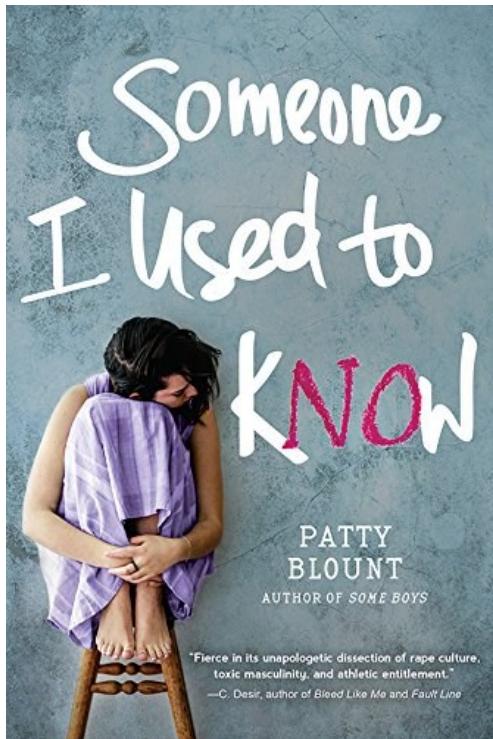


SOMEONE I USED TO KNOW



Young Adult

By Patty Blount

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3
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Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
17	<p>“But you have something I didn’t have in freshman year.” I did? “What’s that?” “Boobs.” The other girls crack up as my face bursts into flames. “The boys won’t see anything else. Trust me.”</p>
25	<p>And because I do, there’s no way in hell I’m going anywhere near that rally because I don’t need the entire university knowing I’m Derek Lawrence, the guy whose sister is the Bellford High School Rape Victim. That’s what the media called her. Ashley was barely fourteen when it happened. ...The Derek Lawrence who played a stupid game that got his sister raped and then told a court of law to go easy on her rapist.</p>
26	<p>Martin’s got this ancient issue of Playboy. We’re not really friends. He’s just a kid at school. But this old magazine is awesome, so when he invites me to his house, I can’t wait to go because he claims there’s a whole box of them in his basement. It’s an issue from way back in the eighties, and the pictures show women of every type you can imagine. Blonds, brunettes, redheads—each more beautiful and sexier than the last. Blue eyes, brown eyes, green eyes, and they all have these big, beautiful, and bare breasts. I can’t stop staring. I don’t want to stop staring. It’s the first time I see a girl as, well—a girl, and not a sister or a mother. I like it. A lot.</p>
35	<p>I was... raped.</p>
38	<p>It kept flipping in all the best possible ways when he took my hand and led me to the field, under the bleachers, and when he kissed me. Even now, two years later, I can still taste the beer on our tongues... feel the tingles. So many tingles. We sat on the ground under the bleachers, but it was disgusting under there. Dirt, cigarette butts, and the smell of sour, moldy bread from the dozens of old beers that had spilled there over time. We drank too much of the six-pack he carried. We kissed, and his stubble scraped my skin. I liked it. And then I didn’t. I began to feel sick and dizzy and sleepy. The next time my belly did that flippy thing, all that beer wanted to rush back up. But Vic pushed me down into the dirt. I can feel it, right now, feel the dirt and the bits of plastic and metal and glass—bite into my skin. Nothing tingled, nothing felt good, but he was still kissing me, touching me in places I didn’t want him to touch and—</p>
47	<p>She’s with me, so I guess that means she likes me. And she kisses me and lets me touch her, which has to mean she likes me likes me, right?</p>
51	<p>The most points you can get are a hundred, and that’s usually for some sort of sexual thing, like getting a blow job on our rival school’s grounds.</p>
52	<p>Steal someone’s mailbox, play ring-and-run, and kiss a girl in the stairwell while changing classes are each ten points. Flatten somebody’s tire, dance on a grave, piss out a car window are thirty points each. Coping a feel is twenty points—ten for each side. And one hundred points for sex with an ex. I grin. I can probably snag two hundred points if I call Dakota and Hannah.</p>
53	<p>I lean over and kiss her. “I want us to be together, Derek.” “Mm—hmm.” I nuzzle her neck. ...I freeze. Holy shit. Did she mean... I pull back to study her face. She gazes directly into my eyes. “What? You mean you want us to...” “Yes. I want you to be my first.”</p>

Page	Content
	Christ on a cracker, this has to be my lucky day. I reach for my door handle. "Anybody home right now?"
54	<p>"Yeah. Absolutely. I'd rather be with you, too," I assure her and kiss her again.</p> <p>As soon as I get home that evening, I text Bruce, Andre, and a couple of other guys that I will be collecting one hundred points the night of the homecoming game.</p>
66	<p>"He went after another kid in the locker room, making fun of him, nothing terrible. I let it go until he called the guy a homo."</p> <p>... "I get that a lot of it's just guys being guys. So I ignore it. I let them have their fun. But the kid's face went, like, gray. I seriously thought he was gonna puke. I figured he really is gay and hasn't come out yet. So I told Vic to back off."</p>
73	<p>A junior out with her housemates met some guys, shared a few drinks, and did some dancing. One of the housemates drank excessively, so a guy helped the girl and her friends get her home. Once inside the house, he asked if he could sleep on their sofa because he was too messed up to go home. They agreed. Everyone went to sleep. Hours later, the junior awoke to him on top of her.</p> <p>He raped her while all her housemates slept peacefully in their beds.</p>
84	<p>"I was the strongest guy I knew, and even I wasn't able to save my wife. She killed herself about seven months after she was raped."</p>
88	<p>The legal definition of rape is forcible penetration with a penis or implement.</p>
90	<p>"And you wouldn't believe the ass on her. I'm putting the moves on her, carrying her tray, about to ask her to hook up. She's totally into it. I can tell."</p> <p>... "She's playing it cool, thanking me for the help and all, and then saying, 'See you around,' but all I want to do is just grab her and shove her up against the nearest wall, you know?"</p> <p>"Oh, yeah."</p> <p>"So I say to her, 'Come on, baby. Let's find ourselves a nice quiet spot and make each other very happy.'"</p> <p>... He'd pretty much grabbed the tray from her hands, followed her over to the table where the girl's friends were sitting, and sort of stammered his way through what ended up being, "I want to do you."</p> <p>... "She says, 'Nah,'" he says with a shrug like it's no biggie and then adds, "And I'm like, 'Who do you think you are, bitch?' When I see her again, I'm just gonna do it. Just shove her up against the wall and see how she likes it."</p>
105	<p>"It's become a 'tradition' here," she says with an eye roll and finger quotes. "A scavenger hunt the football players do every year during homecoming season."</p> <p>"What are they supposed to find?"</p> <p>"Us," Deanne says with a shrug. "It kind of sucks. The guys get points for how far they get. You know, a kiss is like one point, but getting to second base might get them ten or twenty."</p> <p>"And going all the way gets like a hundred," Marlena adds.</p> <p>... "Yeah, so don't accept any dates. They're just for points. But that's not the bad part. The bad part is some of the boys try to get points any way they can. Sometimes, if there's nobody around to see, they'll grab you in the hallway, squeeze a boob, snap your bra, lift up your skirt."</p>
109	<p>"Uh, let's see. First, he ordered me off the field and back home, then he said he doesn't want anybody finding out we're related. And because a huge public fight with my brother wasn't</p>

Page	Content
	already bad enough, I just got yelled at for the way I dealt with Doug and Brayden trying to cop a feel."
110	<p>Vic laughs again. "Especially Derek. He's well on his way to a hundred points."</p> <p>A hundred points. "But I thought that was for sex."</p> <p>"It is," Vic confirms, and my face heats up. "But don't worry. He's got it all under control. He's hooking up with Dakota again."</p> <p>..."Okay, yeah, he treats me like crap, but that's just to me. You know, annoying little sister. But there's no way he'd have sex with a girl just to win some stupid game."</p> <p>"Trust me, he would." And then Vic waves a hand. "But the hunt isn't all about sex. We have to do other stuff, too."</p> <p>"Like what?"</p> <p>"Um. Well, like steal somebody's mailbox or toss a pair of shoes over a utility line and piss on a grave. Oh, and I think at least one card says to do ten shots in less than a minute."</p>
112	<p>He moves even closer, and I hold my breath, not daring to move until his eyes close and his lips touch mine.</p> <p>His lips are so soft and oh my God! Vic is kissing me. Victor Patton, a senior, is kissing me, a freshman.</p> <p>...His hands grip my face and angle my head, and he kisses me again. I mean really kisses me... with tongue. I think I might die of terminal happiness, because this is literally the best thing that's ever happened to me.</p> <p>..."So... kissing's okay?"</p> <p>I nod vigorously.</p> <p>"And... what about touching, like this?" Deliberately, he moves his hand to my right breast, lifting it, squeezing it. My legs bounce, and I'm on total sensory overload, but I nod again, and he laughs.</p> <p>"Got it." He leans in and kisses me again, his hand still right there, and I forget all about Derek and the hunt and points and Doug's stupid leg.</p>
113	<p>"No, like he said, there are tons of older and way more experienced girls he could do that with. He must really like you, Ashley."</p> <p>I float through class that day. Vic drives me home every day for the rest of the week, and every day, our kisses get more and more exciting.</p>
119	<p>"Look, man, I got called to testify about the scavenger hunt. Tell the court what it was, who played, what we had to do. Rape was never part of it. It wasn't on a single player's list."</p> <p>"So what was on the list?"</p> <p>"My list had sex with an ex. I didn't know that Victor's list had sex with a virgin until..." I clench my jaw.</p> <p>..."Just what the hell was so cool about this scavenger hunt in the first place? I mean, why'd you get so into it? No offense, but sex with an ex? Sex with a virgin? That's messed up."</p>
120	<p>"I was called to testify for Ashley. But Victor's defense attorney tripped me up on his cross-examination. He asked me if anybody made plans about forcing girls, about taking points for our items on the hunt lists. I said not to my knowledge because that was true. Nobody did discuss it openly. But the truth is, a few of the guys did try to steal points. This one guy? Doug. He cornered my sister in a stairwell, but a teacher broke that up. And I heard some stories about cell phones aimed up girls' skirts. But I didn't say any of that on the stand because he asked me if anybody planned to force girls to get their points. How's that for</p>

Page	Content
	sibling loyalty? My sister's rapist is on trial, and I'm giving testimony that paints the entire team out to be a bunch of choirboys," I say with a sneer.
123	Your Honor, it's true I let Victor kiss me and touch me, but that's all I wanted to do. He chose to ignore me when I said stop.
125	<p>"I said, Doug just tried to fondle me. Are you going to do anything about it?"</p> <p>"There's nothing I can do. I didn't see anything, and it would be your word against his."</p> <p>... "He wouldn't let me pass by him unless I... unless I lifted my shirt."</p> <p>"That's because he's a little turd who knows he'll never see a girl's boobs voluntarily, so he has to milk the Bengals hunt for anything he can get."</p>
129	<p>"It's not as if I don't like her."</p> <p>"Oh, it's not like you don't like her. That's a really great reason to have sex. 'Hey, Dakota! I don't not like you. Let's sleep together.' I'm sure she just melted at that." Dad laughs, but it's a scary sound, not a happy one. I'm not sure I've ever seen him so mad. "And here it is. Our son's scavenger hunt list."</p> <p>... "Sex with an ex." Dad looks up from the phone with eyes that could bore holes through solid wood. "I'll ask again. Is this the only reason why you asked Dakota out again?"</p>
132	One has his phone in his palm throughout math class, aiming up girls' skirts every time the teacher turns away. Doug, the same moron I tripped yesterday, asks Mia, the girl who sits next to him, if he can borrow a pen. She searches through her bag for one, and as soon as she looks up, he plants a kiss on her. The whole class goes wild as Doug high-fives all the guys sitting around him. Mia keeps scrubbing at her lips, looking like she'd just been tricked into kissing a fairy-tale toad.
137	"Your sister has great tits," he mutters so only I could hear him, grinning behind his mouth guard. "They feel so good."
142	"Derek, I'm telling you it's not cool for guys to demand we show them body parts. It's even illegal. And it's really not cool for you to get back with an ex-girlfriend just because you need sex with an ex to get some stupid points. You have absolutely no idea what it's like to be a girl. None."
151	"Guys, let's play a game. It's a trivia game this time, not a scavenger hunt. Take out a pen. Ready? Here's the first question. It's for the boys. What do you do if you don't want to participate in the scavenger hunt?" I pause and hum a game show tune. "Okay, first, why don't we ask what the girls did during the last scavenger hunt? I'll tell you. We wore shorts in case guys decided to look up our skirts. We never walked alone. We had our parents pick us up after late practices. Okay, boys, show us your list now. Oh, wait! You didn't write anything down? Too bad. Guess you lose."
176	<p>"You let Victor kiss you, correct?"</p> <p>"Yes."</p> <p>"You let Victor touch your breast, correct?"</p> <p>"Yes."</p> <p>"Why did you let him have sex with you?"</p>
183	"Rape is a power thing. Everybody has this power inside them... what to wear, what to say, what to do. You never think about it. It's just there. And when it's taken, you do a lot of shit to try to convince yourself that you still have that power. This is why some rape survivors go on self-destructive binges—changing their appearance or getting wasted a lot, maybe even having a lot of sex with different people."

Page	Content
198	<p>"We don't have to go to the rally. We could go back to my dorm. My roommates are out." ...I tighten my arms around her and kiss her deep. I want to take her up on that offer like I want to breathe. It's all I want to do. I kiss her again, and with a couple million regrets, let her go.</p>
201	<p>Past the booth, there's what looks like a clothesline strung up between a couple of trees. Clipped to the line are clothes and posters that say things like This is what I was wearing the night I was raped.</p> <p>It's a pair of flannel pants.</p> <p>I swallow hard, and I keep reading.</p> <p>He said I was so sexy, he couldn't control himself. We'd been dating for four months.</p> <p>This is a dress. It cannot give consent.</p> <p>He told me, "You make me so hard."</p> <p>Stop telling girls how to dress and start telling boys NOT to rape.</p> <p>He asked me, "How was it?" I cried and fought the whole time, and he wanted me to give his performance a score.</p>
203	<p>"The posters. Yeah. I read them. Did you see the one that said something about being so sexy, I can't control myself?"</p> <p>When I nod, Ian looks down and clears his throat, and says, "I used that exact line on the girl I lost my virginity with—and then, didn't talk to her for over a year."</p>
206	<p>"But we can only do that if we talk about something nobody wants to talk about. And that's rape culture. See, a lot of guys believe women like me hate men. That we're a bunch of man-hating feminists who worship Satan."</p> <p>... "These are men who think it's okay to harass women they see on the street, demand that we smile for them or give them our numbers, and then call us bitches if we don't. These are the men who protect and support the athletes, the celebrities, the coaches and teachers, the priests and next-door neighbors and politicians accused of rape instead of listening to the accusers."</p>
208	<p>She talks about the bone-deep feelings of guilt and loneliness that almost compelled her to take her own life.</p>
224	<p>"What the fuck do you mean, with her?"</p> <p>"With her, Derek. It's on his card."</p> <p>The bottom falls out of my world. "What's on his card?"</p> <p>"I don't know for sure. It's just a feeling. I heard some of the guys in the locker room talking about Vic's scavenger hunt list. Sex with a virgin. Two hundred points. They doubled the points."</p> <p>... "I know, and I'm telling you, they're not listening. They decided she's worth double if Vic... if Vic... you know."</p>
244	<p>"This feels like revenge, Ash."</p> <p>I shake my head. "No. It's justice, which is what I should have gotten in court, but I didn't because nobody could prove it was real rape. I mean, seriously, is there such a thing as fake rape?"</p> <p>A few heads swivel my way, and I realize I'm talking too loud. I lean over my sandwich and tell Tara straight up, "It's not fair, Tara. None of this is fair. He says the sex was consensual, and just like that, the charges go from rape down to sexual assault, and he spends what? A stupid year in prison and gets to come out, go back to his nice life, like nothing happened?"</p>

Page	Content
	And what do I get? A brother who can't stand me, parents on the verge of divorce, and oh, yeah, let's not forget about the list of psychological problems I now have."
247	"I was raped at knifepoint. And still, my father blamed me. Said I shouldn't have been walking alone, shouldn't have gone to that school. You know the drill."
249	<p>"Okay, keep it professional. Obviously, you've noticed these images are intentionally trying to be provocative. Why?"</p> <p>"Because sex sells!" a</p> <p>...While I turn pages, bits and pieces of the conversations taking place around me drift into my ears.</p> <p>"Totally do her. She's so hot."</p> <p>"What car? I only see the girl in the bikini."</p> <p>"Great tits."</p> <p>"Legs."</p> <p>"Ass."</p> <p>"Mouth."</p>
250	Ashley, you're so hot. You have the best tits in the entire freshman class. I love to touch them. You like it, don't you? You like it when I touch you.
251	I force my attention back to my catalog and stop suddenly at a holiday ad that says, "Hey! Why not spike your best friend's eggnog?"
261	I participated in a sexist scavenger hunt with not just enthusiasm but actual excitement. I never saw rape even when it was right in front of me. I am all those sexist, misogynistic things! Every one of them, and I can't. Fucking. Stand it."
305	"I joined this group called GAR at my school. Guys Against Rape. How lame is that?" He laughs, but it's fake and forced, and oh my God, the great Derek Lawrence is actually nervous. I want to keep ignoring him, but he keeps talking. "We meet a few times a week and pledge to do our part to end misogyny and add our voices to protests."
341	"I wish I could tell you I was that guy, but... no, I played and scored over a hundred points, completing my card. Some cards had stuff on them like sex in public, sex on a moving vehicle, sex with a virgin. That's the one that led to my sister's rape. Over the past two years, I've replayed the day I chose my card, that moment, a few million times. If I'd stood next to the guy who said no and backed him up, I'm convinced a few of my buddies would have stood up with me. And maybe a few more guys with them. If I'd done that, I think my teammate wouldn't have picked my sister to target, and if he hadn't raped her, I'm dead-set sure my family wouldn't be falling apart."
346	I know drinking beer at my age is wrong. I think ignoring me when I tell you I'm dizzy and sick is also wrong.
352	I lean in and touch his lips with mine, and it's this perfect moment when there's no pain, no scar tissue, no shame or guilt or grief—just a girl who's a little bit in love with a boy with Nike swoosh hair and magic eyes who maybe loves her back and is willing to let her set the pace. His lips are warm and firm, and his hands gently caress my face, my hair, my neck, making me feel like something valuable, something treasured, something that matters. We angle our heads, move closer, and let the kiss go on for a long time. I'm warm, soothed, and stirred up and can feel all these dark and hidden parts of me ignite, parts I was sure had been drowned in hurt and anger.

Profanity	Count
Ass	28
Bitch	6
Dick	5
Fuck	29
Goddamn	3
Piss	40
Pussy	2
Shit	59
Tit	4