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Untitled

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ABC poem by Neha Rajan

Ash settles in the creases of his clothes.

Breathe in, breathe out, don't think about her too much.

**Caustic laughter rings out from behind him as her hand wraps
around his.**

**Darkly painted fingernails take hold of his cigarette. She smirks,
exhales.**

**Electricity seems to crackle in her eyes, and she's too close, too
close.**

**Fearless—that's how she has always been, but this is ridiculous.
Girls, he thinks, are insane, and he will never understand why she
keeps coming back to him.**

**He takes the cigarette back, blows a smoke ring in her face.
It becomes a game (what else to be expected?) and she's slunk
closer, lips almost at his neck.**

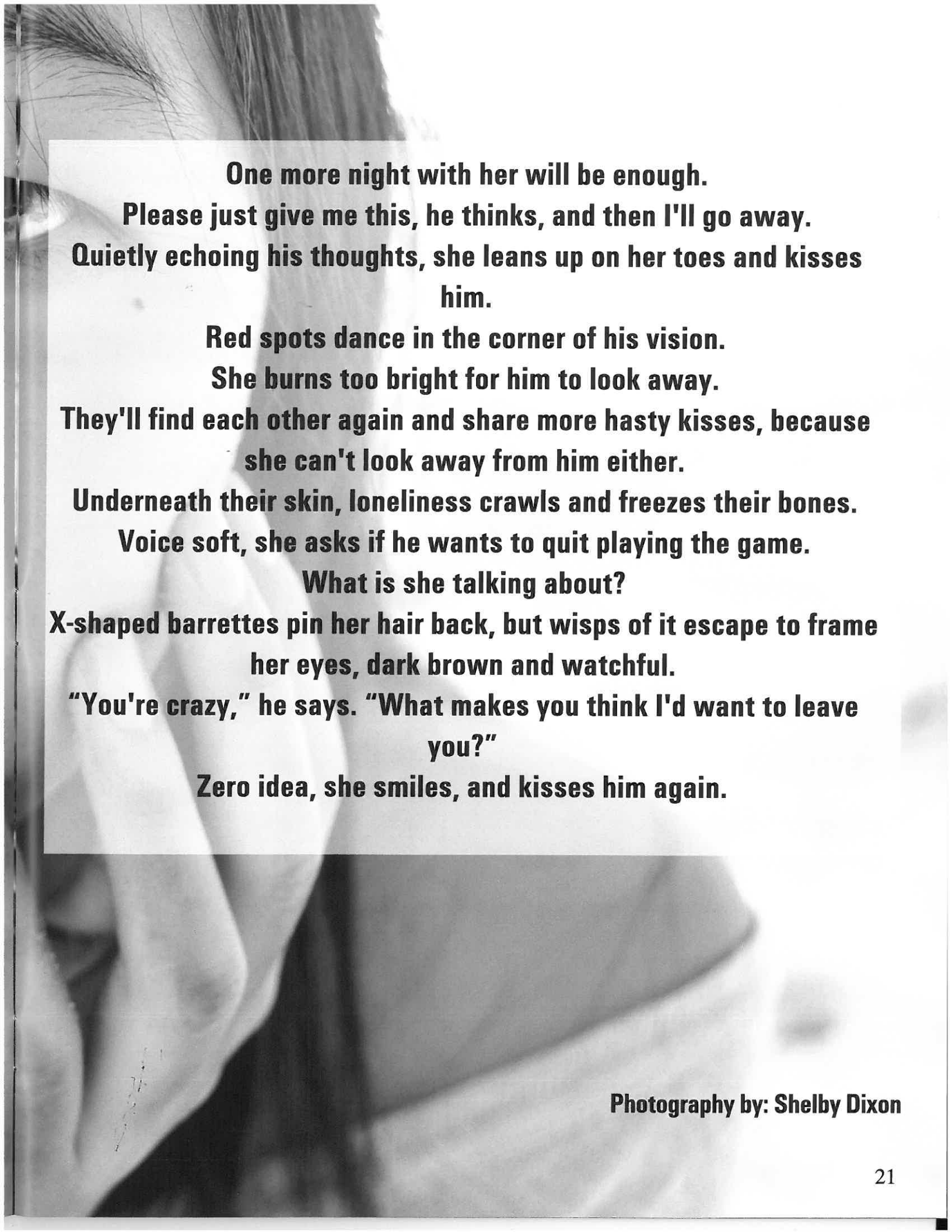
Just do it already.

Kiss me, he thinks.

**Laughing quietly into his chest, she doesn't kiss him, but drags her
hand through his hair.**

**Maybe he should've brushed it properly this morning—hell, that felt
like years ago.**

**Never mind that she'll be gone soon, dissipating with cigarette
smoke.**



**One more night with her will be enough.
Please just give me this, he thinks, and then I'll go away.
Quietly echoing his thoughts, she leans up on her toes and kisses
him.**

**Red spots dance in the corner of his vision.
She burns too bright for him to look away.
They'll find each other again and share more hasty kisses, because
she can't look away from him either.
Underneath their skin, loneliness crawls and freezes their bones.
Voice soft, she asks if he wants to quit playing the game.
What is she talking about?
X-shaped barrettes pin her hair back, but wisps of it escape to frame
her eyes, dark brown and watchful.
"You're crazy," he says. "What makes you think I'd want to leave
you?"
Zero idea, she smiles, and kisses him again.**

Photography by: Shelby Dixon