

Tears of a Clown



When I was twelve, I fell in love with an Indian girl named Dawn. She was tall and brown and was the best traditional powwow dancer on the rez. Her braids, wrapped in otter fur, were legendary. Of course, she didn't care about me. She mostly made fun of me (she called me Junior High Honky for some reason I never understood). But that just made me love her even more. She was out of my league, and even though I was only twelve, I knew that I'd be one of those guys who always fell in love with the unreachable, ungettable, and uninterested.

One night, at about two in the morning, when Rowdy slept over at my house, I made a full confession.

"Man," I said. "I love Dawn so much."

He was pretending to be asleep on the floor of my room.

"Rowdy," I said. "Are you awake?"

"No."

"Did you hear what I said?"

"No."

"I said I love Dawn so much."

He was quiet.

"Aren't you going to say anything?" I asked.

"About what?"

"About what I just said."

"I didn't hear you say anything."

He was just screwing with me.

"Come on, Rowdy, I'm trying to tell you something major."

"You're just being stupid," he said.

"What's so stupid about it?"

"Dawn doesn't give a shit about you," he said.

And that made me cry. Man, I've always cried too easily. I cry when I'm happy or sad. I cry when I'm angry. I cry because I'm crying. It's weak. It's the opposite of warrior.

"Quit crying," Rowdy said.

"I can't help it," I said. "I love her more than I've ever loved anybody."

Yeah, I was quite the dramatic twelve-year-old.

"Please," Rowdy said. "Stop that bawling, okay?"

"Okay, okay," I said. "I'm sorry."

I wiped my face with one of my pillows and threw it across the room.

"Jesus, you're a wimp," Rowdy said.

"Just don't tell anybody I cried about Dawn," I said.

"Have I ever told anybody your secrets?" Rowdy asked.

"No."

"Okay, then, I won't tell anybody you cried over a dumb girl."

And he didn't tell anybody. Rowdy was my secret-keeper.

Halloween



At school today, I went dressed as a homeless dude. It was a pretty easy costume for me. There's not much difference between my good and bad clothes, so I pretty much look half-homeless anyway.

And Penelope went dressed as a homeless woman. Of course, she was the most beautiful homeless woman who ever lived.

We made a cute couple.

Of course, we weren't a couple at all, but I still found the need to comment on our common taste.