

Pancakes

by Jill Chan

My mother made delicious pancakes. I'd top my pancake with a square of butter which would melt slowly, sizzling. I'd lick my lips in anxious anticipation. Something would make me impatient. Something else would make me hold my breath, as if waiting, as if in surprise.

Then I'd spread the butter over the pancake which I'd cut into quarters, then into eight pieces. I'd look for a fork and quickly stab a piece of it and bite into it, feeling good about the finality of things. About my mother, her work and her life. How difficult to be so unassuming. To bring everything into place by being around, by living in a time in heaven, how I'd grow up and lose her, snatched away like humanity bearing something which could be lost, could be tested, and finally gone.

To all the people we loved and lost, there are edges which still hang around in our memory. Those places which stir like a sleeper in her dream.

That hand that held out; that mouth that ate; that God that gave and still gives.

My mother made delicious pancakes. The pictures this memory conjures are endless. They were not taken. They were not given either.

They are stolen from a love that remains more than memory, more than death.

