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11 LC (Class)

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**Love in a Hopeless Place**

 Most fairy tales begin with, “Once upon a time in a far away land…” Well, mine didn’t quite start that way. In fact, it began at a famously douchey bar in Royal Oak, Michigan when a handsome young man with Ray Ban eyeglasses and a *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* t-shirt saved me from a most boring car salesman who was trying to get my number. While it’s not quite as high stakes as a prince rescuing a maiden locked in a tower, it sure felt like it at the time.

 Here’s how it went down.

 I wasn’t supposed to be at Fifth that night. A close friend of mine needed a “wing woman” to help her out because this guy she had been talking to only wanted to meet if they could meet in a group (side note: this is a bad sign if you are ever trying to date someone).

So on that night, two completely incompatible friend groups met. Somehow, I got swooped into a conversation with the brother of the guy my friend was trying to date. As this car-salesmen-brother-guy droned on and on over the loud top 40 music about working at GM, I glanced up from our *stimulating* conversation and met eyes with the most striking person I’d ever seen. My eyes kept drawing back to his like a magnet. I couldn’t tell if this eye game was creepy, a coincidence, or a flirtation, but I wasn’t left to wonder for long.

“Are you with that guy?” he came and whispered in my ear, making it look like we had known each other for a long time.

“Does it look like I want to be with this guy?” I whispered back with a sarcastic smile.

Then, like we’d loved each other forever, he told the car salesmen, “Thanks for keeping my girl company. I’ve got it from here.” He winked at the guy, suggesting it was time for him to go back to his awkward group of friends who were now pretending like they hadn’t been watching this whole exchange occur from a few feet away.

“I’m Zak.”

“I’m Sam.” And then I giggled. I always giggle when I’m nervous.

He smiled at me--the first time his dimples ever melted my heart--and in that moment, my heart felt light. And although we only spoke for a few minutes before my friends were ready to leave, something inside me knew that something special had just occurred.

My friend Shelby, the one who I came to wing for (who did not end up dating that guy by the way--big shocker there) still tells the story of how I literally skipped back to our car after we left the bar. I was giddy.

And...I was right. Something special had just occurred. Three years later, Zak is my fiance.

**1) What is the purpose of this piece and what kind of voice did you establish to fit your purpose for writing?**

My purpose of this piece is to entertain. In my piece, I establish a light-hearted, witty, and conversational voice. As I wrote, I aimed to make the piece feel like my reader was a friend I was telling the story to. In the beginning, I use the language that is found in typical fairy tales (once upon a time, maiden, prince, tower) and compare it to the experience I had finding love (douchey bar, loud top 40 music). I use a lot of dialogue in the middle of the narrative, which shows the wittiness exchanged between me and Zak. In the end, I shift to a more romantic tone, but I still manage to slip in funny side bits about my friend’s unsuccessful attempt at love to keep my voice light-hearted. .

**2) What specific diction choices helped you achieve your intended voice? Cite them in your response.**

I use language modern and relatable. I say, “Here’s how it went down.” This is a millenial phrase that is used to indicate that a story is going to be told. I explain that I went out as my friend’s “wing woman,” a play on the term wing man, to give an idea of the role I played that need. It also helped to display my character as someone who is confident enough to play that role. I also employ some figurative language, like when I use a simile to describe my attraction to Zak: “My eyes kept drawing back to his like a magnet.” This acts as a shift from my annoyance with the car salesman to my fascination with Zak.

**3) What specific syntax choices helped you achieve your intended voice? Cite them in your response.**

I use a lot of long sentences, like the last sentence of the first paragraph where I describe Zak and the car salesmen because when I tell stories, I tend to be a bit long-winded in order to get every detail in. I also mix in some very short sentences for a punch of humor, like a sting at the end of a thought.I do this when I say, “And then I giggled. I always giggle when I’m nervous.” In these two very short, simple sentences, I’m sharing about how visibly awkward I was in this moment because I was so excited and nervous. By communicating it so directly, my audience can easily imagine the moment and feel the honesty in it.

**4) What specific punctuation and capitalization choices helped you achieve your intended voice? Cite them in your response.**

My use of dashes, ellipses, and parentheses played a major part in the achievement of my intended voice. In this sentence, “ He smiled at me--the first time his dimples ever melted my heart--and in that moment, my heart felt light” the dashes interrupt the sentence to give my reader urgent information. In my everyday speech, I tend to go on a lot of tangents, so this is reflective of that. The final line of the essay begins with the word *and*, but it is followed by the ellipsis (“And...I was right. Something special had just occurred”). This adds an element of final anticipation to the storytelling which enhances the entertainment value of the piece. And finally, I make a quick address directly to the reader when I say in parentheses, “(side note: this is a bad sign if you are ever trying to date someone).” This is the only time I use the 2nd person to deliver info to the reader. This enhances the conversational and funny voice.