My Open Wound

This realization was my herida abierta.
I knew there was at least one book telling
my story, but if I hadn’t stumbled across it,
I would never’a known even that.
I began wondering why we weren’t being made
to read Thomas in class? If I liked it, I was sure
other of my friends would, too. It would’a made a difference
for me and them—a teacher, who I took to be
the sole authority figure in the classroom, intentionally
selecting my story as the one to assign
would’a been big: I mean, everyone reading my story
on the pages of this book, everyone reading me / us!—

of course it would’a made a difference.
My Librarian

The librarian, though, 
who I’d love to name, I can’t. 
I know she was there. 
In my mind, I can see her behind 
the checkout counter, 
kids lined up, her hands busy 
taking the card from its pouch 
at the back of the book and 
 stamping the due date in red.

There had to’a been someone 
there. Someone had to look 
the other way when I’d sneak 
into the library when it wasn’t 
my turn and no pass to speak of: 
before the morning bell, 
during lunch, after school. 
I wonder, did I ever skip class and 
make my way there? 
I don’t think so. I wouldn’t’a 
had the guts to risk it.

Something else I don’t remember: 
the librarian ever sneaking a look over 
my shoulder curious about 
what I was reading (if you must know, 
it was likely quick reads on UFOs, 
long-lost treasures, or Sasquatch). 
She didn’t hover recommending 
similar titles (If you like that book, 
you’ll absolutely love...), or 
making conversation (a sure sign 
she was assessing my comprehension 
skills), or ushering me out.
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