

After Irene Breaks Up with Him,

Frank reads on the internet that atoms don't disappear when you die—particles stay in the atmosphere. In Vegas, Frank searches for a place to wash his clothes from Colorado. This kind of traveling does no one any good. And if you're not a natural born salesman, it's worse. Frank thinks about being frank with the pretty Asian girls in the laundromat, who play the video games and occasionally grin at each other, before squealing, "Go ahead, make my day," in high pitched tones. They point and shoot each other with would-be American fingers. That comforter (my God, an army of them could use it for warmth) won't even fit in the industrial loader.

Frank looks at his phone and waits for a text that won't come. Outside, the neon light of LAUNDRY sputters and kills the "N" and the "R." He'd like to call Irene to say, "Hey, baby," but he bets his friends would think that was desperate. So, he closes the phone and watches the tiniest girl (the one with the bee stung lips) pout, shove her whole body against electric green fabric. What the hell. In the end, we're all inhaling the atoms of Hitler or Elvis anyway. We're all breathing heartbreak. Frank gets up and with one hand, buries the quilt deep in the well of the machine. The girls cheer, each stands on tiptoe, brushes her lips against his cheek.