

You Can Wear Skinny Jeans

by Jennifer Donnell

I liked bell bottom in nineteen ninety four. I found an old pair of brown wooden clogs from the seventies and wore them too, deciding blisters were worth it. My parents dropped me off at the mall and I clattered inside, my blonde hair brushed evenly into braids. I wore a lace v-neck shirt and carried a crocheted bag from a thrift store.

“Are you a hippie?” a teenage boy in a surf shirt and shorts asked. He was waiting outside the Dairy Queen. He wasn't my type, in puffy white tennis shoes, his sandy blonde hair cut close to his scalp.

“No.” I glared at him, my green eyes flickering.

“Do you, like, not shave your armpit hair?” he continued, unfazed.

I wasn't sure I should answer, but did, “Yes, I shave my armpit hair.” or the little that I had. The blush I was always fighting against began to emerge. My best friend Kim was supposed to meet me at Hot Dog On A Stick, which was directly across from the Dairy Queen. I was usually late, but today it was her turn.

“Do you burn patchouli?” he asked, mentally checking off the list of hippie characteristics.

“I like Nirvana and I think patchouli smells gross.” I turned away from him, hoping I wouldn't turn redder. I focused on chewing my bubble gum. My older step brother listened to hippie bands like Pink Floyd, but I didn't tell him that.

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Now it's two thousand and fourteen and I like skinny jeans. My doctor warned me, at my last checkup, that skinny jeans can do a number on your stomach. Luckily, I'm an optimist and live large blocks of time in yoga pants to make up for it. Today I chose an aquamarine colored pair, legs tapered to the shape of my calves. In a polka dot spotted shirt and a chic long sleeve black cardigan, there was no sign of the hippie from the past. It's even been a while since I listened to Nirvana.

My teenage son is in trouble again, this time Chad (the new redheaded boy, who's twice his size) told my son he'd kick his ass. My son kept quiet for a moment, opting for a melodramatic glare.

"Why are you looking at him like that?" his teacher asked, walking over. My son has perfected this look on his siblings.

"Oh, I'm just imagining punching him." my son announced loudly, adding a few other imaginary threats for good measure. They sent him to the office, suspended him, and I now have the pleasure of meeting with two deputies.

The first deputy is, I assume, playing 'bad' cop. He never smiles and says it doesn't matter what you mean, if the other person feels scared for their life... an idle threat could be considered a felony.

The 'good' cop doesn't smile that much either, but shares his two cents. I get the message, don't mess up or your life can be ruined. The redheaded boy walks into the office, larger and taller than all of us.

Cop number one looks me over. My hair was just cut yesterday and has a realtor-esque blow dry. "Your mom works." he surmises by my somewhat professional appearance. "You work, right?" he turns toward me for confirmation and I nod, not mentioning that I work a

hippie job where people talk about Chakras. "She doesn't want to have to waste her day when you get in trouble."

He looks at me again, this time glancing down at my skinny jeans, "And... are you a single mom?" he seems to think he has it right, taking a last look at my aquamarine colored pants and the tapered area around my calves.

I shake my head, no, and he looks surprised.

* * *Wear skinny jeans and clogs at your own risk.

