

Forever KAP

by Dianne McKnight-Warren

She mustn't make a sound nor a move; she mustn't get the bull started.

—Katherine Anne Porter

She mustn't make a sound nor a move; she mustn't get the bull started. But it was her curse time of month and the bull could tell. “Shit,” she thought, “I am so fucked.” And she was.

She mustn't make a sound nor a move; she mustn't get the bull started. “Strong like bull,” were the first English words he'd taught her. The only words he taught her for the first three weeks. She spoke five languages. English was not one of them. He speaks English and Pig Latin. She still says “snort” when she means “snore.” “Donald snort all night,” she says. He grins. He likes inside jokes.

She mustn't make a sound nor a move; she mustn't get the bull started. Delores was sure Peebee would die if the mechanical bull bucked again. He might already be dead. He looked cross-eyed. Maybe from pain? Electric shock and liquor? She wasn't sure. The bull had bucked like it meant to fly. Peebee threw up and fell off in the puddle. “Alive! He's alive!” Delores cried.

She mustn't make a sound nor a move; she mustn't get the bull started. No wrong sounds, no wrong moves. Change the subject, change the subject. Talk about the weather, the game, the turkey.

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Maybe not the turkey. Blather away. Talk about car trouble. That's good. Make it specific, but not Japanese. Don't go there. Talk about clutches. How cars don't have clutches anymore. Where are the clutches? Talk about Larry David. No don't. Bernie? Probably not. Don't bring up pandemics, climate change. For God sakes don't bring up Greta Thunberg. Just don't.

