

Hairs

I read Lydia Davis on a train. An ex-lover gave me the book before we parted ways. There was a story, "The Dog Hair," about a dead dog and his hair, and how no one could bring themselves to clean it. Several stories later I found a hair between the pages. I traced it with my finger and the hair fell on the floor and disappeared. It was the last part of my lover I ever touched.

One summer my friend let me stay in her apartment while she was away. I came after dark and spent the evening reading on the sofa in the living room. Next morning I noticed that the sofa was all covered with dog hair. She had lost her dog a year ago, but his hair was still in her apartment. I vacuumed the sofa. It was much later that I realized that maybe she kept the hair on purpose.

Another lover told me he had been finding my hair on his body all the time. He seemed to like it. I wondered when we would reach the time when my hair in the sink and in the shower would stop being cute and become irritating. But we never lasted that long.

Sometimes I lose so much hair that I fear I might eventually run out, but it never happens.

My mother told me that when I was born, I had unusually long hair for babies. She had to comb it regularly. When my younger sister was born, I came up to her cradle and dropped my comb next to her. My mom thought it was endearing. She thought I was sharing my most prized possession. But who knows what I was thinking. I might have been mocking my sister: she was born completely bald.

As a child I had a bunch of books about ancient Egypt. One of them had a giant picture of a mummy. The description said, "...so well preserved... you can still see the skin and the hair." But all I saw was a skeleton, blackened and deformed.

After I have my hair cut, I always stare at my ends on the floor. They look surprisingly light and fluffy, and I don't recognize them. As I watch them being swept and thrown into trash, I wonder where I begin and where I end.

Once I dreamed I started to go gray. When I woke up, I remembered I had always had one gray hair ever since I was a child. One day my mother noticed it and plucked it out of my head. It was around that time when she herself started getting her first gray hairs and was in a habit of plucking them. We were both aging, but she was further along.