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You are an easy target. You have all the right elements going for you: primarily, you're young. You're almost festering in youth and all the crude trappings that go along with it, especially that telltale lust for inspiration or almost any impetus, really, to come along and smack you upside the head. You're feminine. You're new here, at least to her. You're eclectic. Some might even consider you this side of "hip" except that: you're fat. Except that you're fat. She thinks.

You must be hungry. You must be approachable. You must be available. You must be desperate. You must be easily flattered. You must be stupid.

She assumes all these things about you to some degree, but you are, for the extended moment, thankfully oblivious. She is flattering you, and laying it on thick.

Actually, she herself is a walking cliché, but you can't know this at first. A local celebrity with talent, she is well known for (among other traits less endearing) her creative edge sharpened from a deep, underlying angst that makes her almost as socially inept as you. When she's out of the spotlight, anyway. This endears her to you even more. Aside from the fact that she's so politically right-on, nothing gets you like that moment when she turns away from the throngs and zeroes in on you with an excessively cavalier move.

"You look stunning," she says, taking your hand and a huge foppish bow down to kiss it. You're unaccustomed to such displays. You're not sure whether to believe her or be embarrassed for her.

Either way, she has gotten under your skin. It's too late. You move her up on your list of local celebrities to secretly follow, to "accidentally" bump into reading after performance after opening. Of course, you have several people on your list, and once thought yourself safely invisible in your own private admiration, but no longer! She has seen you. She has seen you and you have captivated her. WHO KNOWS WHY, but she seems really into you! She openly leers at you as though you're someone else. You are terrified by the weight of experience that must come with those twenty years she has on you. You're also terrified by your own weight. Her small but masculine frame intimidates you and leaves a clammy wet spot in your panties. You wait to chat with her after her performance, but she has too many fans and admirers; it isn't until she blocks the door on your way out that her subtle charm wins you over all the more. Of course, this means that now she owns you. Now matter where you bump into her, she is the sole reason you are there. It is only partially true.

Unfortunately for you, this misconception of hers will persist until long after you've figured her out. Not to get ahead of myself.

So she gives you her phone number while a small crowd of smug-faced women looks on. You have so far carefully restrained yourself from doing anything too obvious, like giving her your own phone number or throwing her down. You think this leaves you with a certain dignity, but it doesn't. She is blind to your restraint and any illusions of dignity you may have for yourself. For all she cares, you've thrown yourself at her, tearing your clothes off and pleading with her. Please, please, PLEASE. Please, what? You don't know what. You spend a lot of time imagining what.

You wait the required two days and call her up. No matter what happens, you know you're following all the basic guidelines of self-respect. You think you've covered your bases. You can't figure out, later on, just how you lost it. When did it happen? Her voice is smooth and sexy. She is charming you. She doesn't want to talk about herself, though, tell her all about YOU. This dis-


by Candida Albicans Royale

arms you. You tell awkward, self-deprecating stories, hoping to entertain her at your own expense. She interrupts frequently to tell stories of her own, and then says, "Tell me about YOU." You can't quite get over the way she uses the word "trick" to describe former dates of hers that you can tell were really girlfriends. She doesn't quite pull it off. You especially love this about her. You start to think maybe this is the one you want to "top" you. You hope she will use you up and even throw you away, just so long as she at least uses you and doesn't leave you with this relentless waiting forever.

You run into her at another party. She is busy and ignores you. You don't call her again. It pains you, but you don't. Then one day, you get home from work/school/a political action and see it scrawled on a piece of scrap paper: She has called! You want to frame it. In fact, you keep the piece of paper near your bed, hidden away where your housemates won't spy it and know its importance. You call her back right away. She acts as though she's missed you terribly. You still haven't had a first date. In fact, the word "date" hasn't even come up. You don't care. You are still wondrous that such a handsome talent could be interested in YOU. Really, you're only a little frustrated. You see her across the street. You see her coming from 3 blocks away, her presence is that enormous and magnetic. It's just like when you pick up something to read, it seems every queer zine or newspaper has a piece of her in it, but really you know you're just drawn to wherever she is. Instinctively, you pretend to ignore her in the hopes that she'll spy on you while you're looking smooth. You put on a huge, vacant smile and avert your eyes, laughing giddily at something your friend said. This friend is kind enough to humor you while you laugh onto her shoulder. You hope it looks like you have a girlfriend. That night, she calls you. You run into her again, you are with a fag friend. You take his hand and hope that it looks like you have a boyfriend, inately thinking this might look both convincing and attractive to her.

You pull away, you ignore her, and each time you do, she pays that much more attention to you. You forgive

her, and she ignores you. Secretly, you refer to her as "Control Top," and imagine straining your hips into her firm, tight grip. One night, you allow yourself to go to just one more lit reading to ignore her. Before you can leave, she darts out the door in front of you. She walks along with you for a block, and when you near a group of men hanging out in front of a bar, she crosses over to the sidewalk, drapes her arm around your shoulder, and spits into the street. No one has ever spat for you before. You're touched that she is being so protective of you, even though she's half your size and twice your age. It's so new, you can barely breathe. Your clit is thumping. She asks if you want to go out for a drink. You could fall into wild, drunken abandon with her, but since you're you, you suggest coffee. Everything goes downhill from there. You become even more awkward and twitchy. Thankfully, she leaves soon, sparing you from making more awkward, lascivious moves toward her mouth. The pattern resumes.

 You think of her constantly but have given up on her, when you receive an invitation to a casual dinner party at her place. You can't sleep. You can't eat. When the day finally arrives, you wander around her apartment taking everything in, her smells, her furniture. Even her toilet paper. You spend as much time as possible hiding in the bathroom and trying to contain your insane passion. You never want to leave this apartment. In fact, everyone else has suddenly left. She suggests that you house-sit for her sometime while she's away. You imagine sifting through her private papers while she's gone and marvel at her trust. You can't stand it anymore, you must spew your feelings to her, you must tell her how much you want her and admit your leaden inexperience. You tell her everything, and then, finally, breathe. She is excruciatingly calm after your outburst. Her cold, distant concern says it all. You're too humiliated to feel relieved. You accidentally break a wine glass and flee.

Weeks later, much to your nausea, she continues to flirt with you. But you know what you look like to her and finally realize that she's only doing it for sick kicks.

At long last and in a fit of self-pride, you tell her to go fuck herself, because you're sick of being strung along. She sounds annoyed and tells you that by all means, you should "do whatever you need to to feel comfortable." You are so confused. You are beginning to realize how completely disingenuous she's been. You feel bitter-sweet and thankful for your huge, stupid love.

Years later, like the untouchable queen you've grown into, you are not surprised to befriend clever, beautiful women who tell you stories of this same butch bitch (and several others) stringing them along. But you are not consoled by stories of other fat young femmes—less naive than you were!—getting worked over in the same way. You have by now developed a grudge. Because it's one thing to string along someone as pathetic as you once were. But your friends were smarter, even jaded already. It is becoming clearer that to you that there are many "she"s, and that to her, you all look alike.

After three more years, you still find this to be true. One night, you are cautiously flirting with a casual friend, a handsome older writer who you think likes small butches. Still, she is giving you the signals. You are amused and curious. You respond. You respond by going through the motions, but really, you are watching her. She's not pulling it off very well. You wonder what the fuck she's trying to seduce you for, since her heart isn't in. You play along for a while and start to get into it on some distant plane. She is watching you and you are watching her, and you are both going through the motions until you're actually moving, pawing at each other in a public bathroom. You can't stand to have her touch you, but your hands are all over her small, firm breasts, your mouth on her neck, bending her over the toilet towards the floor—she has become a salty meat product you know is going to sicken you later, but still has its appeal. It's then that she stops. She is gloating. You realize that what she really wants is to work you up and leave you hanging just for the sake of it. You're enraged. At the same time, it registers that femmes do this to butches all the time. You yourself like to do this,

but are careful only to do it to girls who beg to play along. You never assume. It's not a horrible thing to want, but this girl AIN'T ALL THAT. She is oblivious to your cool distance, and thinks you'll pant after her anyway. You want to stab her so violently that you scare yourself into being polite to her, if noticeably cold.

You proceed to watch her hit on three other young femmes, two of whom are fat. You know from having her hands on you that she doesn't know what to do with a fat femme; it is surprising how one pair of disinterested hands can turn warm, sensual flesh into mere lard. You just know. She is tacky enough to use the same bad line and a few of you have a good, mean laugh about her later. Except for the one girl, who believes her when she looks her in the eyes and tells her she is "stunning." You stop laughing.

You are realizing right about here that you must obsess. It's what you do. It goes on forever. You wash it down thinking there are much more important things in the world to think about.

