



Was She Pretty?

By Leanne Shapton

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A SINGULAR EXPLORATION OF MODERN LOVE AND ALL ITS DEMONS, IN WORDS AND DRAWINGS

In this brilliant gem of a book, artist/writer Leanne Shapton weaves together a voyeuristic tale of love and life through epigrammatic vignettes and sleek line drawings. Entire relationships are encapsulated in a few, stinging perfect lines: "Colleen was Walter's ex-girlfriend from med school. She loved to dance with men at weddings." Pricking our insecurities, Shapton introduces us to Kim, whose ex "kept a drawerful of love letters in a kitchen drawer . . . She would stare at it while she cooked." And Ben's ex, "a physiotherapist for the U.S. men's and women's Olympic swim teams. She wore small white shorts year-round."

Fascinated by her own jealousy, Shapton interviewed acquaintances about their anxieties and peccadilloes, and the result is a book of surpassing originality: one of those unusual books that comes along to delight us all, like *An Exaltation of Larks* or *Love, Loss, and What I Wore* or *Griffin and Sabine*. *Was She Pretty?* can also share the shelf with the work of the legendary William Steig, whose early, psychologically revealing work inspired Shapton. An unflinching observer of human behavior, she invites us to peer into the hearts and minds of her characters--while reminding us that we shouldn't be surprised if we see ourselves staring right back.

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Was She Pretty? By Leanne Shapton Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Illustrator Leanne Shapton's debut reads like a graphic-novel-cum-children's-book: each spread includes one or more scratchy, b&w line drawings plus short, facing-page, poetryesque texts. Its content, though, leans much more toward *Sex In the City* than Shel Silverstein, exploring conflicting feelings aroused in women by their boyfriends' ex-lovers. It's narrated (and drawn) by a sharp but weary onlooker who is very intimate with all the principles, who seem to form a loose circle of friends. A picture depicting "one of the women Len used to know" shows a dour, hot, tight-sweater-wearing woman who is summed-up with deadpan wit: in one sentence, she's "an opinionated academic," in the next, it's revealed, with barely concealed jealousy, that "She wore braces and they looked fantastic." Shapton also captures a complex brew of nostalgia, lingering attachment, relief, rage and intoxication harbored by the men: they keep letters, hairclips, phone numbers—and are occasionally also honest with themselves. In a serial description of Margaret's adventures reading her boyfriend Scott's journals, which detail his past relationships, "Scott described seeing Diane on the subway with another man, and feeling jealous, but sorry for the man." Diane looks very mean, and the book is pitch perfect from start to finish. (Nov.)

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Review

"Shapton's *Was She Pretty?* explores that painful behavior that we just can't seem to quit with thoughtful sketches that cut right to the heart of how we love." *XO Jane*

"Deceptively complex and uncommonly elegant, *Was She Pretty?* is a series of gorgeous line drawings, most of men and women...Together, these brief encounters with the other tell a story about the difficulty of accepting that those we love have loved before ? and of recognizing the ugly truth that they may love again." *Jacob Brogan, Washington Post*

"It is exactly as devastating as when it was originally published. In as little as three sentences, Shapton can tell us everything a current lover thinks they know about the former." *Haley Mlotek, National Post*

"In just a handful of words or a flick of the pen, Shapton stabs you in the gut, bleeding out the pettiness that pulses below the surface of the skin typically hidden behind a thin membrane of decorum." - *Fashion*

"... timeless, cosmopolitan art and elegant ... prose" *Jonathon Sturgeon, Flavorwire*

"*Was She Pretty?* is a great read if you want a voyeuristic tour of other people's exes, and it may even help you through your own jealousy." *Madeline Raynor, Bust*

"Shapton quietly plumbs all the familiar trappings of the guilty fascinations we develop with those who came before." *Lauren Oyler, Broadly*

About the Author

Leanne Shapton is an art director, illustrator, artist, and publisher based in New York. She has contributed work to *The New York Times*, *Harper's*, *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, *Jane*, *Flaunt*, and *Seventeen*, among others. She runs J&L Books with the photographer Jason Fulford.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jeannine Ricks:

Reading a book tends to be new life style with this era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world could share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only the story that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on earth always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some study before they write to their book. One of them is this Was She Pretty?.

Walter Reeves:

Reading can called brain hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book specially book entitled Was She Pretty? the mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a guide then become one form conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get just before. The Was She Pretty? giving you another experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful information for your better life in this era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

Adrian White:

This Was She Pretty? is great guide for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it information accurately using great organize word or we can claim no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but hard core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having Was She Pretty? in your hand like getting the world in your arm, info in it is not ridiculous a single. We can say that no reserve that offer you world within ten or fifteen minute right but this guide already do that. So , this is certainly good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. stressful do you still doubt that?

Bryan Foxworth:

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