

Confessions – Ruby, Year 12, NSW

I will try to remember him, for you all. Now, I know myself. I speak the plain and honest truth, no rose gold glasses or all those cliché idioms. Even if I did love him, once, I know the truth of the matter and that is what I will try and convey to you today. He was in the wrong, from the start. But I understand why he did what he did. Just left me a bit wounded, that's all.

How do you get across a character like Matthew's? He was so forgettable yet, once you let your skin cells intermingle with his for a while, you came to know one another without speaking. Seeing him on the street would lead to a sort of facial blindness. Do I know him? He looks like someone I would know. Wait, what are the faces of those I love? Why can't I remember anymore?

That is what a glimpse of him evoked. Did he mean to do this? I think not. He was just handed features from God and had to live with them. A power or a curse, of sorts.

We met in front of the *Agnus Dei* in the art gallery. Both staring at art (each other) and that poor little lamb all tied up and hopeless.

He told me he loved me after a month of us knowing each other.

Every day, we would follow the same routine, 'accidentally' bumping into one another. We never changed our routes. We understood each other, right?

The next day, he told me he thought I was someone else.

I found out, a week later, after walking home the same way as him (by accident), that he was a priest. So maybe the way we saw love when it came to us was not the same. I saw us in *the Kiss* in the room next to the lamb, but he saw me as a sister. Maybe as the hopeless lamb itself, no longer Christ's sacrifice in a negative light, but rather, the lost sheep needing to be shepherded back.

I told myself I was only following his wants when I entered the church after him. Maybe religion would be good for me. Maybe, as an only child, a brother would be good as well. I could accept the love he offered. He was complex. He was different. We understood each other. We saw each other.

Before I could ever tell him all of this, the way Matthew had changed my path and my being in five entire minutes, I found him. Lying on the floor. Eyes open wide and alarmed, a little. Before they dulled.

What had happened? How had everything changed once more, again? He was the lamb. He was the lamb.

I was the lamb! I was the lamb?

A bit of blood fell from him. A small plummet to the hardwood floor of his church office underneath him. It didn't look very comfortable. I decided, I should move him. The confessional booth? This is my confessional booth. I'm honest, remember? You trust me?

I want you guys to trust me.

Anyways. I sat him down on the plush seat inside. It was one of those old ones, you see. Wooden and velvety seats with cushions. Very swish. Almost made me want to convert again, if I'm honest (I am. Don't worry!).

I shut the door, him in the darkness, alone with God. This is what he wanted. I knew him. I knew him very well.

He was a priest and he loved me. But not like that. He was the lamb, freed. Now with God. I had done good. I had. I had!

"I'm sorry. You're free to leave now. I just wanted you to know I loved you, maybe." I whispered against the wood. I waited. Maybe he needed to talk a bit more with the Big Guy.

I left and that was that. I didn't really, truly think about it until now. I guess I've always had time alone to think. To write the truth down.

Always been a bit (in) solitary.

Have to be, been here for almost 20 years now. Plain walls, canteen mush. Prison food, ha! Just like school, I suppose. I needed brothers and sisters, once, but not anymore. I'd freed the damn lamb, hadn't I? This was my reward? For all that? For doing well? For letting him go straight to God, straight to the damn confessional so he would make it to heaven, hypocrisy and all?

He loved me, I swear he did. That's on him, not me.

But, I forget myself. I said I would tell you about him. Well, this is it. He was a hypocrite, a fake, a fraud. He lied to me, and he damn well knew it. *I* was honest, don't forget it.