

Hungry

by Jake Barnes

My old man died years ago. He was sixty-five when he gave up the ghost. He killed himself in a way. He loved to eat, and it was his weight that put him in the grave. That and a bum ticker. He weighed over two hundred and fifty pounds.

I'm a tall man like my Dad, over six feet tall, but I am slender. I stay away the gravy, the mashed potatoes. I got up to two hundred and fifteen pounds once, but when I looked in the mirror, I looked fat. When I was thirty years old, I started running. I ran a mile a day. I ran 10ks, too, for a time. I had a hip replacement a few years ago, and that put an end to my running. Now I get my exercise by walking.

Why do people kill themselves with food? It's obvious, I suppose. They're hungry. Hungry for something. In my father's case, I think he was hungry for love. He told me once that my mother was cold.

My father died in his early sixties; my mother lived to be ninety-four. She told me when she was an old, old woman that the past thirty years had been the happiest years of her life.

