

"Yeah, but I'm sure he likes Cheryl."

"Who said he likes Cheryl? Her thighs are so fat! Audrey, he likes you! Everyone knows it. Marie said she heard Mark and Jason talking, and they were talking about you!"

"What? Don't be ridiculous Cindy. Maybe he wants help in math or something."

Audrey forgets about all the previous times Mark had approached her. She forgets the time he gave her his raincoat on that school trip to the Science Centre. What about that nudge at the Christmas party, or the dance at the Valentine's bash? Audrey seems not to remember. Isn't it the attention that made her like him in the first place?

"Mom, that's the dress. Pleeease!"

"Okay, okay. Try it on."

Audrey wraps herself into the change room, pulling the curtain tight at both sides. She steps into the pink, lush fabric and slides it up her sides. She strides out to her mother, her back straight, her shoulders back. Watch out Julia Roberts!

"Oh Audrey. You're gorgeous."

She starts patting down her daughter's messy hair, smoothing the pinkness over her daughter's round behind, tucking away her daughter's bra straps. "Oh you're so darling!"

"Thanks mom." Audrey's a little embarrassed, but not like usual. The dress gives her some conviction. She twirls in front of a mirror.

"Can I go to Mme Tussaud's mom?"

"Of course. We'll get your hair all fixed up. Maybe we'll try some braids, like that singer you like so much."

"You mean Brandy?"

"Yep."

"Oh, thank you mom."

"You're welcome Audrey. Now let's go."

Audrey hardly sleeps the night before prom. Her mother wakes her up to take her to *Mme. Tussaud's*. Prince smirks. "You sure need a makeover!"

"Shut up Prince." Audrey shakes the comment off as she exits the house.

At Mme Tussaud's Lucy pulls and stretches Audrey's hair, adding more hair, counterfeit hair, hair that doesn't belong to her. Audrey's nerves are fully awake after four hours of braid-weaving. She pictures Mark taking her shimmering, pink-tipped fingers in his strong hands, leading her to the dance floor.

At home, in her room, she slips on her dress and stares at her image in the mirror. She's not Audrey anymore. Her nerves are easing, her smile is peeking. Her brother's taunts dissolve at her closed bedroom door. It's the dress. Nothing can touch her in that dress.

"Have a wonderful night honey. You're magnificent." Mrs. Donald is proud of the way Audrey looks.

Mark doesn't ask her. He was scared she would say no. Audrey must go alone. She tags along with her friends and their dates. She's in her pink dress, her hair is finely braided, straight strands flying in the night breeze.

Mark smiles at her from the dance floor. She turns around expecting to see Cheryl. She's a step closer now to being like Cheryl, with her dress, her hair, her makeup. She's no longer "Brainer Audrey," the smart girl Mark actually liked. She feels one step away still, one step from perfection. She stands under the disco ball and it orbits and sparkles, shining light on various dresses. As it shines on Audrey's face, her colour is transported. The shadows and the twinkle paint her a new face, a white face, and she glides over to Mark and asks him to dance.

Christine Singh has just finished a Masters degree in English literature at York University and is now looking forward to spending more time on her writing.

BRONWYN GILLIES

I am Bronwyn. I am a girl. I like being a girl. I have Know Idea why I like being a girl. I just do. My favorite thing to do is art. So far I have don one hundrud things so far.

This is Bronwyn Gillies's first poem. It was written when she was seven years old.