

SHORT PROSE FOR TWO ●

Brendan Todt

I asked him to stop and he did. We both ate our slices of cake. He got up on the stepstool and laid his square plate in the sink. Then we both cried like candles dripping wax. There was no birthday. No anniversary. No one had retired from work and sent the extra cake home with me. We had bought it for ourselves, him and me, four days ago, and now it was gone. He had pointed at the glass display case and the baker made us a face in orange icing. I asked her if she could add two gaping buck teeth and she smiled and added a tongue as well. It's not just crying and eating we do. Or remembering. There are leaves outside, still on the trees, that we know will fall and the falling will make us happy. It's only when we leave them there, in their great piles like torn-open mouths, that everything beneath will begin to go brown.