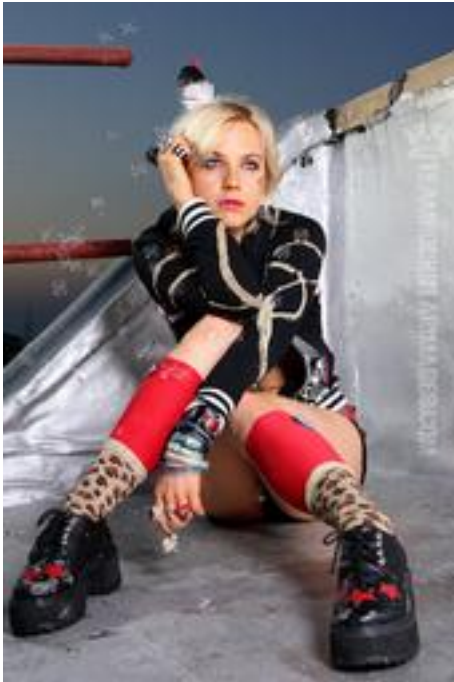


## You Can Tell

Written by Kate Crash

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Kate Crash can also be [read here](#) .



"You can tell, she was bred to be beautiful and full of sorrow." That is what she would whisper to me about girls like me, desperate for attention and neon lights and rich boys and fast times with screaming hearts and never quiet minds.

"But in the end," she says to me as she turns her white head from the window's sunset and onto some distant part of her past somewhere behind my left shoulder where life might start over, somewhere she can't track

"all this sorrow and sex don't mean a damn." and my insides roll over like a summer into storm, she reads me so well, I feel so alone and sometimes the heartache is too much I could just cry out and my scream would be so loud that all of me would go with it, to fly red above the world, out into the stars and be burned up, burned up, but happiness is never so far, especially if forgiveness can sew my heart shut long enough to keep on.

"tell me mom," I can never look at her, I always stare at her strong shoulders, her knobby hands, her wrinkled men's clothes "why you stay with him?"

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after years of bad choices and running away, she's finally made a bad choice and let it hang around her neck, stay like a love child because on some days it's almost okay, and the alternative is grave and besides who else is there out there for her? I know she thinks, as her hand sweeps to me,

"it's too hard to start over," she has told me before and now her new seven years now husband starts knocking at the door, "wrap wrap wrap warp" I can feel his blue collar knuckles and his tequila song, knock knocking to come to condemn her for being a woman.

she closes her eyes at his call and looks down her eyes are Africa and we're in the states, her lips part and words form justificatory waves "love is not all fire and passion, it too is about sacrifice and inaction." She thinks I have yet to learn this, patience, settling for less. She is right.

I walk to the window and raise it open. Her answer leaves me still empty, I know the decision is mine, I try her one more time before hopping out the window before that man comes inside, I try one more time to let her have the chance at a decent answer, a decent life, something not settled for, something more... unlike her, I left.

"No, mom. Tell my why you stay and how I can stop loving him."