

# 19\_\_, What I Wanted

by Catherine Davis

(Are you crazy? I am so not filling that blank. A time honored Russian trope, just read *Crime and Punishment*. Am I Russian? This is beside the point.)

In 19\_\_, I wanted things to fit. I needed, was desperate, to see how things aligned. Related. Alone in the guestroom, with my mother's sewing box, I'd never had such leisure to explore. My parents were having drinks in the living room with my aunt and uncle.

Spools upon spools of thread, thimbles, bobbins. Sharp needles. Rick-rack, pinking sheers. Colorful coat buttons on cards, tiny four-holed mother-of-pearl buttons. Jars of assorted buttons, like candy. But what got me this night was the snaps.

Shiny steel snaps, in a circle on their card. These were a secret thing, unlike showy buttons, not meant to show. I slid my thumbnails under each half, to release a single one. Ah! Snap, unsnap. Snap, unsnap. Snap.

This could have gone on forever, alas. But before returning it to the card, linger a moment. Such perfection. What is it like? Matches, aligns with what?

Ohhh: my own nostril.

So certain, I hardly needed to prove. Still, with a thrust of the forefinger, up it went. Voila, giddy with my own brilliance. And it fit so perfectly that it wouldn't come back out. A single finger pushed it further up. Two fingers didn't fit.

That snap had to be surgically removed. Right there in the living room, by my uncle, the surgeon. Tragically, no one ever praised me

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for my discovery.

