



Preview: Elsewhere

Let's start with this: it feels good to *go*. To be moving. I get restless after a time, when everything starts adding up. It feels good to say a dramatic goodbye, one of those "I wish I didn't have to leave" kinds with passionate kisses and tears choked back, but it feels just as good to say "fuck this" and walk out without looking back. Some people, mostly the ones left behind, think it's the coward's way out, because you don't stick around to see things through. But moving around means two things: you're leaving one thing behind and you're going towards something else.

When I go to Austin, I'm surrounded by the ashes of people that I've left for good or the embers of people that I'm returning to. There's music and traffic in the air, and the smell of beer wafts up from the street.



I land for a couple of nights at J's and replay our history in my head. I lay my head on his chest and say that I love him, because that's what I know I'm supposed to feel after we sleep together. And I'm supposed to feel it so much that I actually do feel it, even though he's done nothing but say stupid and angry things, smoke a lot of dope and ask me for a blowjob. The inequality of genders is so obvious these days I have to laugh instead of cry, because I know tomorrow night he'll have some other girl in his bed, either cooking him dinner and saying *Don't worry, I don't even want a relationship, I'm not that kind of girl, or* lying the same romantic lie I'm living when I say *I love you*. We lay in bed and I tell him the greatest heist ever perpetuated against women was convincing them that fucking was an act of their liberation. He strokes my bare back and calls it even.

These are the times we live in: the casual sex institutionalized complex. The mass-ingested half-boredom of fucking because you can and because it's the closest thing to intimacy that you can fake without revealing anything about yourself other than your skin.

We leave the next day. I start the car, and Nora asks me if I'm ok and I say no, as though it's about him. It's not, and I know it's not, but I'm shaking anyway. It's about a lifetime of disillusionment consummated in twenty minutes of fatigued sex, one dose at a time.



Let me tell you a lesson hard learned: no matter how far you travel, you can't escape yourself. You can try to forget all the things you've done, and all the things that that have been done to you, but it'll catch up to you eventually... everything does, whether you thought it meant a damn or not. The one thing you take along with you everywhere is yourself.

But sometimes, the urge to *go* is so strong that all those things, those hidden memories and suitcases of sadness you carry around with you -- they're just irrelevant details. In the movement, you can forget. Yeah, it's temporary, but so is everything. It just means that you have to keep moving.