

La Force

Spring, 1994: Friend S is a senior in high school. I, one year older, am home from college for the weekend. In past months friend S has been the target of ugly rumors spread by now former friend A. Friend S and I develop a vengeful plan. We head to P, a sex shop near my home. We peruse the naughty bumper stickers...

Towards midnight S and I park at the opening of A's cul de sac. Creeping on foot, we edge our way to A's truck and hastily affix our selection to its bumper. We speed off. Weeks later we learn that A's parents promptly grounded her upon discovery of her new favorite pastime.

Spring, 2015: Astronomical summer begins June 21. S is now an assistant attorney general for the state of X. A is now the first female editor of Y, a major metropolitan newspaper. Within animal populations, competition is often particularly acute among individuals of the same sex because such individuals require the same limited resources to maximize their success.

Maybe I should run for president...

Much like irritants caught in an oyster's flesh, words once hurtful and degrading lose their power to wound us as associations accumulate like so many layers of radiant nacre, such that what once caused pain becomes bound in possibility.

Thrill, whose original meaning was 'to make a hole in, to pierce', later shifted metaphorically to 'to pierce with emotion', and then again to 'to fill with pleasure'. Similarly, words used in and created for "La Force" seek to live amongst the dunes of connotation.