

Simone/01



The squirrels hadn't been yet. She'd grown so used to their regularity over the years that they had grown semi-tame. They would announce their arrival with a tap and delicately munch on the feast Simone had left out for them. There were two squirrels and Simone had never really questioned the intimate anatomy of their bodies, but she liked to think they were husband and wife or at least lovers. And when they passed each other food they were tutting at how greedy the other one was. The way their fur bristled when extremely close to each other added another factor. And the fact that the smaller of the two always went first tickled her, as if one were being gentlemanly. But the squirrels hadn't been yet and Simone had been up all night waiting for a phonecall, the sunrise and the squirrels. She sighed throwing the phone onto the sofa. It had grown hot from where she'd held it tightly, anticipating its noise. He promised, again. She'd listened, again. He'd not called. Again. As she poured herself another coffee she vowed she'd do everything on her To-Do-List today. She stared through her toes questioning their frivolous life when they began to steadily glow red. The sun had begun to rise and she heard a tap, tap, tap.

*Text: Katie McCullough
Image: Natka the Great*

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When Simone was about six years old her mother discovered her raiding her wardrobe. Standing naked, practically swimming in her mothers stilettos and string of pearls, she was caught red-handed about to smear lipstick on her untainted lips. Startled she took a quick breath in expecting to feel the back of her mother's hand. She didn't. Instead her mother delicately took the lipstick out of her fumbling fingers and spread the pigment across her own smooth lips. She knelt down to Simone and taking her naive face in both hands, kissed her full on the lips. Her mother's fuller lipstick imprint over her own thin smile made them both laugh. Simone missed her mother's laugh.

She rarely wore lipstick now unless it was for a special occasion. Tonight seemed to feel like it was special or at least it was looking to be. She bought the dress in a fit of fury as she just couldn't get anything to sit right in the changing rooms. The pressure of hunting for a dress in the boutiques she thought she should shop in made her feel tired and insignificant. But in the safety of her own flat she felt like she'd triumphed by opting for the black dress. For a few moments she admired how she looked. She felt beautiful and she knew it, she believed it. She'd been staring at the pile of applications all day, but they were now a distant dream as she stepped into the autumn strewn street. Her lipstick caused many men to give her a second glance, but she was too busy running through the words in her head to notice.

Text: Katie McCullough

Image: Natka the Great