



# Anything You Say Can and Will Be Used Against You: Stories

*Laurie Lynn Drummond*

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Every night when I go home after shift, I run my hands lightly over my body as I undress. The tips of my fingers catch the new scratches on my hands and arms, tiny red vines, an unreadable map. The burn from the teeth of the cuffs, I remember it catching my skin only now; the new welt on my side, unexplainable; the constant, steady bruise on the hip bone where my gun caresses the skin a deeper purple day after day. I unbraid my hair, shake it loose, stand under the shower. I place both hands on the wall and lean into the water, stretching out the muscles. Okay, I tell myself. Every night I tell myself, okay.

In this stunning debut collection, Laurie Lynn Drummond mines her eight years in law enforcement to tell the stories of five female police officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In prose as unflinching and nuanced as the job itself, each woman's story -- like each call in a police officer's day -- varies in its singular drama, but all the tales illuminate the tenuous line between life and death, violence and control, despair and salvation.

These stories draw us into the insular world of cops -- how violence clings to a crime scene long after the crime has been committed, how officers determine when to engage in or defuse violence, why some cadets make it from the academy to the force and some don't -- and delve into the darkest chambers of police officers' hearts.

In "Absolutes," a stunned cop learns to live with the shimmering presence of the man she killed in self-defense, while her neighbor brings her casseroles because "it's the polite thing to do at wakes."

In "Something About a Scar," a rookie from Victims' Services tries to calm a woman with a nine-inch knife embedded in her sternum, while the crime scene officers snap photos and ask questions. At a vigil that seven policewomen hold for a brutally murdered victim in "Keeping the Dead Alive," the mourners get caught up in a vicious act of revenge that escalates out of control.

Fresh, unique, and uncensored, these stories are startlingly vivid and alive, revealing the humanity, compassion, humor, tragedy, and, ultimately, the redemption hidden behind the "blue wall." This collection signals the debut of an extraordinary new talent.

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