

LOVE IS IN THE AIR

By Joan Powell, North Vancouver

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The key turns and the door opens. I pause and listen for him. In the distance, a radio plays Bach, the cellist pulling each note from her soul. There is no other sound.

My heart quickens as I head for the kitchen. I know he's heard me come in. The thought seeds a smile as I drop the bags I'm carrying onto the counter and unpack the contents: tenderloin, a hill of vegetables, red wine.

I pause, leaning against the sink where the window frames a garden voluptuous in plump spring blossoms. Bees sail wantonly across the sea of flowers, one or two intoxicated enough to bump off the glass in front of me like upholstered pebbles.

Their drunkenness is appealing; I find the wine, pull the cork and pour a few ruby mouthfuls. The first sip is round and full of fruit, trailing fingers of warmth the length of my throat. I think about calling out to him but don't, knowing he'll find me.

I take another sip and slowly unwrap the steak, waiting. Soon enough I feel the melting heat of his brown eyes following my every move.

A low, inadvertent groan sounds from the doorway. I turn to face him.

The dog returns my fond gaze with infinite adoration. Just a friend in all other places, here in the kitchen he is besotted. I trim a bit of meat from the steak and offer it to him. He eats it from my fingers, tenderly, like a lover.