

Journal Entry Four – The Celebration

Time to say good-bye to the Christian school. We had our 9th grade graduation at Mrs. Cleo's house. She was this popular teacher with a huge house on acres of land with a cool pool in the back. Why was she popular? Number one, she was cool, she could relate to the students and was down to earth. You know the type. Number two, she was a natural red-headed bombshell. With her silk blouses and pencil skirts and high heels every day, what was not to admire or like?! I wanted to be just like her when I grew up. Smart, attractive, stylish, sexy...you name it. I could see why the boys and men fell all over her. They could barely speak around her. We would have free time and everyone was supposed to be working on their English assignment. She would be at her desk grading papers. The pencil skirt was so tight I could never understand how she sat down in it and crossed her legs. She always kept her pencil behind her ear as she graded papers. When she would need to mark up sentences she would slowly remove the pencil from behind her ear, lick it with the tip of her tongue, and write her corrections. Then slowly slide the pencil back behind her ear. The boys in the class were not working after that! Drool was

slathered on most of their desks. Gross!

Anyway, Miss Cleo threw us a pool party and invited the other teachers as well. Of course all of the female teachers hated her. They were all quite homely and overweight so you can guess why. And of course the male teachers worshiped her. Her husband was a hunk as well and took it all in stride. Oh and her daughters were gorgeous redheads as well. Bitches. Ha!

So we all having a great time, playing board games inside, pool games outside, and eating everything placed in front of us! Everyone knows I cannot swim so I just play in the shallow end where I can stand. Even though me and my mom took basic lessons at the Y. Still a great time! Even my good friend, Dee, was there. She was the one I called after I had sex the first time; the one who told me about the Hymen thing.

So anyway I was standing by the side of the pool when one of the white guys screamed something inaudible, rushed up behind me and pushed me in the deep end of the pool. Everything stopped. Time froze. Everything around me froze. The more my arms and legs flailed, the deeper I sank. I had no time to hold my breath beforehand so I was losing oxygen fast. At one point I must have gotten back

to the top for a second so I screamed "Help!" and took a breath. No one heard my cries. Everyone was laughing and having fun. Why was everyone laughing? I could hear someone yelling, "Very funny Tara, stop playing around!" I was losing hope but kept fighting my way to the top again. Water was beginning to fill my lungs. Finally, I reached the top and yelled "Help!" again. No time for a breath this time.

And then an angel appeared in front of me and a hand slipped around my waist. I was slowly floating to the top. I can feel air on top of head, my arms, and my legs. But why am I not moving? I can only hear the sounds of chaos around me. A collage of screams, apologies and movement. "What's going on?!" "I thought she was playing around!"

"Is she dead?!" "I'm sorry; I didn't know she couldn't swim!"

Someone was carrying me, then laying me down, pulling at my head. I could feel the cool grass under my back and legs. Then there was pressing on my chest and mouth. And that's when it happened. I guess I realized it was not my time. That God had a bigger purpose for me on this earth. My eyes opened wide, I rolled to my side, and proceeded

to cough up water. I thought it would never stop coming up, but it did. I was alive and well, but once again the spoiler of the party and center of attention.

Two blessings. My angel, who happened to be Dee. She knew I was not faking since she knew I could not swim. And my old Elementary teacher, who just happens to also be a certified Nurse. The one who saved my life.

So the party was over. Thank goodness I just happened to drown at the tail end of the party. Ha!

This was just one of many near tragedies in my life.