

SCENE 5: I HAVE BEEN CALLED BEAUTIFUL EXACTLY ONE TIME IN MY LIFE.

FAT WOMAN 1

When you're always the biggest girl in the room you get used to having eyes on you. You can literally feel people's disgust and resentment for taking up more space than them in a room. It's thick and palpable and sometimes so heavy you feel like you're going to drown. It's like they think you're going to steal all the oxygen because maybe this big body requires more than normal to function. Or maybe they're scared that at any given moment your body will swell and rapidly expand and somehow suffocate or swallow them up. Like the blob.

When I say "they" I mean girls who went through high school not knowing what stretch marks are.

You feel like you're shaking the room with every step.

You feel like everyone can see you sweating or breathing too hard just from walking up the stairs.

You feel panic at picking up a drink or god forbid a snack because then they'll KNOW you're fat and you can't pretend you're not anymore.

You feel like people are assuming assuming assuming and projecting projecting projecting and judging laughing whispering pointing sneering

and even though you have all of those eyes on you you are somehow still invisible.

But at this particular party I notice you from across the room  
and you notice me

And this time I wasn't invisible.

You are looking at me.

And you see me.

And you keep looking at me.

I don't know what to do so I just keep looking back

And I get this feeling like I already know that this person is going to be important to me.

I will know this person's name for the rest of my life.

This person is going to explode everything I thought about myself and the world and my place in it and I start to turn red.

But I still can't look away.

Because I see something I've never seen before behind your eyes.

It's deep and magnetic and delicious and I feel my skin on fire.

I can't breathe.

Oh my god is this... desire?

Is this... lust?

Holy shit is this the male gaze  
and IS IT GAZING AT ME!?

NOTHING GAZES AT ME.  
NOT IN THIS BODY.  
FUCK.  
I CAN'T BREATHE.  
SOS.  
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY.

You start walking towards me and my heart jumps up into my throat.  
I can feel all of my flaws screaming at me and I think you notice.  
You smile at me and oh my god it's so amazing but because I can see your teeth I'm somehow reminded of a shark and I start to feel like one of those big huge sea bass you see on Blue Planet and I start to panic.  
What do I do? Do I walk away? Do I start a random conversation with someone else? Do I pretend to wave at the person standing behind you so you don't think I'm weird FOR JUST STARING AT YOU.

Am I about to be bitten? I have no gills. I'm frozen.  
I try to smile back and somehow forget how to do that right and feel like maybe I'm just opening and closing my mouth.  
I am a fucking sea bass.  
But I try to look happy so I try to smile again and then I think maybe I'm just bearing my teeth.  
Oh my god, Maybe I'm the shark. Maybe I'm freaking him out? What kind of face am I even making? What does smiling even look like? How do we learn to smile? Why do we think that's a friendly, nice, fun thing to do?

This is a nightmare.

You're getting closer.  
I pretend to look somewhere else.  
I can feel that I'm still opening and closing my mouth for some reason so I try to play it cool and look like I'm chewing gum  
because apparently that's what I think cool girls do.

Yeah, so cool.

This is okay.  
I got this.  
I can be cool.  
I've been to lots of parties.  
I can drink a lot of beer.  
I listen to hip music.  
I, at this point, have smoked 2 joints in my life.  
I have a lot of guy friends.

But this is different.

They don't smile that smile  
and they don't have that delicious look in their eye  
that makes my insides feel like melted butter  
and honestly I had convinced myself that I would only ever have friends that are boys and never  
boyfriends.

But you're still walking towards me and now I'm treading water.  
I feel like the first time I heard "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion  
That song is what love sounds like!  
Everything is in slow motion.

Okay okay okay maybe he just needs something?  
Am I blocking the way to the bathroom?  
Maybe he needs to know where something is?  
Does he think I work here?  
But this is a house party.  
Oh oh oh okay he must think I'm someone else.

Fuck.  
Is this what flirting is?  
This is awful.

You stop in front of me.  
You smile again.  
That smile.  
Oh my god it's so amazing.  
I have to catch my breath.

You introduce yourself to me.  
And I can't find my words.  
I am again opening and closing my mouth.  
Fucking sea bass bitch.

You don't say anything  
You just hand me a beer  
and say

this is for you, beautiful.