

2017

Keeping Quiet

Brittany Gautier
Humboldt State University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/courageouscuentos>

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Chicana/o Studies Commons](#), [Civic and Community Engagement Commons](#), [Community-Based Learning Commons](#), [Creative Writing Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence Commons](#), [Educational Sociology Commons](#), [Ethnic Studies Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), [History Commons](#), [Inequality and Stratification Commons](#), [Latin American Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Latina/o Studies Commons](#), [Modern Literature Commons](#), [Politics and Social Change Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), [Reading and Language Commons](#), and the [Theory, Knowledge and Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gautier, Brittany (2017) "Keeping Quiet," *CouRaGeouS Cuentos: A Journal of Counternarratives*: Vol. 2 , Article 22.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/courageouscuentos/vol2/iss1/22>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 License](#)

© 2016 Department of Critical Race, Gender & Sexuality Studies (CRGS) at Humboldt State University.

This Counternarratives and Reflections is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in CouRaGeouS Cuentos: A Journal of Counternarratives by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. For more information, please contact kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu.

Keeping Quiet

Brittany Gautier

In the backseat like a prison cell
where i refuse to yell for help,
where private undesired intercourse
is pressured by strong arms of explicit force

i hear suggestions from a male friend,
"should have taken self defense"

imagine his sweaty, shivering body
behind the dollar theater parking lot
i assume i'm cheap, dingy, ungodly
mantra of misplaced afterthoughts

i feel the need to apologize out of fear,
"next time, i promise to be clearer"

this experience would not be the last time
still building this awareness of mine
maybe i should have broadened my shoulders
maybe i should have been a heart much colder

from a lecture in health class freshman year
i couldn't remember to scream, "fire"

only four months past the first lesson
i ask to keep my dress on
but i'm drunk, feeble, unresisting
he doesn't know to stop insisting

societal acceptance of sinful genetic disposition
"boys will be boys"

unprotected and unsolicited
he was never taught how to listen
he fooled me once, and fooled me twice
responses to my claim cold as ice

suddenly in touch with the devil's silent flesh
we're victims turned rape apologists

four months later and a new lover
he may not treat me like the others
but he looks at me with accusing eyes
foreign force, my displeasure, all lies

thinking i'm looking for pity, he asks me
"why are you telling me these things?"

after keeping trauma quiet for two years,
searching for survivors deemed legitimate,
i hesitantly open up to my little sister,
and she sweetly lets me in on a secret

"in the war against girls and women,
sharing these stories."