

Woke White Boys

Nonfiction • Maddie De Pree

I once had sex in a boy's room with multicolored Christmas lights on the walls and shelves full of vinyls, and while I should have found this cozy, instead I found it depressing, and the boy put on a Connie Francis record, and there was a baggie of cocaine in the corner, and it was not my baggie of cocaine. He turned me onto my side and we fucked, and I looked at the record player and watched the needle skimming over the grooves of the vinyl as it played *Who's Sorry Now*.

By the time he was finished, the record had begun to make that dull knocking noise, the sound of no more sound; and as I laid in his dirty bed, it occurred to me that I had made a poor decision. But I had gotten what I wanted; I had only gone home with him to make someone else mad.

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Later that year I had sex with a different boy in a different place, and he wanted me to tie him up with black cord, which I did not want to do but did anyway; and when I waved him away the following morning, I thought, *Thank God, I never have to hear from this person again!* Before he left, he mashed his mouth against mine and whipped his tongue around like a dog's, and I stood there with my eyes open and wondered, *Why do people do this, why do we do anything at all.*

I heard from him often the following summer, and though I didn't answer his calls, he kept calling, mostly to ask if I would ever peg him, and why didn't he receive more Tinder matches, and what are women so scared of when the world is full of nice men like him.

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Before these boys was another boy, one who wanted me to explain things to him, like the word queer and the differences between gender and sexuality and sex; and when he saw my body, he said *You're so beautiful, you're so hot*, in a voice that sounded more dismayed than anything else. Afterward, he said that I was not dateable, for reasons that he did not fully understand; and as I walked home, I thought, *I should have stolen something from his apartment on my way out.*

When I flirted with women in front of this boy, he would become irate and then miserable; he would trudge away, and I wouldn't go after him. But for some reason I loved him, would have tied him up with black cord if he'd wanted me to; but he never asked; he never asks.