

Gazpacho

by Shawn Misener

It's a pretty strange feeling when you think you're about to bite into some ice cream and instead it's gazpacho. I winced and moaned and watched her walk back toward the kitchen. She was so so serious when she said "You need to pay closer attention to things." Nevermind. The news was on the television and some dark-skinned rebels were running through clouds of smoke. Children carted away on stretchers made of blasted shards of drywall. Outside the ice cream man was in full Doppler, coming then going, and I entertained the notion of tossing the disgusting cold soup on the floor and making a break for it. It's just not possible to have everything I want.

She was either laughing or crying hunched over the kitchen sink. We were sick with humidity. I went for beers in the fridge, gently touching her hips in passing. She waved me off. "What's the matter?" I asked, not actually caring, popping open the beer and drinking most of it in one tip. "Like you fucking give a shit." That was it, she was crying. I shook my head and told her that the soup wasn't so bad after all, even though I knew I wouldn't touch it before sneaking it into the disposal later.

Three days later and she was gone. It only took a few minutes to toss out all of the moldy things in the fridge, including her gazpacho. I almost didn't. For a brief and torturous moment I could sense her presence locked up in the Tupperware, like some twisted and desperate ghost, but the sentimentality was gone before it came and I proceeded to open the lid on the ice cream.

