

Once

R. F. Tripp

It was winter, and her clothes were cold to the touch—like her skin, perfumed for going out. And her body was stout and still resilient with youth—even after two kids. And when she swooped him up onto the kitchen countertop, up to where the window radiated heat from the winter sun onto his skinny back, she put her arms around him and hugged him, and her going-out suit smelled like it had been outside in the bright winter air, and she told him something he forgets now what—but then, there, everything fell away—he remembers that—and there were no tomorrows, and the past was wiped clean, and she would make sure it was all okay—he could count on that—and even though a bunch of things happened after that that is what he remembers when he remembers.