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Mosquito Bites

Joseph Krebaum

*Content Warning: Rape

Underneath my tight flannel clothes, there is barely any space for my arms to breathe. The insect bites scathe my legs and constellate the skin like a road map with a red rash of cities. As I trudge across the deep trenches of mud with the occasional crackling of sticks and leaves, I only have about one thing on my mind: “home.” “Home” being the code word for “my tent.”

It is dark, and I spot the silhouette of a man. His figure is sly, curving just around the waist and hungry for deliverance. I look up at his face. The nose is slightly upturned, the eyes hollow, but even so, I decided that it wouldn't hurt to ask him for help. Reluctant, but still hopeful, I ask the man a question.

He answers the question. Not in the way that I want it to be answered, but in the way that he wants it to be answered instead. Without blinking, he pushes me down. Onto a log. Holds me down with his coarse, unwashed hands as he unzips his jeans. Unzips my jeans. Then, he thrusts his hips wildly as he forces me to stay down on the log, trying not to break concentration. After all, this is his destiny. The man violates my personal space as if his life depends on it. A violent pattern of penetrating gasps of air and “Oh yeah.” I try to scream my answer out loud. But he doesn't care. He doesn't care. As offensive as he gets, he doesn't look back as he pulls me toward him. Brutalizes me. Pounds me so hard that my flesh tears open, and I no longer focus on the irritating bug bites covering my razor-thin legs. Groans. Ejaculates.

And before I know it, the question becomes a memory.