

Senior Division, Short Fiction

Kirsti Mikoda, St. John's

**Pam Sunday (an excerpt)**

She stood resolutely from the table and crossed to the small sink. There, she reached past him, shouldering him aside a bit as she did, and turned the open tap all the way cold. Taking him by the wrist and without asking, she plunged his hand under the cold stream of water and held it there until she was sure he wasn't of a mind to make a dash for it. She felt him shiver powerfully as relief passed through him.

"Just keep it there," Donna told him, and he did. She crossed to the tiny fridge and began to rummage around. She could feel Loyola watching her as she did, so made sure to bend extra deep when she reached into the back to pull out the tub of Good Luck. His eyes were round as she came back to him, peeling off the plastic lid. Then, cradling his paw in one of her much smaller hands, she rubbed a good dollop of the margarine into his palm over the burn with gentle fingers.

"Better?" she asked.

She felt him shrug, and when she glanced back up at him, he was frowning down at her quizzically. There was a look in his eyes she didn't recognize. A look that Donna felt might be how Loyola would stare at a wounded bird for a moment, before he left it to its fate. He seemed all at once like he wasn't really a biter or a thrasher at all, but a man who was tired out, and desperate for someone to insist that he sit down for a minute.