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Meniscus

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JESSICA WHITEHAIR

Meniscus

Some injuries people should lie about. Spinning some tale saving paralyzed orphans from a fiery death trap elevator is an acceptable alternative to the actual truth about certain embarrassing accidents. He should have lied about his knee.

Before the surgery, he habitually sprawled. His legs never bent quite enough to fit in constrained spaces. When their group of friends watched a movie of shameless product placement, he took up an entire couch among the cheap furniture on concrete floors scarcely padded by short carpet. Her head rested against the tightly woven, lawn furniture fabric of the couch. She sat on the floor by his knee, the appendage whose injury would end their relationship as well as his athletic pursuits. Later, her friends would tell her that he looked like he wanted to touch the hair layered back on the couch. She'd wish that he had.

Three years later, the knee had healed, the torn meniscus had been repaired, but nothing else. He's not so shy anymore, his hand curled in another woman's hair. This time she could see the look that her friends had seen years before as she watched him, separated by a more expensive couch, coffee table, and settee. She looks at her fingers tightening slightly around a mug of cooling tea. Her expression lightens quickly.

He could have fabricated a lie about tripping while going up the staircase and the ridiculous misstep that necessitated an outpatient knee surgery. She had forgiven him for much more.