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## Quesadilla

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# Quesadilla

Our curtains were white, the ones hanging in the bedroom. In my opinion, they looked like the ones you find at your grandmother's house, but my wife Josephine really liked them, so I didn't complain. I had sort of gotten used to looking at them now that I have been bedridden for months. We prepared for the absolute worst at the start, but almost two years passed and I was still fighting. The doctors were calling it a miracle, but I was giving the praise to Josephine, to her driving for hours just to get the right medicine, staying up all night just to talk like when we were kids and most important of all, not giving up on me. We had always been close ever since we were kids. Josephine had always been a strange kid, especially after a certain incident when we were 6 and she disappeared into the forest only to come back a year after, unharmed and unable to remember what had happened. While the other girls in our grade wanted to dress up as princesses in blonde wigs and tiaras, Josephine would paint her face green and put on this strange silver suit, yelling that she came from the stars. But even for her weirdness, I fell in love with her for her kindness and honesty. There was a pure joy that I only felt around her.

The sun had just gone down, filling our room in a faint blue tint. The tall trees made their guest appearance in my window. I could hear Josephine downstairs making dinner for us, probably pizza or something. We always ate Italian on Fridays. Resting my head on the pillow, my eyes were counting the white painted plank boards holding our ceiling up. The sounds of the porcelain plates scraping against each other had become a calming sound for me and informed me dinner was soon to be served. Normally the sound would alert me to hide away my Gameboy or whatever else I was not allowed to entertain myself with. She worried about the radiation but I could not give a shit. The creaking of Josephine moving up the stairs and the smell of food made me sit up in anticipation, although I was unable to scent any pizza or spaghetti. The door opened and, like the sun, Josephine's smile lit up the room.

“I made quesadillas,” her voice warmly informed.

“Oh, shaking things up I see?” I exclaimed back, lifting the cover of my duvet to invite her in. It was not like her to change habits, but maybe living in an isolated forest had finally driven her as crazy as I felt lying in bed all day.

Quietly making her way over to the bed, Josephine slipped in and dug her dark curly hair into the crook of my neck. The dinner was placed on my lap and I wrapped my arms around the smaller woman next to me, letting my face disappear into her hair. The food might smell good but Josephine smelled better, like a mix of cinnamon and pine tree.

“How was work?” I broke the silence, eying the quesadilla.

“The storm blew down a large tree, so I was a few hours late. Except for that my day was pretty good.”

“Well, that is what we get for living in the middle of the forest, right?” I teased, tightening my grip around my wife.

“How about you, Pia? Did you do anything today?” I could feel her head shuffling underneath my cheek and turned to look at her. A soft hand suddenly grabbed my cheek

“Hey, Strawberry, eat your food before it gets cold!”

Although knowing her for as long as I can remember I will never get used to her eyes. She has the world captured inside of those irises, one blue and the other green. Josephine had caught onto my staring and planted a quick kiss on my lips before crawling out of bed.

“Where is the remote?”

I grabbed the plate of hot food and lifted it up to my nose, taking in the smell of my wife’s cooking. Lately, my appetite had not been that good, barely eating more than a box of crackers. I knew it worried Josephine so I really wanted to eat her meal, but at the same time, the thought of putting any food in my mouth was somewhat nauseating. I reached my finger out and gently poked the cheese on top of the dinner.

“On your night stand, babe,” I responded, sort of just sitting there until the TV was turned on.

Josephine jumped back into our bed and I placed the dinner down onto the floor, turning my head to catch a glimpse of disappointment in Josephine's eyes. I knew she was worried, but I will be fine.

This time it was me to slip close and plant my head onto the soft fabric covering my wife's shoulder. Josephine placed her hand on top of my head, gently stroking where, a few years back, locks of flaming orange hair had spilled out. I had never been a spiritual woman but there was something with Josephine's energy that always made me feel calm, like I was just where I needed to be. The sounds of the TV and Josephine's smell was the last thing I felt before drifting off.

"Hey, do you believe in aliens?"

Static sound filled my ears as the remote was firmly pressed against my cheek. I blinked in confusion for a few minutes, wondering where I was and what time it was. I sat up, expecting to see Josephine, or at least hear her downstairs. But our house was as quiet as any other day when she was at work. Pushing the sheets off me, I scanned our bedroom, eyes locking onto our wedding vows framed in a star painted frame. The sun was not up yet, I could see that from the blue hour creeping up on me again, this time darker.

"Josephine?" It was Saturday and she never worked on the weekends.

Our back door downstairs was shut and it prompted me to get up, stepping into my dinner. The cheese squeezed between my toes like a large fat slug, making me shiver a bit.

Eyes glancing out the window, I managed to catch the silhouette of my wife making her way towards the end of our garden. I had only seen this once, when we both were six years old. My ears were filled with a never stopping beeping, vision suddenly turning blurry, making my head spin. I could not let her go back in, she would not come back this time. Slamming my hand onto the glass, I attempted to get her attention. But as my vision faded, Josephine entered the forest without even looking back. The last thing I saw was bright lights in the sky, it was not the sun.

## About Maiken Møller-Andersen

I am an international student from Norway, studying English at the University of North Dakota. I love to write stories that leave the reader with a certain uncomfortableness or fear.

