

I haven't slept with anyone since this ended, it's been years. My muscle memory abandoning me with every month that goes by, the trepidation of a virgin stuck in my throat. A part of me is embarrassed, although I can't say it's been a struggle, I've found it pretty easy, necessary even. It feels like you are still in possession of it. I feel like a lent book that you never returned. Late fees piling up, take care of those will you. Years ago I lent an ex-boyfriend, if you could call him that, my copy of Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* before I'd even read it. Him ghosting me not long after. I can't tell if it were an assumption, a hope, that one day he'd return with said book and an apology, or a fear that maybe there was something in that book that made him come to the conclusion that I wasn't for him, but whatever it was I never repurchased it. Had I sooner, maybe this book would have already been written, or maybe the timing is perfect. I've given myself to men before, and been taken by a few more. They've braced my hips, caused my spine to bend into a frown, positioning me upon their faces just the same and yet they rarely possessed me in the way you managed. I felt their absence almost immediately, sometimes welcomed it. You ate me up at a rate I felt I couldn't match. I think you may have bitten too hard, bitten off more than you could chew, that you took a part of me with you. Not in the mythical sense but in the physical sense, it's the only way how I feel now makes sense. Mid fuck you surgically removed a part of me, to take with you, a souvenir of my innards. A small mucous organ with the body of a rare fish Attenborough would narrate over, with a name we've never heard of. Not the kind of organ you can't live without but one that sometimes when missing makes life so miserable you wonder if there's any point. I imagine it wedged between your molars like a slither of spinach. I imagine that it's been lodged there for years, giving your immunity a boost, a spring in your step you've not been able to put a finger on. Now you have two of the scaled, gill-bearing organ, the mysterious little undiscovered species of the anatomy. Yours and mine. Two of something, you never even knew you had one of. No wonder you're doing so well, baby.