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Other People's Happiness

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Other People's Happiness

At a truck stop near Tacoma, you broke down and bought a pack of Pall Malls. I drove the rest of the way, while you practiced French exhales.

Your mother's face crumpled when she answered the door. After dinner you said: "He's really dead." Something you'd heard people say in films.

After dark, we stripped on the beach, and I saw, for the first time, the way your body carried its grief; shoulders rolled, arms smothering your breasts, knees buckling against the water's wake. You kept talking about people we'd known years before; you wanted to know if they'd lost it too.

LAUREN LAWS

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