

This is an excerpt from the short story *Keeping an Eye on Lucy* by Michale Little. This first-person narrator story opens with the main character, Nick, speaking to the reader:

Before there was Lucy there were other women. Real women. Women who could walk and shop and carry on a reasonably intelligent conversation, all at the same time. I won't tell you about these women, there's not enough time. Not that there were hundreds, or even dozens. OK, there were five. Not counting the one-date wonders. My five ex-girlfriends, women I rarely if ever see again, and only by accident. And yet they live on in my mind as reference points, landmarks in an evolving educational journey, like a Smithsonian expedition, one on which I have traveled for years in an attempt to understand women. There are times when I believe I have made some progress on this quest.

If I were John Cusack, and this was *High Fidelity*, I would take you through five major scenes, one for each of the exes. But I'm not him, and this is not it, and I need to tell you about Lucy and how she changed my life.