
NOT ME. A MEMOIR BY MARIANNE DISSARD
EXCERPT 'MR. CREOSOTE'

Remember the wafer-thin mint?

When I first saw Monty Python's *Meaning of Life*, I laughed a lot, but especially hard at the final scene. In a fancy French restaurant, a very big man in dinner jacket, Mr. Creosote, has eaten, eaten, and eaten. Despite being "absolutely stuffed," he says, he eats one wafer-thin mint and explodes. The content of his stupendous stomach is splattered all over the restaurant. A poor little heart still beating inside the big, hollowed, exposed chest, Mr. Creosote is ceremoniously presented with the check for his gargantuan meal. When I binge, there always comes a time for my wafer-thin mint. It is the last little morsel I can swallow and I never know which it will be. Could be salty or sweet, a cracker or a pea. At that point, before potentially catastrophic gastric rupture, I barrel out of the kitchen to bend over the toilet bowl and, in that moment, remember something one of my teachers once told me in class. "You're very flexible," he'd said. "Resist going there, where it's easy. Work to pull away from the ground." So I unbend a bit from a near perfect fold-over and use the muscle power in my legs and core to gain better access and control of my stomach muscles, the very same muscles that I use during yoga breathing exercises and digestion-enhancing twists. Not unlike Mr. Creosote, I can't resist eating the wafer-thin mint. When the check comes due, however, I look the other way.