

## NECK HAIRS

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KATE: I was on the train and everyone refused to stand up for me and it's honestly more comfortable to stand with the brace sometimes because the thing like digs in when I sit because of the height of the seats, but, so I was like, penned in behind this man. He was talking to his friends, I mean, this man wasn't- like he was maybe six feet and paunchy, and had a very bureaucratic haircut and like- he was saying to his friends. I guess he was trying to joke, like office water cooler joke, "...you put on a helmet to jump out of a plane, like what's that for? The helmet is gonna help if you're jumping out of a plane?" And his friends laughed like he was Jerry Seinfeld and it was 1991 Late Night and it's weird because before he started talking even I had had this urge to bite all of the hairs on the back of his neck. Like he had gotten a haircut earlier this week and his hairs were pointed and straight at the back of his neck and I wanted to take them in my teeth and rip them out by the root and he wouldn't even know what hit him before- because no one expects to have their neck hairs bitten off by a stranger on a subway and I kind of just want to be responsible for someone else's trauma for once. Responsible and then never think about it again and if some day someone's like, "Hey didn't you bite off my friend's neck hairs on the F train to Brooklyn?" I'd say- I don't think I took the F train, I was on the J at the time, what was he doing on the F train to Brooklyn? He doesn't seem like the type that would be on there. Look, clearly someone bit off his neck hairs at some point, and that's terrible, but honestly it's the subway to Brooklyn, he was in a navy suit, weird stuff just happens sometimes and that's life. And really, it seems strange that these neck hairs are being brought up now. Plenty of people have bitten neck hairs in their time. He had just gotten a haircut, he must like the feeling of having his neck hairs removed at some level, this just got a little out of hand.

And now he dreams about me. He dreams about his hairs caught in my teeth, the way I smiled at him. I didn't smile and he never really saw my mouth, full, but that's what he sees in his dreams. He can't bring himself to floss, it gets so bad that he needs a gum graft and his wife buys him a water pick but he can't do it. He feels queasy if celery string gets stuck, so he says he's allergic. He doesn't even know why it started, he doesn't know it's part of the need to keep his head totally shaved. I haunt him, I keep him company on the bus, at the airport. He hates standing in lines. He feels more comfortable wearing a scarf and his brother in law gives him shit for it, calls him metrosexual and asks him when he's gonna transplant his pubes onto his head because damn he got bald fast.

I also wanted to tell them that the reason you wear a helmet when you skydive isn't in case you need it when you hit the ground- it's so that if you hit your head as you're jumping out of the plane on the plane itself, you don't knock yourself out and fall unconscious to the ground. But then I liked the idea of each of them, jumping out of the plane, having the backs of their necks bitten on the way down and falling.