

# Nails

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In a dark room, a man lies pressed between his wife's legs. He begs with tear-filled eyes for her to scratch him. She does, just under his bottom eyelids, shallow enough to prevent a scar but deep enough for his tears to make the wounds sting.

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With nails that her mother begged her to clip, this little girl undoes the stitching of her teddy bear's chest. She digs around through synthetic fibers for a heart, but all she finds is a button, a factory error. This little girl falls asleep empty-handed.

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A boy runs from home. At a creek he removes his socks, peeling gingerly where they have adhered to his broken toenails. His blood clings like glue. Dipping his feet in the water, he watches the red flow move downstream.

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She broke the nail she used to point with. It snapped as she was clasping the second push-up bra she'd put on over top of the first. When she looks down, she won't be able to see past her deflated breasts. She won't be able to see the recent vacancy of her womb, but its hollow echo still wakes her up at night.