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Moves

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••MOVES

CHRISTOPHER MERKNER

Our son uses his hands to move me. He pushes me away and says, "No kisses." He frowns and smiles at the same time. He is weighing wants.

My wife just looks at me.

She drops her mouth. She cannot believe I let him get away with this. Neither can I. No one does this to me. I am seldom pushed. "You're seldom told 'no'," is how my grocery store lover says it. She hands me a large lemon.

She has taken another lover, I know, a man with three children—twins, both toddlers, and a newborn. The prospects of a fourth are excellent, she tells me. "Look," she says, "I'm just an old-fashioned girl. Eventually you'll find someone who loves you for your force and discernment."

I take her hand. I bring her near me. I back her into a cascade of Braeburns. They drop in thuds. I bend. She goes.

Later, when I come in through the back door, my son runs over and kisses me. Then he smells me. He doesn't move.