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The Architect's Confection

In her early 80s, she was getting podgy. The lumpish, weighty sensation was a novelty, after a life unhampered by extraneous layers.

When she'd first arrived in this country, just after the war, they'd found a tiny place north of the river. It was crumbling, but they were lucky to have it. After a while, they were able to buy some land in the south to start from scratch. She was putting the final touches to her design for the house, and just in time, as the bulge in her belly was starting to show – not fat, like now, but her first child.

They'd borrowed and saved, getting by with what rations they could muster in those lean years, and gradually, sponge by sponge, loaf by loaf, they had a comfortable family home. Some of her friends had grander places. It's...sweet, they said, with a sneer. But for them it was like all their birthday cakes come at once.

For a while. With a second child and her parents coming to live with them, things had to expand. Ingredients were much easier to acquire by then, and one could get anything from around the world in this city. She'd used her architect's skills and got to work in the kitchen. An old Romanian song had drifted around in her head as she measured, stirred, sifted and folded: *"To live there is a pleasure, what your heart desires, you can get a mamaliga, a pastrami, a karnatzl, and a glass of wine, aha!"* Soon enough, the substantial extension was baked, tiered and cemented.

Now, the dusting of icing sugar had long blown away, and the piping chipped along the edges. There were cracks here and there, and the roof was a little sunken. But she was proud of the place and what they'd been able to provide for their family.

With her parents passed away and her dear husband too, and both children grown and baking for their own families, the task of maintaining the house had fallen to her. Tired of dealing with the upkeep on this huge place, the thought occurred to her that the home would need to shrink, to diminish. Over time, the thought solidified and she came to believe it was the only way. And so, she began the demolition. Plate by plate, bite by bite. She'd drunk a lot of tea to wash it down, and would need many more cups before the job was done. And as she absorbed the home into herself, she was overcome by all the memories, the good times and bad, all she'd had and lost. And so, as the fatty layers accumulated around her waist and thighs, hanging from her arms, and blooming on her buttocks, she took pleasure in them, knowing all that they contained.