

We Planned to Have Breakfast Together and You Didn't Show Up by Virginia Cunningham

I buy fruit for breakfast—

I buy bananas, a pear, a pomegranate, a grapefruit, and strawberries.

I cut and arrange the fruit.

The fruit is from Mexico.

You are coming at 11, you said last night. You will take two busses to my apartment. I haven't seen you since we shopped for a new pet for you. You bought a rabbit. We bought vegetables for the rabbit. When we were looking at lettuce you looked at your phone and said that you had to go soon, you had something to do.

You said we would have breakfast sometime, not tomorrow or the next day, but soon.

I put the fruit on a plate and carry it to a table you helped me move into my apartment. I sit across from the fruit. I look at the fruit and grin, thinking of you eating it and of your rabbit, which nibbled my fingers in the pet store.

I sit there until 11:45. I am hungry. I am feeling a little bit stupid for believing in you, like that time by the lettuce. I look at your name in my cell phone. As an anagram it spells "An lied." I feel smart for a minute for figuring this out. I don't call you.

At one the bananas are turning brown. I eat some of the pomegranate. I think of the person in Mexico who grew it. The person looks like you. I imagine that you grew all of the fruit in my arrangement. You grew it and packed it and shipped it to me, and I was stupid and hopeful enough to buy it all.

I finish the pomegranate and leave the rest of the fruit on the plate. It has been a week now and the fruit is moldy, seven colors of mold, it is beautiful actually, but too bad I deleted your name from my phone. You will never see it.

Dirty by Brandi Wells

My pants are slouched below my waist and piss runs down the cobblestone building. I give it a shake and zip up.

"You ought to wash your hands," she tells me.

I tuck the front of my shirt in and turn around.

The wind blows and I can see the tops of her panty hose and those thick stalks she calls legs with spider veins creeping along fatty cellulite.

"It wasn't dirty," I say.

We go inside. The church is half full.

The preacher's standing at the door and I shake his hand.

"Wonderful to see you, brother," he says.

"You too," I tell him.

We sit in the third pew, our pew.

"You really should have washed," she says. "At least before shaking hands."

"I'm not dirty," I tell her.

(one page of lit. edited by samuel cole)

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