

hair

by Melissa Corliss DeLorenzo

He insists she not cut her hair.

“No. Don't cut it. Let it grow.” This surprises her.

“But I'm really sick of it.” She says. She feels more like herself when it sits in a neat bob around her jaw.

“Don't cut your hair.” He points a finger at her. His face is serious.

Right now, her brown wavy hair hovers just above her shoulders. Her intention was to grow it long again. She is bored with it and restless with the waiting. Her hair never looks good no matter what she does at this awkward length - halfway between short and long. It's straggly and frayed. She always gets antsy at this point and goes and rashly has it trimmed. This is why her hair hasn't been long in seven years, since right after her wedding when she got it all chopped off one hot summer day when she just needed a change. Before that, it was down her back, a good six inches below her shoulder blades. She is ready now to cut it. *Fuck it*, she thinks with impatience.

But then Donald at work says not to.

Her husband never cares how she wears her hair. Some women would think this a lucky thing, but it annoys her. Shouldn't he care? How difficult is it to form a simple opinion? It must mean something that he cannot or will not.

She asks him again anyhow. “Should I cut it shorter again?” She lies on the couch. She watches him trying to fix the television. He doesn't know how to repair televisions or any other appliance.

“I don't know. Sure.” He sprawls on his side behind the TV stand. He unscrews something. It pings on the floor. He mutters. “Shit.” His hand gropes around for it. She sees the screw and stares at it.

“But do you like it better long?” she asks. She picks at something stuck to the couch. It is the size of a penny and copper-colored. At first, she thinks it is a penny, until she goes to grab for it and clearly it is not a penny. It is slightly sticky and disgusts her mildly because she doesn't know what it is.

"Either way is fine," he says.

"You have no opinion, Tom."

"Don't shave your head." His voice sounds like it is coming from inside the TV.

Then Donald insists she not cut it.

"Don't," he shakes his head. "My wife butchered hers. Don't."

Kay knows Don's wife. Her name is Angie. She knows her as Don's wife who comes in sometimes. She and Angie chat in a friendly, unmemorable way. Angie's hair has been short the entire time Kay has known her, which is a lot of years that she has worked at the restaurant and so has Don. Maybe about ten. (She doesn't like to think how long it's been. But it's since high school ended and she thought she would waitress for a while until she figured out what she was doing. She supposes this is what she is doing.) Angie's hair is short in an unfashionable, matronly way. And she is not much older than Kay, if at all. Kay doesn't mean to cut her hair like that.

"Angie has always had the shorter hairstyle," says Jean. She works at the restaurant, too. "I think it looks nice," and Jean sniffs that way she does. Loud.

"I didn't say she don't look nice." He turns back to Kay and points lightly at her. "Don't cut your hair."

"I won't," she says.

* * *

Kay is at work. It is a busy Friday night. Every table is filled and there is a line in the tiny entryway. If it were summer and the patio and outdoor bar were open, waiting customers would have a place to sit and pass the time. But it is winter and they stand impatiently, shift from foot to foot getting too hot in the coats and scarves and sweaters they need for outside. She glances at the clock and it is only six thirty — there is still so much of this night to go, still so much time for plenty more people to come for their supper. A table

clears out and she wipes it down after it is bussed by the latest high school kid who thinks he's better than everyone else there because he's just doing this for now since he's stuck in this town and soon he's going to go to college. *Sure*, she thinks. *Sure you are*. She sags a little as she heads to the foyer to show another group to a table. She's not the type to act enthusiastic, but most of the time she can at least hold the hostility at arms' length.

Being at this restaurant so much, the thing that strikes her about eating is the endlessness of it. And it seems so pointless at her. Of course everyone needs to eat, but to what end? To death, that's all there is to it. You eat to your death. And watching some of these pigs and their bowls of clam chowder followed up with their fried seafood platters with extra tartar sauce, and it will be coming quicker than they might be looking for. Tail the endlessness of the eating with the table cleaning, the floor mopping, the wipe-down of the bathrooms, the kitchen scrubbing and you got one giant circle of nothing. Every day starts out clean with an empty belly and ends clean again despite the clamor of the day, as if it all gets erased, as though noting ever happened at all, belly empty again.

And yet, she gets hungry, too.

Another table clears and Kay sees Jean lead another party of people to fill it. More people push through the door and pin themselves to the end of the line.

This is one of those winters when more snow falls every week. Snow is piled high in the backs of parking lots. The guys who do the plowing are running out of places to push the new snow. It never gets warm enough to melt any of it down. It is a very cold winter.

Kay escapes to the kitchen for a moment. It is much warmer back there. Almost too warm, but welcome in comparison to what she knows waits for her outside. She looks out from inside the big window at the back of the kitchen. She lights a cigarette and cracks the window. She can just see the shoreline out of the corner of the window. There is a full moon. The waves break white and black on the pale shore. It snowed earlier, and now the sky is clear, but for a

few harmless clouds floating far beneath the moon. This is what Kay can see from the window at the back of the kitchen.

"Still coming down?" It is Jean, pressed up too close behind Kay.

Kay shifts rigidly away. "You're right there. Look out for yourself."

"Well, pardon me, Missus High and Mighty. Maybe you could start doing some work around here 'stead of staring out that window, smoking your cancer sticks." She waves her hand, prissy-faced, in Kay's smoke.

"Well, Jesus, Jean. If it was still snowing, don't you think these people would be complaining, if they came out at all? Don't you think they'd be covered with snow? Wet and dripping all over the floor we'd have to clean up after them?"

Jean sucks at the back of her nose, makes that loud noise she emanates a hundred times a day. She stalks away, her big ass pumping back and forth. Kay turns back to the window, drags on her cigarette.

Kay wishes she were outside in all that moonlight, in all that winter night sky quiet, listening to that the night sound mixed with the sound of the ocean and the sky and the puffy clouds and wind. All the sounds of the things that move around all the time. Not people, not even animals, just the constancy of the big things that can neither be restrained nor influenced.

* * *

A strange and unexpected shift has occurred.

Now that Don told her not to cut her hair, when she thinks of him it is somehow in direct contrast to her husband, Tom. Like two sides of a coin. It is a constant comparison. She can't help it and does not intend it. And yet it continues to happen. And this is Don, for chrisakes. Don, the cook, now, but a person she has known since high school. It is like when you have one of those dreams about a person you would never think about in *that* way and then you see

them and think *oh, I suppose. Yes, maybe.* Or sometimes *never!* But in those cases it fades off and then you just want to laugh at yourself. This is different. Now, when she sees Don working or loafing, when she stands near him (and, dear God, she is finding reasons to get near him - she had no inkling she was so creative) she feels hot all over. Like a blush from the inside. She thinks of his hands on her and concocts elaborate scenarios in her mind in which they find themselves alone, none of which would be possible in real life.

She says things around him like, "Don is my favorite." This is not the kind of thing she usually says. The other night, a busy Saturday, she actually had fun at work. She can't remember the last time she thought work was fun. She has never been the type to describe a thing as *fun*, no matter what it is. *Fun* is a stupid word that makes her think of cheerleaders or those grown people who like amusement parks. And yet she is finding work enjoyable when Don is working, too.

Saturdays, their busiest night, she only ever put up with for the tips — you need to take it when you can get it. But now it seems as if Saturday isn't Saturday at all, more like a nice quiet Tuesday or something. She even finds the Saturday ruckus energizing all of a sudden. It's not hard work she dislikes; she actually despises being idle. It's all the people coming and going and coming and going, thinking it's alright to treat her any old way that strikes them. She loathes their condescension. Jean once remarked, "Kay, if Mother Theresa and the Pope out on a date came and sat in your section dropping hundreds of blessings at your feet you would think they were in some way being 'condescending' to you." *Sniff.* Jean has something to say on every topic known to humankind, Kay has more than once reflected.

Tonight is Saturday night and the restaurant is quiet and finally closed. Kay clears away the last dishes in her section, while the other waitresses do the same in theirs. Don clears the counter off. He always does this — it is his to clear up before he gets the kitchen scrubbed down for the day.

Kay walks by on her way to the kitchen. "You need some help there, Don?" she says.

He looks up. "You offering?"

"No." She shrugs and he laughs. They clear away the dishes into a bucket.

"I could use some help over here if you're feeling so generous tonight," Jean calls out.

"I'm not. Generally speaking," Kay says.

Jean stops, straightens up and looks at them at the counter. "But you'll help him when I've got this mess here?" She waves the green cloth she holds in one hand around at the tables she is cleaning.

"Yeah. Only because he's my favorite," says Kay.

Don shrugs and says, "I can't help it, Jean. Don't look at me like that." He holds his hands out helplessly.

Kay thinks this heat she feels, generates, must roll off her like a perfume when she is around him. They have always been friendly, have always had an easy way with one another. But before, as soon as she left the restaurant each night, he faded away to nothingness, to reappear when she again walked through the restaurant door the next day. Now, he plays around in her mind like a little breeze, blowing slowly and warmly about. She flirts with him, but always stops at the point when it might become too clear that she is indeed flirting. He flirts back. This thing between them (is it a thing?) is a little beam of light.

Tom is a fisherman. He goes out for two weeks and then is home for two weeks. Kay is used to it now, but when they were first married, it was jarring. She would no sooner become used to having him around and he'd be gone. Then she'd just begin to enjoy being alone only to have him come in like a bull in a china shop.

Tom, even though not very tall, but not short, either, is large and bulky. Not fat, but thick somehow. He has a large shaggy head, solid hands and feet. A real weight to them and a lack of grace.

This terrible thing has happened: he has become slightly revolting to Kay. His body, that is. She used to feel so hot for him — a feverish, sweaty thing. She could not keep her hands off him. Not only sex,

but a genuine affection. It used to be that she must always, when next to his body, be in contact. She adored every part of him. Not that she did not, even then, recognize his shortcomings. He was beautiful to her and she did not presume to think he was to anyone else. (Who else would think it?) But now she has become unable to ignore his flaws and, in fact, they glare at her. The mole on the back of his neck, the way the dark hairs curl on his fingers, the smell of his breath. His eyeteeth protrude slightly which has grown to really bother Kay, even though for a long time she thought it was endearing. It is a good thing that he is away so often and when he comes in isn't demanding about sex. Sometimes she wonders if he is getting it someplace else. But she doesn't really believe he would do that. He is not the type. And she doesn't imagine it has anything to do with her. It's just the natural way things go.

She cannot say she doesn't love him. She cannot say she doesn't want to stay married. But she wants everything in her life to change and she wants nothing to change. And all this is new and terrifying and exhilarating.



Kay still wants to cut her hair. But she feels at odds about it because of Don. But she says she's not sure what to do because Tom won't decide what he likes more.

Her best friend tells her some women would be grateful to have a husband who likes the way his wife looks no matter what she does to her hair.

"You're lucky, Kay," she says.

Bonnie's husband has just left her, so Kay doesn't say anything other than, "Yeah, I suppose."

But Kay does not feel lucky because Tom can't manage to conjure an opinion about her hair. She doesn't believe he likes it no matter what she does. How dim is a man who can't put two thoughts

together about hair? Maybe she's just invisible to him. *The incredible disappearing wife*, she thinks. Wouldn't he be sorry if she really did disappear.

Earlier that week, they had an argument before Tom went out on the boat again. He had left his dirty, nasty shirt down on the stairs again. If she has told him once, she has told him a thousand times to throw his dirty clothes, whatever piece of clothing he might be tempted to leave all over the damn house, in the laundry basket. How hard is that? How hard? A child could get that right. He seems to think it's no problem at all for Kay to clean up after him like she's some maid. Like she doesn't already have a crappy job. At least at the restaurant she gets paid to clean up after people.

She came across the shirt hanging over the railing on the stairs that lead up to their bedroom. "Tom! Come here," she screamed. He ambled in — took his damn sweet time. Like she has so much time to spare for his crap. As if she has nothing she'd rather be doing.

"What." He acted unaffected by her tone. As though she were a minor nuisance, dealing with her. Only the barest whiff of impatience floated in the air around him. She recognized it only because she knew this man in and out.

She gripped the shirt like a throat you might strangle. "Throw your damn shirt in the basket! Throw your damn fucking shirt in the basket!" she hollered. It hurt her throat and she did not care. "What is wrong with you? You think I exist to clean up after you?" For chrissakes, she heard him go upstairs at least once since he must have left the shirt there. Why not just take it with him and toss it in the basket?

"Sorry." He said this and looked right at her.

"No you are not. If you were even a little sorry I wouldn't need to sound like a broken fucking record. You leave your dirty clothes all over. The mail you half read sits on the table until I deal with it. You can't put your beer cans out back. Never even think to bring them in to collect the deposit. No. That would be absolutely out of the question."

Tom leaves stuff in the same places all the time. But not the right places, even though she tells him where the right places are.

"You cannot be this stupid, Tom. You obviously just do not give a crap about me. About me doing all the work around here. Do you know how nice and clean this place stays when you're out on the boat?"

He stared at her. "Sorry," he said again. He did not even have the decency to holler back at her or even act confused.. Confusion is a defense he used to use, which she'd always seen right through.

These are the kinds of things they fight about: his slovenly habits, the foolish things he likes to do (nothing but sit around and watch the Red Sox, Patriots, Bruins or Celtics), his lack of ability to decide on anything. If it were not for her, they would starve to death on a Friday night when they get take-out since he never has an idea of what they might order. She always decides, even though she asks him what he wants every time and every time he says, "Whatever. I don't care." This is unbearably aggravating. He is incapable of forming an opinion on any matter.

Kay still wants to cut her hair short, but she won't. Instead she gets a trim, a slight trim. A little bit of layering.

"I thought you wanted to cut it short and stylish. Like Pat Benatar," says Rose Marie, who has cut her hair for more than ten years. "You have the perfect hair for it and the perfect face. You even look a little like her."

Kay groans. "I do not. Jesus, don't I wish. No. Just tidy it up. I'm gonna grow it out."

* * *

Kay does not think of herself as a pretty girl. She means she is not a sweet, syrupy girl. Not pastels and ruffles and make-up. She does not wear uncomfortable clothes — what she thinks of as uncomfortable, such as high heels and garments that bind, or reveal

slashes of flesh (a middle, a shoulder, a piece of thigh), tiny itchy underthings with too many fasteners. Clothes that make her overly aware that she is dressed in them.

So why is she standing in the middle of her bedroom, staring at her clothes hanging there uninspiring and (does she imagine?) forlorn. She is not the type of woman who thinks like this and she is annoyed with herself. She does not know what to wear to work? Please. She does not care about things like this. She despises this kind of fluffy thinking. It is pointless. To make all this more ridiculous, she wears a uniform at work. She changes into it in the small bathroom the employees share off the back of the kitchen near where they hang their coats. It is a horrid baby blue starchy thing. The one good thing about it is she never has to give a thought at all to clothing.

She huffs and grabs a pair of jeans and a shirt randomly, yanks them onto her body. *It makes no difference*, she thinks. And she gets in her car to drive to the restaurant and can't help but think she maybe should have tried harder with the clothes.

The sky is all shades of gray and heavy like rain water stuck in a tarp. Fuller and bulkier here and here and there. Kay thinks she could poke it and hear and feel its weight. Fat fluffy snow falls, blows around. It is not noisy, but it is not silent. It is hushed, but not soundless.

Kay is sure the restaurant will be very quiet tonight, between the weather and it being a Tuesday. She knows she will barely make anything resembling a decent night's worth of tips.

There is no one in the parking lot except the other employees' cars: Jean's car, Onerva's, a few others, and Don's. Her stomach gets that jittery feeling, like too much coffee. "Fool," she mutters to herself. She hurries inside. It is so damn cold. She partly wishes she had stayed home — it's not like she's going to make any money anyhow. But she checked the schedule for the week posted on the cluttered, dry, falling-apart cork board, and knows Don is on tonight and she doesn't want to miss it.

It is as if suddenly the boredom of her life has been lifted slightly and everything underneath has a brightness to it that she had forgotten about. When had it all gotten so dull? Like a nasty build-up on the floor.

"Hey, girly," Don says as Kay comes out into the restaurant in her uniform. He leans against the counter out front, looking over the sports page. Yesterday's paper someone has left behind. His apron is white white.

"Doing absolutely nothing again, Don?" she asks. Her voice has a lilt in it of which she did not know, or maybe did not remember, she is capable. "Look at that virginal apron you got there. Good enough for a bride on her wedding day." Jean looks up at them sharply from the book she is reading. She looks at Kay funny. Kay raises her eyebrows, gives her a *what?* face back. "Well, not all brides," she amends. Jean turns her eyes back to her book, sniffs.

"I hold up the counters as often as I can get away with. Right, Onerva?" he turns to the owner, their boss.

"We can always count on that, Don, if nothing else," she answers. She looks out the window. "Lord, this has been a bitch of a winter. We are going to see no business tonight. I should just close up."

"We've had over eighty inches of snow total this season so far. I heard that on the news. And it is only mid-January," says Jean.

"This is more snow than I think I have ever seen in one year. And I have seen a few."

"How many, Onerva?" Don asks.

"Never mind. Go cook something for us," Onerva says. "Lord knows there's nobody else around here to feed."

"Kay, you come help me. I'm not doing all the work by myself."

Jean's pointy little bird eyes again. *Fuck off*, Kay thinks. *You stingy old biddy*. Although Jean is no more than a few years older than she is, Kay thinks she acts like the worst kind of old lady.

She follows Don into the kitchen. They make omelets for Jean and Onerva and the busboy. They make one for themselves that begins as a Denver omelet until they grow silly and start tossing other ingredients into the pan.

"How about raisins?" she says and sprinkles a few on top.

"Don't forget the pickles." He folds some in.

"Maraschino cherries."

"Of course."

"Are we actually going to eat this?" she asks.

"Yes, we are." He picks it up with a spatula and drops it on a plate. He grabs two forks and hands one to her. "Dig in."

She does. It's terrible. "It's delicious," she says.

"I knew it would be," he says.

He leans on the counter near where she sits on a stool. He is tall and slim. He manages to make the white apron look sexy somehow, his hipbones showing through a little. His dark eyes are framed by thick long eyelashes, the kind that women always say is unfair found on a man. He smells good - of soap or maybe laundry detergent on his clothes. He smells tempting. She wants to bury her nose in the warmth of his neck and collarbone.

There are also the things about his body that embarrass her: a small pimple on his jaw line, something caught in his tooth, the hairs on the back of his neck. Even the thought of things like ear wax, gas, possible marks on the covered parts of his body - things she has never seen or experienced with him — make her uncomfortable. These things are too personal. She imagines he can see what is going on in her mind — that in spite of it all, she wants his mouth, his hands on her. She is preoccupied by this even though she knows it is not possible.

She tries to put these things out of her mind by sneaking her eyes at Don's mouth. He has full, deeply colored lips. She imagines what they feel like and they must be very soft and warm. His lips make her think of oranges. They are at the center of her fantasies about him.

Onerva pops her head into the kitchen. He is pretending to force-feed Kay the omelet. They laugh loudly, as if they are all alone.

"Don, that was Angie on the phone just now. One of the kids is sick and she needs the medical card. She's going to drive over and she needs you to run it out to her so she can take him to the doctor."

"Thanks," he says.

And the room changes entirely. They've been transported to some other kitchen in some other restaurant and are some other people.

We are, thinks Kay.

He starts to clean up the mess. She goes out and joins the other women in the front of the restaurant, waits for the customers who may or may not come in.

When Angie drives up in their shabby old station wagon, Don trots out and pulls the card from the wallet in his pocket. He kisses her through the open car window. Kay watches through the glass of the door.

* * *

It snows all the way into March. It feels as though it will never end. Maybe spring will never come. It is almost April.

Kay likes it best when real life does not enter the restaurant. Meaning Tom. Meaning Angie. It is shockingly easy to pretend they do not exist as long as their names are not mentioned or they do not drop in - Tom almost never does and Angie is usually too busy with the kids to do anything but survive them. Kay remembers her saying something like this once. As long as they, Tom and Angie, stay in their places, it is very simple to pretend they do not exist. But this is not exactly right — they exist, but their existence is of no consequence, no liability of hers. It is as though she has shed the part of her which bears any responsibility to them. She is released and unconstrained.

"Hey there, Kay. How goes it?" Don says when she steps out of the bathroom in her uniform.

"It goes. Weren't we just here? I could have sworn about a mere half day ago I was here in this very spot..."

He shrugged. "At least we were together."

"Yes. At least we were." His eyes linger on her. They seem heavy and drenched in something. The feeling stays with her even after she has pulled herself away. The feeling stays with her and mingles with something in her like fear or exhilaration. She avoids him and luckily it is a busy night and she thinks he is unaware that she is trying to sidestep him. She isn't sure why she is compelled to do this.

The snow continues to fall. People come to the restaurant in spite of it. No one is willing to stay home for this weather any longer. They don't want to see even one more flake and if it must insist on falling, they will continue on with their lives, bad roads or not. They drag in wet on their feet, on their coats, on their heads. Little puddles form around the restaurant and the windows fog up. It smells of wet clothes and forced heat. The staff tries to keep up with the slippery floors, dropping cloths here and there to soak up the melted snow. They put out the yellow CAUTION sign in the hallway that leads to the customer restrooms.

Jean falls on her ass on her way to pick up one of her orders. Kay and Onerva help her to the kitchen.

"It's my tailbone!" she says tearfully. Her sniffs increase with every tear she squeezes out.

"Go on home, sweetheart. Put an icepack on that. I'll take over your section. Call us later, let us know you're alright." And Jean leaves, limping out to her car.

"Well, that's one way of getting out of a busy night's work," Kay mutters.

"Now, honey, be nice. Jean didn't mean to fall." Onerva pats Kay.

Kay sighs, "I know." Onerva pats her again and they go back out into the busy restaurant.

The evening flies by - it is so busy and they are shorthanded. At the end of the night Onerva slumps down at the counter.

"I haven't worked a shift like that in a long time. I'm too old for this," she says. "You guys close up. I'll run the numbers first thing tomorrow. I'm going home to bed." She gets up, stiff, and gets her coat from the hook out back, and her purse from beneath the

register. "Thanks for all the hard work, everyone." She calls this behind her as she shuts the door.

"Night," they call to her, one by one.

This leaves Kay, a busboy and Don. But then the busboy's mother pulls up and honks and he runs out in the snow to the warm safety of her car.

Kay continues to wipe down tables and put chairs upside down on top of them so she can wash the floor. Don's presence is charged and brimming. He cleans the counter. In silence, they wash the floors and scrub the kitchen. Kay goes to clean the customer bathrooms and when she comes back, there Don sits on a stool at the counter smoking a cigarette. He has turned off all the lights but those in the kitchen. She sits and he hands her a smoke and lights it for her.

She has thought so many times about being alone with him and now that she is she has a blank mind. She sits and smokes.

"What a night," she says. She can't think of anything else to say. This is not a problem she usually has and she is uncomfortable. She wants to run.

Don watches her. One elbow is propped on the counter and his chin rests in his hand. That same hand holds his smoldering cigarette. The smoke pools and curls around his face. He watches her, his eyelids heavy. He slowly reaches out and places his other hand on her thigh. His palm runs unhurriedly up and down, up and down. No other part of him is moving except the hand that holds the cigarette when he moves it to his mouth and inhales.

She thinks of his mouth. His slim body that she imagines touching, pressing into, consuming. She looks at his mouth. His palm, hot, runs up and down her thigh.

She moves her eyes to the wall behind the counter.

Outside the snow continues to fall. It piles and piles on top of all the snow that is already out there. The big dirty mounds, the sandy, oily snow at the edges of the roads. It covers it and covers it and covers it. When will it be Spring? Tom comes to her thoughts. She doesn't feel guilt, which is what she might have thought she would naturally feel. What surprises her is the intense longing.

She stands. Moves out from under his hot palm. She can feel the abruptness of her movements.

"I have to go." And then she is in her car and going home. She doesn't feel that she has decided this and she does not feel that she has not. In a way, it is simply where she finds herself. In another way, it is the only place she could be.

* * *

Tom's boat is due in.

Kay drives down to the dock to meet it. She has not done this since they were first married. Somehow without intention, she simply stopped. Now he gets a ride home with one of the other fishermen. But today she wants to get him. There is so much she wants to say to him.

It hasn't snowed in almost a week. It is just about forty degrees. This morning when Kay went out to buy a coffee at the convenience store, she could smell things. Earthy, growing things. She almost forgot the world has a smell.

After a while, the boat docks and the men walk off and out into the parking lot. Kay opens her door and calls out, "Tom!" He turns and looks surprised to see her. He waves to the guy he's walking with and climbs into their car.

"Hi," he says and leans over to kiss her.

He smells of fish and sweat and unwashed clothes. Cigarettes and coffee. This is how he smells when he comes off the boat. Usually she tells him *get in the shower!*

"Hi," she says.

"What are you doing here?" he says. She can tell he is pleased she has come.

"I don't know."

He touches the back of her head. "I thought you were going to cut your hair?"

The sky is blue. They pass the bank and the digital sign that tells everyone the time and the temperature says "1:00" and "41." Is this spring? *Maybe*, she thinks.

What does she have to say? This is her husband. What will she say? There may not be the any words. There is not enough time and there is too much time left.

"I still might," Kay says.

