

Selection from *Everaftering*
By Greg Edwards

HELEN

If you take a calculator and try to determine my failure-to-success ratio, you'll get "Error: Divide by Zero." Do you know how depressing it is when your love life defies modern computation? I'm a human Klein bottle.

MICHELLE

No, you're an visionary. Oh, don't look pleased. It's not a good thing—

HELEN

Thanks.

MICHELLE

An visionary thinks too far in advance. Take yourself for instance, the second you start to like a man—the second a man asks you out—

HELEN

Which happens never.

MICHELLE

—you envision the first couple dates. Then, a moment later, you envision a long-term relationship and, from there, marriage and, before you know it, you've envisioned the next sixty years of your life, including your home, pets, and children, subdivided by gender and projected occupation.

Now, while men aren't a terribly observant lot, years of evolution have granted them a sensory mechanism of unprecedented power: the *everafterdar*.

HELEN

The "everafterdar"?

MICHELLE

Not as catchy as "gaydar," I know—it doesn't have the radar rhyme going and it adds all those syllables—but here's how it works. The second you think about marriage with a man and your life "ever after," even if the thought just crosses your mind for an instant—the man's everafterdar kicks in. He senses your thought, processes it, and runs the other way.

When I like a man, if I sense even a glimmer of an inkling of an "ever after" forming in my head, I immediately flush it out with thoughts of books I've read, places I've traveled, or—in emergency situations—team sports. This creates white noise and throws off even the most attuned of everafterdars, defending visionaries such as yourself.

HELEN

We should have these conversations more often. It's nice to know my problems can be summed up in a series of portmanteaus.