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I Love You

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Abstract

Yes, that's her. She's gorgeous, isn't she. Those long legs. I love a woman with long legs. Like a young horse. They have nervous legs, delicate, full of energy. You can tell, she's just arrived, come galloping up the hill and skittered to a stop when she saw the writing on the car. We'd had a pretty grotty trip, dust and rain and mud. There was a good thick coating to make the marks in.

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Yes, that's her. She's gorgeous, isn't she. Those long legs. I love a woman with long legs. Like a young horse. They have nervous legs, delicate, full of energy. You can tell, she's just arrived, come galloping up the hill and skittered to a stop when she saw the writing on the car. We'd had a pretty grotty trip, dust and rain and mud. There was a good thick coating to make the marks in.

True? Of course. Yes, I did love her. She knew that. Came up the hill, saw the writing, turned round, and I took the shot just as she stood, poised, with that sexy pleased look. She was photogenic, you didn't need to pose her, any fleeting moment you caught her she looked good.

Of course shooting her wasn't the object of the outing. Shooting anything, although I had my camera along and got some nice photographs of the lake. There was a kind of silver light that day, and I thought, this is peace, and I photographed it. I thought I am actually photographing peace. There was nobody around, no human noises. It's hard to get away from human noises. There's always our machinery cutting the silence into shreds. Lawn mowers or cars or chain saws, even those screaming little things for beating up cakes. She didn't talk much, and anyway she had a soft voice, husky and slow, she'd always talk in a murmur, and there was the water making a liquid lapping sound against the pebbles, and no wind to rustle the leaves. No sun, either. Have you noticed how noisy the sun makes things when it shines? The bright light and the bright noise. I liked the greyness and calmness.

We walked around the shore for quite a bit. She didn't have any shoes on, she liked to travel light, that bird. It was rocky, but she picked her way, the rockiness didn't bother her. There were little sandy coves and thick mats of reeds washed up and sometimes shingle; she said she liked the feel of all the different surfaces of the earth under her feet. In amongst the rocks there were these small patches of grass, the kind that grows around lakes, thick and lush with little soft blades that don't prickle at all when you lie on them, even with no clothes on.

Yeah, we made love. I'm not always ... I mean, I can sometimes. I suppose it was the peacefulness, all that quiet emptiness, the silvery grey lake and the sky and the water lapping. It worked in the straight way, normal, her on her back and those legs around me and it was slow and sort of kind and afterwards we just lay on the grass and yes I did love her and

she loved me. She had a tattoo on her bottom, on the left side, a dragonfly she said it was. I thought its wings shimmered when she moved. You know, she'd twitch her bum and the different colours of its wings'd shimmer. I thought it just suited her, a dragonfly, because of them being long and slender and big-eyed. I haven't got wings, she said, and I said where's your imagination girl. I see wings.

It was cool there, not cold, we didn't feel cold, but the air was cool and sort of dry. There was this faint watery breeze off the lake, but it wasn't humid, not that jungle humid where your skin can't breathe, when you're sweating and the atmosphere's sweating and there's nowhere for it to go. And for a bit I thought, I could stay here forever, but of course you never can. Not in the good places. We put our clothes on and walked back around the shoreline. There weren't even any boats pulled up. I wished I had one of those old wooden boats that people used to go fishing in. I could see myself carrying down the oars and setting off in the dawn, that's what it felt like, without the sun, the light all clear and grey like that, it felt like a dawn, the day not begun yet. And you push the boat out, you're wearing old sneakers in case of oyster shells or sharp rocks on the bottom, and you crawl in, and the oars make a quiet splash as they pull you through the water. You know the right places for the fish, and drop the anchor over, and bait your hooks with pongy old bits of green prawn, and throw the lines in, and you sit and wait for the fish to bite.

Of course it was the afternoon then, and too late in the day for fishing, even if we'd had a boat, with oars in it, and lines, and bait. We walked back to where we started, where the hill came down from the road. We didn't walk up the slope together. I felt good, I didn't need her right beside me at that moment. She'd stopped to look at something growing, the hillside had little scrubby plants with flowers on, she liked to look at things like that. Not pick. As I said she travelled light, she just looked Well, when I say she travelled light, I don't know about in her head. Who knows what's in people's heads? And maybe she didn't carry much baggage with her because of what she took along in her head. Stuff you'd like to chuck away, but you can't. If you could pack it all up in a port and leave it behind in a motel, with a false name and lost property never catching up with you. Lost property: I should be so lucky.

So I walked up the hill on my own, her mooning over some plant, and the choppers went over. You can't even see their blades whirling, just the air disturbed. The choppers went over and they chopped the sky in pieces and it fell down in chunks around me and I raced up the hill but still there was this noisy sky falling in chunks all round me. I couldn't get away. I got in the car but it didn't help. I got out and waited for her and that was when I wrote the words in the dirt on the side of the car. The choppers were gone by then but the quiet was still falling in pieces around us. Sharp pieces, heavy, that do damage.

She wasn't hurrying, it was the plants she cared about, bending and touching them as though it would make them feel better, but finally she stopped that and came galloping up the last bit of hill to the top and saw the words and skittered round and leaned and stood the way you see her there, poised on her toes lifting her head back offering her throat with that slow pleased smile and pulling her shirt down in her rather shy way with her big kind knuckly hands so careful of the flowers and that was when I shot her, first with the camera and then with the gun and then the camera again. You can see what the camera is about to pick up, just there in the corners of her mouth, the doubt that will turn into amazement, here, in this one, when she sees I've got the gun, the amazement already sliding into fear as she realizes what I'm going to do, here, and when I've done it, when I've pulled the trigger, haven't I, there's the writing on the car smudged where she fell across it.

It's a good camera, you see you only need one hand. I wanted a good camera, I wanted to take good pictures, you have to try to do things well. These pictures turned out well, even using only one hand. The gun behaved well too. The noise of the gun isn't like the noise of the choppers, it doesn't chop the sky into pieces falling on your head, it's an orderly sound, that puts things back. The noise of the gun rings like a bell and all the sky is back in place again and everything is very very quiet.

The writing? I used the gun. I guess it scratched the duco. It didn't seem to matter at the time.