her for now, pull away mentally from her siren song, yet pull her slim frame in so close I can feel her heart beat in chaste goodnight hugs as I long for more

without taking. Because I do not deserve her, because I have already forgotten her name. Twice. What a bastard (I am).

Female or otherwise.

She is worth more.

So I let her walk down svelte hallways alone, unmolested, taste her only in the memory of a vanishing possibility. Shut the door. Linger in the mixed blessing of a maybe turned to no. Let her disappear. Let her reappear on this page, let you see her, all eager and ready for me to please her, let you see me not-- for I have made such mistakes before. Let her touch a cotton gray scarf wrapped three times around her neck with warm fingertips, gingerly, before going. Let her eyes drop and her taut torso turn away. Let you feel my lack as she leaves, and my damp skin, and the falling tide of this passion turned to calm. A pretty girl's dropped footfalls land softly in the outer hall.

I cannot hear them or listen. She is leaving the page, too, as she left my room: her fragrance in the air, in my nose and throat, all that wisteria, tuberose, musk, faint sweat, shampoo, and clean clothes scent now turning into subtexts for ubiquitous immaculate desire. I am her everlasting cataclysmic non-event. I am stationary with unquenchable longing. One day, news of my new fame will reach her. She will read this story somewhere and remember this night and my response. Will it sting less then, when I say the things I did not tell her saddened face? I sit alone, pressing my legs together like the pages of a closed book, tight, held shut, wanting her back, but not opening them, and not following.

