

Hating Your Thighs

by Jessica Harris

The thing about hating your thighs is that it gives you a reason for no one to love you. I mean, think about it: it gives you permission to sit around in your unflattering pants, eating ice cream and wallowing in self-pity, because, you tell yourself, no one could ever love thighs like yours. You could try and do something about it - put down the ice cream, buy better pants, whatever. But you don't. Because what if you fix your thighs and still nobody wants you? What if it's actually your inside, not your outside, that's the problem?

If you concentrate hard enough on hating your thighs, you never have to think about that little possibility. No one wants to have to change to be loved, but we all secretly think that if we could change, love would be better. I have a cousin who hated her thighs as much as I did, and she finally did do something about it - with the wonders of liposuction she became a size eight and bought a whole new wardrobe.

But she was haunted by the ghost of her old thighs. Whenever anyone told her she was pretty, she'd start to think about how they wouldn't even have looked at her before she fixed her thighs. And then she'd get angry, and tell herself how blind and shallow they must be if all they could see was her thighs. And then she'd start to think about how much money and work she'd put into fixing her thighs, and she'd tell herself that she could do better than someone that shallow, and she'd brush them off. And soon she was back eating ice cream alone and feeling sorry for herself, hating her thighs as much as ever.

Brunch #1: Arrivals and Departures

by Jessica Harris

"You know what the really sad thing is?"

"Sadder than when you faked a yeast infection to get out of sex? Because you've told us that story already."

"Yes. Well, maybe. No, definitely sadder."

"Wow. This I have to hear."

"Well, it was... OK, you remember when Kathy and Andrea had that accidental threesome?"

"Accidental? Threesome? I... no, I do not remember that. "

"It was when they went to New York that time. They were staying with this friend of Kathy's from library school, and one night while Andrea was in the kitchen the friend suggested that they, you know, have a threesome. So Kathy didn't know what to do, and when Andrea came back in

from the kitchen, Kathy's like, "So, um, Susan thinks we should have a threesome...". And Andrea didn't want to be the one to say no because Susan was Kathy's friend, and she didn't want to be rude, plus she thought that maybe Kathy was into it. And when Andrea didn't say no right away, Kathy didn't want to say no in case Andrea was into it, and so they ended up having this sort of awkward threesome that neither of them really wanted."

"That's... an oddly Canadian story, I think - having a threesome because everyone's afraid that saying no would be rude."

"Exactly!"

"So what are you trying to tell me? That you guys had a bad threesome?"

"No! The really sad thing is that I only told her I loved her by accident."

"An accident as in you didn't mean to say it, or you didn't mean it?"

"As in I didn't mean it. And also didn't mean to say it."

"So what happened?"

"We were at the airport."

"And the airport gives you some kind of love Tourette's?"

"No! It's just... usually when I'm at the airport with someone it's because they're dropping me off, and you know, it's all, 'Bye dear, have a good trip, love you,' and you say, 'Bye Mom, love you too!'. And it was really early in the morning, and I was distracted because I couldn't tell if we were in the right line-up, and cranky because she had already remembered like three things she had forgotten that I was going to have to mail to her, and I wasn't really paying attention, so when we got to the gate and she said 'I love you,' - which incidentally she had been saying every five minutes since our second date so I didn't take it that seriously - I just automatically said 'Love you too!'"

"Oh god..."

"Yeah. And there is no polite way to take something like that back. Plus she got all big-eyed and happy, so what was I going to say? 'Wait, on second thought, let me scale that statement down to, 'Happy enough to keep seeing you for a while but pretty dubious about a future for this relationship because you talk about rugby too fucking much?' or 'Whoops, didn't mean to say that, for a moment I thought you were my mother?'" There is just no graceful way to deal with an accidental I love you."

"So what did you do?"

"Tried really hard for the rest of the relationship to be in love, so I wouldn't have to feel like an asshole or a liar."

"And?"

"It didn't work."