

# You are beautiful just the way you are

by E. Victoria Flynn

There were avocados splayed across menus like 1950's pinup girls—all thigh and curve. Avocados in California omelets. Avocados split and diced, sprayed with lime, slapped on bagels, served with tomato.

There were avocados on mismatched plates eaten under shade trees with chai lattes next to dog-eared classics and a 50 cent romance pinched from the laundry across the street. She read aloud, “No, she was being ridiculous. He was an honorable man; there had to be another explanation. Perhaps weariness rode him as hard as it did her.”

There were avocados on hand thrown mugs, stamped there above the cafe's name, painted in olive green instead of avocado.

When they crossed the boarder back into California, there were signs warning against illegal produce and she wondered if an avocado needed a Green Card.

She remembered the pits she'd saved and skewered with toothpicks, how they hung suspended in shot glasses rotting and turning soft.

There were avocados smeared on soft dresses left soaking overnight in the bathroom sink. Small faces and hands, she knew, couldn't be kept clean for long.

