

A Little Piece of Meat

by angel readman

'When she feels better,' you said, 'after his recitals, when the kitchen will be finished, she'll be able to handle it, it'll be the right time.' You said this and poured more wine. I looked at the little suits of armour on the walls of the restaurant and imagined I'd never fit in them. I wondered if anyone ever tried to play the half size guitar screwed to the wall, or tried to brandish the shiny replica of the antique sword next to it. The whole place was a jumble of what someone believed Spain might be, decades and centuries fused.

We ended up at mine. There was time. All the way your mouthed moved the flesh of your face around, the tongue bulging from the cheek. What was driving you to crazy was a small piece of meat secretly nestled somewhere between your teeth. I didn't have toothpicks. You looked at me as if it summed up everything about me. The dog followed me to the bathroom where the door was open, I followed you because I couldn't let go of what we'd said.

'There's a cabin...' I started talking about summer and where we could go and you didn't disagree. You said sure, book it, by then you'd tell her. You stood in my bathroom looking into the medicine cabinet mirror, poking your fingernail in between your canines and snapping part of it off. Then you picked up my bracelet lying on top of the toilet and placed the metal loop of the clasp between your teeth.

'Got it!' You beamed as if it was some sort of victory. I looked at you and the dog looked too. You were still smiling. I watched the dog sniff the ground and lap up the tiny scrap of meat from between your teeth.