

# She Is Beauty

*Anonymous*

It's summer and one of the hottest days yet. You both lounge on beach towels, bathing in the sun that's bound to give you both sunburns later. You're so close that you can feel the heat radiating off her skin. You can't help but notice the way she glows in the light.

It's these moments that confuse you the most.

You know that you like her, but that's okay because everybody does. You can never stop watching her but that's okay because everybody does. You want to be just like her, but that's okay because everybody does. That's all okay, all perfectly excusable - but the way your breath catches when you see her applying sunblock to herself, the way your heart speeds up when she brushes the sand out of your hair?

That's not normal.

The ringing of a phone - it's her boyfriend reminding her that she has to leave soon. She was going to watch his football game because apparently, her time with you is nowhere near as important as time spent with him. It's not like this is new; It's a common occurrence, but it still manages to ignite sparks of jealousy every time she leaves you by yourself, wondering what she sees in him that she doesn't see in you, why he is so deserving of her time when all he does is smile at her from across a football field, why you always come second despite all the time and effort that you pour into your friendship with her.

You both end up leaving early and catching a bus. Your skin is already starting to feel taut, as if it has been stretched too tightly over your body. Later in the day you'll sit in your room during dusk, sheltering from mosquitos in the evening heat as you run through that day in your head.

Summer is over and winter has brought cold weather, meaning that the two of you spend most of your time indoors. you're in her room after school, the two of you scrolling through social media after giving up on the maths homework that you barely attempted. You watch as she tucks her hair behind her ear, observes the way her face crinkles up when she smiles.

It's so cute when she does that.

It frustrates you, not being able to tell her this. You want more than anything to

let her know how pretty she is, in her own delicate way, but you know that you can't - the risk of losing your friendship with her is too big, too terrifying. It's getting colder and she nestles into you whilst curling her hair around her finger. You never knew that such casual movements could cause such disturbance; It's as if your heart has stopped beating and you've lost the ability to breathe. Your surprise must have been obvious - she asks if you're okay and with a tremor in your voice, you say that of course you are, you couldn't be better.

She goes back to leaning against the wall.

It's been months since that day at the beach and you have to tell her. She must feel the same way, or else she wouldn't lean into you, wouldn't brush your hair so gently, wouldn't laugh at your jokes.

You're both at your place; dim fairy lights cast a warm glow across the room. She's sprawled on your bed while you sit cross-legged, your mind abuzz - you don't know what to do.

You want to tell her about how your heart skips a beat when she brushes up against you, about how you lose the ability to breathe whenever she laughs at your jokes; you want to tell her about how perfect her face is, about how she is Aphrodite and you want so desperately to be Hephaestus; You want to tell her that you love her and that you belong together, in each other's arms. There are endless things that you want to tell her, endless confessions that need to be given through more than just words.

Your right-hand brushes her hair out of her eyes and tucks it behind her ear; The other cups her cheek in your hand, brings her closer to you.

She's so beautiful.

Her face is soft, her lips even more so - it's as if the world has burst into millions of bright colours, as if cupid's angels are surrounding you with their bows and quivers because you are kissing the most beautiful girl in the entire world and this impossibly fantastic moment must be what true love is.

You're taken aback when she pulls away and slaps you across the face, filled with confusion and pain when she tells you to stay far away from her because you are nothing more than a filthy dyke. you sit there in shock as she attempts to hide the blush that's creeping across her cheeks, grabs her things and stumbles out of the room.

You know that she's angry, that she'll never love you the way that you love her, but it's funny.

Because for a second,

She kissed you like she really cared.