

Vivian Considers Vivian

by DeMisty Bellinger

She's been considering her breasts more. Never a vain woman, now Vivien caught herself gathering her breasts into her bra, noting the stretch marks and stretched nipples, casualties of two pregnancies and four years of nursing. She would hold one in her hand and marvel at the weight of it. She looked at younger women's chests, perked up and unmolested, with envy, whenever she could inconspicuously. To have them look like that again!

And her belly was a mess of tiger stripes grooved by the skin growing bigger and shrinking again: here's the golden brown of stretched skin next to the darker hue she was used to. Here's her body.

When Vivian was young, she used to wonder how'd she look once she hit forty. And now, looking in the mirror at forty-three, she thinks, 'this is how. I look just like this.'

"Count your blessings," she says aloud, ignoring her atheism, being sincerely thankful for her kids, for her marriage that was--at least--workable.

"What was that, honey?" her husband calls from the bedroom.

"I said I want to fly away," she says. "Fly far away."

