

Scooping the Fat of Time

by Shawn Misener

The scale reads 370 pounds. A spike of anxiety clears out my insides. How on earth could I let myself go like this?

This is my childhood home, and my parents are waiting outside the bathroom door with gifts of gummy bears, cigarettes, and homemade pasties. I dodge them with a spin move and slide into the living room, where my brother is watching game shows and fiddling with his Ipad. God, he looks so old. How far behind him can I be?

I lift up my sweatshirt and reach with a full fist into my belly button. This is where the fat comes out. I scoop out the yellow and white stew and fling it against the television. My family has fled down the road gagging.

After thirty-two scoops I am eager to step on the scale again. Skin hangs like a curtain over my knees.

This time the reading isn't a number. It's a Smurf, beckoning me to join him in my childhood.

