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# They Smell Like Garlic

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# They Smell Like Garlic

J.C.G.

As much as I love garlic, it's so annoying that it sticks to my fingers like tar sticks between my toes at the beach. It doesn't help that thunder rumbles through my core hard enough to make my eyes water. I hate that every time I read a book or watch a show they don't really include the pain that comes with hunger. The kind of pain that makes you grind the flesh of your cheek between your teeth, and keeps the bile down when you consider the fact that you're eating yourself.

I know I shouldn't be angry with my fingers because they smell like food. They aren't trying to make my stomach clench like a snake around its prey. It's not my fingers that forgot to feed me or my fingers that chose to watch five episodes all morning instead of cook. So I refuse to be mad at my fingers. I'm mad at the smell. That's something I can be mad at. That's something I can get rid of. That's something that I can let myself hate.

I can also redirect alternate hatred to the smell. Hatred for every mistake I make, and hatred that I let myself hear that mocking voice telling me that I can't even wipe my own ass. Hatred for how jealous I get when my roommates are absolutely perfect; hatred for when they're not. Hatred for when one of my shirts get holes and when my—

I guess it's a good idea for me to remind myself that a lot of hatred is unfounded. This is why I have to remember that I can't blame a rat because it's a rat...and I hate rats.

I sigh and pull my hands out from under the stream of searing water, then reach for the needle I have set aside. After piercing each blister I glance at the clock and rush to push the loose skin back into place, knowing that my hands have just enough time to return to their healthy pale color before any of my housemates get back. I let myself imagine that the tingling on my hands is like the feeling of peeling skin from a sunburn. I let my pupils contract so I can watch the peach fuzz regrow, and I can't help but think that it looks like my pores are pots and each hair is a sprout breaking through the soil. I let myself relax after a test sniff of my hands, satisfied that the smell of garlic has been burned off.



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