

# Some Girls

Story and photographs by Katie Rose Guest

*Names have been changed.*

There's this girl named Alice. Her name is important to me now—it's important that she possesses a name. The ways I've seen her mistreated, and the ways even I have mistreated her, depend upon her namelessness—that she is not a person, but a thing. Specifically, a thing that has sex with too many boys.

I met her to photograph her. She was performing in a school production; I was hired to photograph the performers. She was beautiful and easy to photograph. She had glowing skin, and her hair hung in long, smooth braids. She was tall and thin—her body was a girl's, not a woman's. Her voice was quiet as she agreed to every pose that I suggested. Later, when I studied the proofs, her eyes seemed blank like she hadn't even known I had been taking her picture. But, compared to many of the other girls I photographed that day, her pleasant demeanor was a relief.

I heard some of these other girls discussing Alice. They talked about her sex life—the quantity and quality of boys she slept with, how she slept with them, whether or not she used a condom with this one or that one. The contempt in their voices frightened me. Alice seemed like such a gentle person, so innocent. She was also younger than these girls who secretly tore her apart. To me she seemed defenseless against their harsh words.

One night I found myself at a small, private party with friends. I had not wanted to go, but a girlfriend of mine had asked me to be there for her sake. She was having trouble with her boyfriend and wanted my moral support. So we were all together at a friend's apartment. There were only 10 or 15 of us—some watched television, some smoked up, some played cards. After four hours or so at this party—at 3 a.m.—two boys said that they needed to go to the store for more "supplies." I figured they wanted more liquor and more blunts to roll their enormous pile of weed. An hour later they returned, with more than we expected them to bring: liquor, blunts and Alice.

She walked in with a friend, another girl also known for her cheap sexual favors. I watched from the bedroom doorway. Alice didn't see me. The girls came in behind the two boys and sat alone in chairs by the door. No one else in the room greeted them. No one else even acknowledged they were there. The two girls just sat and watched everyone in the room. I stood in the corner and seethed. Alice smiled all around her, even though no one smiled back. We all knew why Alice was there, including Alice. Neither Alice nor her friend tried to join a conversation, a card game—they didn't ask for anything to drink. They just waited in their chairs. I looked at the boys who sat on the sofa and drank beers. I was furious. I couldn't believe that these boys—my friends—would ruin the

party by bringing Alice. I was furious at her presence. Alice and the other girl were not friends with anyone at the party; they were brought for a purpose like the weed and alcohol. They would have sex with any boy who decided to ask. I knew the scenario. I knew what would happen, so I didn't stay to watch. I stormed out and slammed the door behind me.

As I drove to my apartment alone I thought, couldn't Alice see that the boys brought her there for physical gratification? What girl would agree to come to a private party at four in the morning? The party had finished—it was time for bed. Didn't she know that these boys only wanted to fuck her, and then they would disrespect her—throw her away like the condom they used? They talk bad about her to their friends. They don't acknowledge her in public. What girl would agree to these conditions? Only trash.

I tore Alice to pieces during that drive home. But that was because I had a secret of my own. When Alice had walked into the party, I had thought to myself: aren't I good enough for these guys? Why don't they want me? Why did they bring these girls when my girlfriends and I had been with them all evening? But I suppressed my secret envy of Alice, refusing to recognize it then. I thought,

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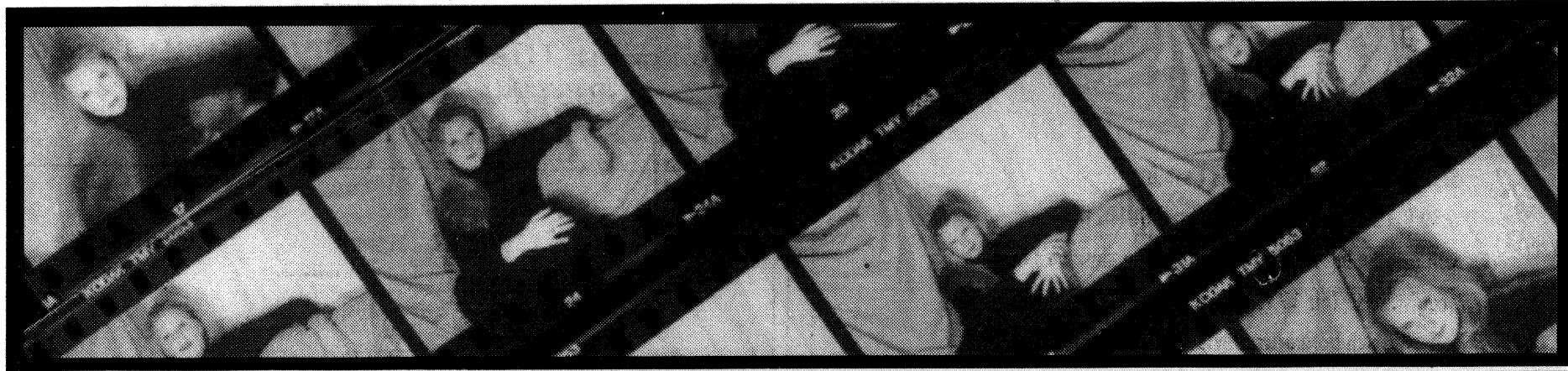
well, the boys know they can't get from me what they can get from Alice. I'm not easy to jump into bed with, like she is.

Then, one day, I passed Alice on the walkway. She smiled a big smile and said, "Hi, Katie." I smiled back and said, "Hello, Alice." Alice. A person, a girl—a woman. I couldn't hate her. When she looked at me, I saw that her big brown eyes weren't empty at all—at that moment they greeted me with kindness and admiration when she spoke my name. I felt dirty because of the dirty things I'd thought and said about Alice. She never did anything to me to deserve my disdain, my disgust.

I realized that I was jealous of Alice. I had set myself up as superior and held Alice in contempt. I was jealous of the attention that the boys gave to her. I was jealous that Alice didn't care—she would arrive at four o'clock in the morning and smile the whole time, and then get on with her life. If I could have seen her in pain I could have pitied her. If I had heard her complain about how the boys had hurt her, I could have felt sorry for her. But I only saw her in the glory of the boys' desire for her, and so I hated her.

In that instant on the walkway, I hated the boys who slept with her and then disrespected her. Don't they know that she has a name—Alice—not "that bitch" or "that cunt?" I asked myself, how could the boys who had sex with Alice treat her like a whore? All she ever did was give these boys a gift—they took it and spat on her. And we, the righteous girls, spat on her too.

Katie Rose Guest, a Trinity junior, is a photographer for *The Chronicle*.



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