

Love Handles

Category: In Pain

written by Kevin Pitts | September 20, 2018

I rocked back on the plush bedspread, leaning into the weekend. I was alive. I filled my chest with her lavender air as if I had just stepped outside.

And then suddenly she spoke, from the place where she faced the bathroom mirror. Her voice drifted across the hall: "My love handles are gone."

Her syllables trudged uphill in disbelief. Recently we had studied late and slept past meals. On weekends she climbed mountainsides, pitched tents, and ate canned beef over open fires: for fun. Of course her love handles were gone.

Then she appeared in the doorway: brown, watery eyes blinking and shoulders slumped. "I loved my love-handles," she said, now looking down at their ghosts. Her hands brushed her sides longingly.

I was confused. I don't love my love handles. The name is sharply ironic. I'm not having sex – thanks for reminding me – and if I do, I don't want to be handled. "Nice love handles." Now I'm wounded. Still her blank expression lingered.

"They can... grow back?" I offered. She shrugged ("Idiot"). And then she sat next to me and nestled into my chest, pondering. We stayed like that for a while, pondering. Her wound wasn't shame but loss.

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