

*Pain*

Immediately after telling the world I was going to stop, Vanderhorne tried to change my mind. ‘Of course I was joking – you could be the champ by Christmas,’ he told me. I held my ground, and explained that as it was, at the moment, my body would never allow me to be that good – I just didn’t have the energy to get to the standard I had been at before surgery.

Stopping wrestling is like breaking up with a partner. There was a feeling of regret that pitted in my stomach. I hadn’t ever been confident enough in my own ability to flourish. I should have been like Dragonita or Janey or Rosa, and pushed for singles matches and a shot at the title. Instead, I had just followed instructions obediently so that I could make everyone else look amazing – the job of the unprofessional wrestler.

The feelings of regret followed me around so I took down all the pictures I had of me wrestling, and hid them away. I removed my Rana mask from the mannequin head that sat on my dressing table and I stowed it away in a bag under the bed, along with my boots, my kneepads and about six variations of