

Emily Sierra

For Hype Literary Magazine

The Dead Leg

My father's dead leg is in a pile somewhere in a hospital in East Orange, NJ. It's left out of the ashes in my closet.

Before my father died, he got gangrene in his leg. Another by-product of his overarching disease: alcoholism. My father used to be a performer. He would act, sing, dance—he even taught it, once upon a time. He loved dancing. My parents fell in love dancing.

He needed to get the leg cut off. That was the only thing that would prolong his life.

My father's alcoholism devoured his brain; I knew that, once he went through the procedure, he wouldn't remember having it done. Every day he would wake up, expecting to have two legs, and wake up to only one. Every day he would be scared and confused and hurt, aware that he would never walk again, never dance again, never perform again. I get my creativity from my father; I know this. They had to cut it off of him because it was going to kill him. The part we shared.

I don't know if they incinerate dead body parts; I can only assume that they do. The thing I have in my closet is incomplete, even if I combined my ashes with my sisters' ashes, it would be incomplete. That's not my father. That's never going to be my father. My father was the walks to the liquor store. My father was Saturday morning cartoons. My father was the silly voices he would give to my stuffed animals. My father was salsa and bachata.

My father's dead leg is somewhere sitting in East Orange, and I don't know how to get it back. How do you get a leg back? How do you get a father back? How do you redo a lifetime when the life has run dry? I don't know if they incinerate body parts, but no one would want my father's dead leg, so I'm sure they did anyway. I want those ashes, not the ones in my closet. I would make those into a diamond and wear it on my finger, show it off proudly and say: "This was made from the ashes of my father's dead leg." As all my friends gasp, I would twist my finger and continue on with, "My father drank himself to death, and this is the leg they had to chop off, and this is the thing that killed him." And then I would weep and weep and weep and no one would be my friend anymore. And I think I'm okay with that because I don't know how to have a dead dad, and I don't think it looks good on me. I don't wear this grief fashionably, like a diamond ring. I don't want it anymore. I want to cut it off of me, like a dead leg.

It's Her Hair

She fiddled with her mic settings before booting up her stream. She had set her string lights to radiate a dull purple which casted dreamy shadows over her body. She wore her Japanese-French-maid uniform for today—a Patreon who won a lottery requested the outfit she would wear next. Her toy of choice was the glass dildo in the shape of a winding tentacle. It was a transparent pink and just a few inches long, bumps lined the underside of it, pretending to be suction cups. Real life tentacle porn with a real-life anime girl. Her audience ate it up. During her streams, she never wore a wig, unlike the other camgirls she was friends with. Her fans loved her long black hair, untouched by dyes or heat or anything that could damage it. As more of her subscribers booted on, she let her hair go from the bun it was in. It framed her face, casting shadows on her cheeks. The shine of her hair looked lavender in the light. “Hi, loves,” she purred, the light of her monitor giving her tan skin an alien glow. The glow of new subs was reflected in her eyes. “I’m super horny tonight, and I need my masters’ love to get me off.” As she spoke, she pulled out her dildo, holding it daintily next to her face. “Can you all show me your love?” She smiled wide as donations flooded the chat. She didn’t read the messages; she massaged her breasts, and moaned too loud.

She took the dildo in her mouth and started sucking on it. Slow. Intentional. Through the fog of the glass, one could see her tongue sliding around the tip of the tentacle. She moaned louder and louder, licked faster and faster, each suction-cup-bump slid over each of her taste buds. The first time someone called her an anime girl was in the eighth grade, nearly a decade ago. “You’d look like you belong in Naruto or something if your skin wasn’t that dark,” Luis, a tall, gangly boy who she had a crush on, told her. “You’d be like a badass villain or something—it’s your hair.”

Hiking her skirt up, she flashed her shaven vagina to the camera. It went out of focus for a moment, but once she stayed still long enough, it was in full view for her audience. “Can I get some more donations to help get me wetter?” she cooed, using her left hand to rub around her lips, haphazard. Thoughtless. Her screen pinged donation after donation, her face lighting up bright pink again and again. The light made it look like she was blushing, like she was really in love. Satisfied, she took the dildo and slowly slid it into herself, letting out a loud shriek of mock-pleasure. She crossed her eyes and stuck her tongue out, forcing saliva out from her throat as she slid the tentacle in and out and in and out and back in again, each suction-cup-bump hitting into her walls, syncing with each donation ding.

If she had looked at the comments, she would have seen one fan comment about how she would look so much better with skin lighteners. Another agreed, saying she would look “less Mexican and more Asian.” These two comments got lost in the flood of messages about taking off her dress, of trying not to clip her audio, of going faster, of going slower.

Reunion

He recognized the Woman from somewhere, he couldn't place where. The Tam was packed as usual. Emersonians slurred out orders of shots, of Pabst Blues, of maybe more shots. He recognized most of their faces from Freshman year; girls who wrote him off as the funny white guy who may also be the White Guy that may shoot up their class if they were rude to him. One of them, Molly, had told him through a tense smile that he was "so silly," which made him consider shooting up the school and then himself.

But that Woman wasn't from Emerson College—hearing her voice, he realized she wasn't from the States. She was Russian. She and her cohort sat at the far end of the bar, sectioned off from the College-Cluster who were busy Snapchatting their roommates, their exes, their confused coworkers.

He was alone sipping gin. He had already smoked a bowl, which is what inspired him to go to the bar across the street from his old school. He didn't think as he slinked over to the Woman; he simply materialized into the group. For a moment the Russians didn't question his existence, like he had always been there. And maybe he had been and had just, in this very moment, remembered this was where he belonged the entire time.

"I know you," he said, looking at Her as steady as he could. She finally regarded him, big blue eyes staring at him, owlish. She was comically sexy; blonde hair, big tits, round hips, smokey eyeliner. His main critique was that she had small lips—and he hated blondes. She tilted her head as the others whispered and giggled.

"Subscriber?" she asked above the white noise of the bar. Ah yes. Subscriber.

"My girlfriend, not me."

"Your girlfriend my subscriber? How cute! She is here?"

ValeriyaASMR. That was Her name. His ex would watch Her constantly, along with that other Russian woman that he liked better because she was brunette. His ex would put Her on his computer, blasting out sloppy and moist mouth sounds through his speakers, causing his ex to cackle so loud

people heard her down the halls. He didn't mind any of that; what he didn't like was that she would call his monitor a "PC" and insisted that she was right, even though he'd set up the computer and knew more than she did.

"No, she isn't. Homework."

"Oh, so sad! Want picture—to send to her?"

"Yeah. Sure, she'll like that."

The ex had blocked him after he called her at three am. He was crossfaded and having a panic attack because he wanted to fuck a girl and she didn't want to fuck him, and he may or may not have over stepped some boundaries, and he wanted to be told that everything was okay.

"Say cheeses!"

He needed to hear her voice to calm himself down.

"Cheeses."