

Short Story

Dear Diary,

April 27th 2000

The prom is in like two weeks. No one has asked me yet, I don't even think anyone has even looked at me. I could figure why. All of my friends have dates. All of them. Even the ones that did shit on the SATs who needs brains when you have beauty I guess. I don't even know who I would go with anyway. All the guys here suck, all they do is pick their noses and throw it at their unwitting rocks for brain friends. I don't even have a dress. Mom gave me hers I guess. It's lowkey ugly though, it's like this light pink and don't get me wrong I love pink, we know this. But it looks like a cowgirl dropped it off at the drycleaners and it got caught in the drain or however they clean it and then it got mixed up with a costume that was second hand and shredded and then those shredded pieces got stuck on the dress and that is what my mother barely handed me. I feel bad saying that I really do but she barely wore it to her own prom. What should I do? I have no date, no dress, no suitors, and Sarah has at least three guys asking her. And Annie is going with her boyfriend who obviously got her flowers and a gorgeous corsage that matches her dress perfectly. UGHHHHHHHHHAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WHY CAN'T ANYTHING IN MY LIFE WORK OUT!! Let me take a breath. It'll work out. I can get a dress from a second-hand shop down the road from the school and have Annie tailor it to fit me perfectly. Everything is going to work out. A boy probably won't ask me but that's okay I can go with a friend or something that's modern. Right? Anyway besides that, I have two tests next week that I am not ready for. I have yet to study but I think it'll be fine. I'm confident in my grammar skills...not so much my math but whatever. I have at least a B in each class and that should bring me to at least an in-state school for college next year. I hope I get into any CSU school at least. So then I'm close to home and can visit mom if she needs. Lets hope she doesn't fuck up my chances and like forgets to fill stuff out or something. She won't, I'll make sure she won't. I'll

promise lotto tickets or something. If she ever gets off the couch maybe that'll make my chances higher. I don't know for now lets focus on the prom and select the chicken on the menu. I really hope it's actually good and not gross and frozen

Dear Maya, why so pink?

XXXXXXX Maya

Dear Diary,

April 29th 2000

Ok so the prom was fine. Was the music bad, yes. Was the chicken as bad as I knew it would be? Yes. The reality is, I knew all of these things !! and I still went. I went in my second hand dress that was tailored to fit my height and nothing else. It was honestly fun and the music wasn't half bad even though there was no No Doubt music playing. I requested like three times they still didn't play it. Anyways. Mom obviously gave me an insane lecture about everything under the sun about drinking sex and smoking while smoking a cigarette obviously! That lecture was useless and awkward. I was just sitting there wiggling my fingers and trying to stop sweating from under my pits. I realize now that I can't use secret deodorant. I need to use a dove. Maybe the flower scent. The scent is fine I guess. I'm excited for spring and what it may bring! Whatever I can be totally cheesy in the comfort of my own diary. It's not like this is fake and being made up and handed to a professor for a grade right. And as spring approaches I want to set a few goals possibly. Possibly to stop picking at my skin, maybe to start cleaning my sheets more often, to read more. Yes, I need to read more. But read what. I saw this sticker once that said reading is sexy therefore I need to read. Why am I treating this like new years? You know what. Fuck it. This is my spring new year. I'm gonna just reinvent myself for the spring and wear cute floral dresses. Maybe second hand, maybe not. At the end of the day, the yellow sun shines and the clouds cover it. Who are my clouds?

Dear Maya, why so yellow?

XXXXX Maya

Dear Diary

May 3rd 2000

Well I stopped picking my face. I stopped and it only took like 4 days kind of. It helps that I told myself that it's worse to pick and have it scar than to just let the pimple be. The pimple. He. It. It's a boy pimple for sure. It's a few of a dozen and I think with time it'll go away. With time and patience, things I need to learn anyway. Well, patience at least. Annie says that I'm impatient even when it comes to waiting for french fries out of the oven. I don't see how being impatient is that bad. Like it's almost like being impulsive. Is being impulsive bad? I don't think so. It keeps things interesting. Things like choices and responsibility! Right? I think so. It helps when it comes to choices because it makes things more fun. What was once dreaded is now...less dreaded. But impulsive things can be bad. Like if I impulsively eat something I'm allergic to so that I can get a little rush is dangerous. But being impulsive like... buying a cute sweater is good. It benefits all. Because people get to look at it. And it looks cute. Whatever. Mom's being annoying once again. Once again she's on the couch sitting next to dozens of bills and forms of god knows what. Dad hasn't been sending the money recently. Maybe it's something to do with that. I can only assume. The money he was sending anyways was never enough regardless. And it's not like he sends any notes or faxes anything over to let us know how he's doing. I think he's in Colorado right now. I assume. But that update is years old, so he could be in like Australia by now or something. I would love to see Australia. I feel like I love that they're winters are warm. Imagining Santa in a suit is making me giggle. Maybe if he's in Australia he'll tell us. And maybe if he's down the road, he won't.

Dear Maya, why so red?

XXXXxxx Maya

Dear Diary

May 3rd 2000

I've been looking in the mirror for way too long. Like way too long. I have managed to inspect every single aspect of my face. The blackheads on my nose that with no matter how many Biore strips I can't seem to conquer. Maybe one day I'll grow out of these imperfections. But for now they'll stay, and set up camp and get comfortable no matter my objection. I guess I'll just have to get used to them, maybe go to CVS to figure out how to cover them with some shit concealer. I wouldn't even know where to start with that though. At all. Other things I have discovered on my face:

- Inconsistent eyelashes
- Bushy eyebrows
- Tiny tiny tiny pimples that are colorless
- A faint outline of a mustache
- Department store size undereye bags
- Brown eyes
- Pink lips

Though I inspected and inspected I guess the harmony of all those features makes my face. Maybe harmony is a strong word. But they do work together to complete me. This is me. No matter how many times I walk past a mirror and reluctantly look at it, it's me. My reflection stares back at me. It stares at me with confusion as if she doesn't recognize me - who's holding all of the cards. She tilts her head at me, not particularly in an endearing way but in a surreal way. I can stare at her, I can critique her. She doesn't critique me. She looks at me helpless, as if I'm treading water waiting for a safety net. But she knows the net won't come. She gets sunburnt from waiting in the ocean for too long. Her fingers begin to prune and her feet begin to grow tired from all of the kicking. And waiting. Everyone is on the cruise, looking down, looking at me,

down at me. Down in empathy yet no action. They're just watching me struggle for a breath and for a bone. And in time she can give up, she can stop kicking and fighting and screaming hoping someone can listen. She can succumb to the water. Drown with weights on her feet and lay with the rocks and sand at the bottom. At least she'll be resting. She's screaming at the top of her lungs and somehow falls silent to everyone else. She hopes one day someone will throw her a raft. And understand that her feet are tired from all of the treading. Understand that her fingers are pruned and she seemingly can't just grab on so easily. And understand that she'll be famished and her voice will hurt from all of the aimless screaming she's been doing even still. Why does she scream if no one listens? If she whispers like a mouse they'll just hear squeaks. But when I look at her in the mirror, I want to reach through and break my hand through the shattered glass with blood and shards all over it just to acknowledge those whispers with my bloodied hand. But instead she's there and I'm here. No staring or acknowledging or any all consuming wonderment is sending her that raft. She has to learn how to tread the water. And how to get through without pruny fingers or blurred vision and the beating sunburn. When will she realize that just because everyone sees no one is looking. Who is she? Who am I? Brown eyes, pimples, pink lips

Dear Maya, why so blue

XXXXXXX Maya

Dear Diary

May 6th 2000

I think I'm allergic to peaches. Note: Don't eat a peach, I get all itchy in my mouth and it's annoying so I might be allergic. The same thing happens when I eat apples. Everyone says I'm being dramatic but I think I am even though peaches are like huge in my culture. I can't eat them I will eat more ummmmm dumplings, I don't know. Something else I'll eat that's the same things. Perhaps noodles for a longer life. During chinese new year all of that comes out. I mean

it's not like I don't eat it anyways all of the time. Mom barely cooks anything but she does cook cuisine. But sometimes I just want a burger or something or like pancakes.

Dear Maya, why so pink!

XXxxxx Maya

Dear Diary,

May 19th 2000

Found dad in the kitchen again. He didn't see me. I think he was collecting items or something. What he could be collecting I don't know. Plates forks or spoons I don't know. He cleaned us out pretty good the last time he was here. Took one of moms lipsticks I'm sure. The same lipstick I saw on the chef's lips when I walked into the restaurant. He smelt of dads cologne. Dad! Don't take kiss the chef so seriously! I always knew there was something. I felt like a foreigner in my own home at times. There was an unspoken language with no matter how much listening and analyzing I do I couldn't seem to comprehend. With mom and dad fighting so much when it was silent I thought one of them had fallen dead. Dad ran out once he saw the porch light turn on. I heard his bag clanking with more silver god knows what. To sell to a pawn shop I guess, or throw into a river, or into a dumpster, or a memorabilia box he might keep in the corner of his closet. I know it's going to the pawn shop. Sometimes if I'm lucky I can spot it in the window and buy it back just for it to be taken again. I wish he would just stop fleeing from the porch light. He's fleeing more than just us. I'm watching him run as fast as he can while his feet are cemented into the ground. He's sweating and panting, wiping his forehead with a raggedy shirt that doesn't fit him right. And I'm standing there. Watching him run and run. I know he has the will to run. In some sort of way it's admirable. He knows he has to run with the wild horses by his side and never look back - unless for more dishes. I wish I was like that. As I've grown older I've realized that everyone has their own story that needs an ending, happy or not. Some are lucky

enough to be the writers of their own stories, others follow the rest. I know he was battling something. A force greater than him. He was fighting something that wouldn't give up and my dad knew that. He knew who he was and what kind of life he would have. Traditionally, obviously, men and women marry. No one has spent the time to think about if things were different or progressive in any way. I think both my parents married for an agenda. My dad had his own love to conquer. My mom needed the money and she needed the stability. One is not nearly better or pure-er than the other. Both had to do what they needed to do to survive in culture. To not be embarrassed to keep their pride. But my dad couldn't fight anymore. He gave up and when the opportunity presented itself he ran. He ran and took what could fit in his backpack. Not a goodbye note, or a brush of my hair while I fell asleep on the couch or anything. I shouldn't have expected too much from a man who was a stranger to himself. Who felt like a separate entity from his soul. His body was just a vessel for his soul. Nothing more therefore I was nothing at all.

Dear Maya, why so green?

XXXXxxxx Maya

Dear Diary,

May 23rd 2000

I am finally 18. Finally old enough to get a job and begin my own journey towards....I'm not completely sure to be quite frank. I guess just the future. It's not college. I tried and tried and my disappointment consumes me. Everyone else is going somewhere. Far, closer, a commute away and I'm here. Just here. I get to watch everyone move on with their lives. Discover the east coast or the midwest. And where am I discovering? Thanks for asking. A burger joint! I get to flip burgers and wipe tables and make milkshakes. And if I'm lucky get a few extra dollars in tips. That cash is going to me and if I have to hide it from my mom so be it. Why should I feel responsible for keeping us afloat? I'm a child I'm barely 18. She didn't even get me a cake for

my birthday she gave me a fortune cookie that was stale. It was me who found the job. It was me figuring out the bills while she slept on the couch. I need to save the money so that I can get on with my life and do SOMETHING ANYTHING. Anything at all. Be an astronaut be an interior designer anything. I can't limit myself... be a writer even! Be a dog walker. Be a barista. For now I am a burger flipper. I don't know any of my co-workers at all. One of them seems to be annoying and taps her nails on everything. She takes smoke breaks and watches the tv in the dining area. Dining area. As if I can really call it that. It's a glorified McDonalds it just doesn't have the word Mc in front of everything. Or a glorified Burger King. Whatever it is, it's disgusting. But it pays me and I will be working a lot. Hopefully everyone that works at the establishment knows to be normal. I've heard horror stories of weird cooks and cashiers and whatever and I need to avoid that. As much as I possibly can. The uniform isn't that bad. It's a hairnet or a hat if I choose and a shitty red apron and these ugly clunky shoes so that I don't slip and sue the establishment. Of course if one thing is spilled it has to be cleaned pretty much immediately. But for now, this works. For now this will be my form of income and I will save and get out of here as fast as I can. I'm working towards a brick wall.

Dear Maya, why so red?

XXXXxxxxXXX Maya

Dear Diary,

June 2nd 2000

It's so hot here. It's insanely hot and I have no AC or even that many ice cubes to run on my face. I need to get ice cube trays actually. And just fill them. I've been taking cold showers to cool off and that's been fine honestly. At work it's even hotter. Especially if I'm on the grill flipping burgers. And that hat, the hairnet the apron it's just a lot. It's overstimulating. And for break I decided to just sit and watch the tv as it plays nonsense. And listen to the outdated music the establishment plays. Once they played Oasis and that was pretty cool. And the customers aren't

bad. One of them gave me a huge tip of like 10 bucks and I immediately ran home and stashed it in my bed. Yes under my bed in a shoebox. A classic. But when mom asks me for money I just give her what's in my pocket which is like two dollars or something. Whatever. I feel like I could put literally 100 dollars in her hand she wouldn't notice she just stuffs it in her pockets for god knows what. Cigarettes, rent, eggs I don't know. She doesn't keep any diary but she keeps every receipt we've ever had and bill and it's there to remind me on the living room coffee table where coffee is replaced by bills. Maybe she'll get us a like small AC unit for the time being. I don't understand how she's not hot. Tbh whatever. Let's just see how long I last without fainting from the heat.

Dear Maya... why so orange?

XXXXxxxx Maya

Dear Diary,

June 13th 2000

Today I have the day off. What to do what to do what to do. I need to pluck my eyebrows make breakfast probably some eggs if we have any with cheese perhaps and then I need to clean the bathroom and my room and then of course, drink tea. Just a relaxing day at home and one that I needed. I feel like my hair has hardened into the shape of a hat and my ears are sore from the pressure pressing down on them. They're red. I might go on a walk. Wait I should, that would be nice and a good way to release the tension between my feet from standing so long so endlessly. And also I could lose a few pounds I feel pudgy. And don't worry my mom has already pointed out that I MIGHT HAVE gained .2 pounds. But she is right, I can feel the skin on my back stretching and the jeans that were once loose on me suddenly fit pretty well. And I could listen to music while I walk. Hmmmm what do I listen to, maybe a podcast even. I love a good podcast it makes me feel like I'm on the phone. OO! The phone, I could call someone too. Maybe Annie

or something. And talk and catch up on anything. That would be so nice. Nice to catch up and stuff like that. If I get into that habit I could follow through with this and lose those .2 pounds and gain endurance. Maybe.... Maybe Maybe.

Dear Maya... why so pudgy

XXXXxxxx Maya

Poems

Ars Poetica Poem

Those who read poetry need poetry
Those who don't read poetry need poetry
We don't need poetry until we need our questions
asked

"Has anyone felt like this before?"
"Why does love hurt?"
"I'm lonely and I need comfort."
"Is it okay to sulk in my sadness?"

Once we reach the point
Where we can no longer possibly
Live
Without poetry

Is the moment we begin to exhale

Volta Poem

My dad was always home
He was home and quiet
I don't know what he would say if anything
At all

He was teaching me how to ride a bike
The bike had training wheels and a sparkly
Bow

With one foot petaling against the other
With the pavement passing below me
He never talked about it

But after biking for a bit I now realize
He was pushing me as hard

As he can

Found Poem

Wet ones, for sensitive skin

Hand and face wipes

Hypoallergenic,

For sensitive skin

Ones for travelers

Ones for Americans

Ones for all

Ones for a fresh start