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One Page Sentence

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One Page Sentence

Kevin Coates

I knew it wasn't going to be easy, and by easy I mean a piece of cake, a cake walk, even though the one time I had actually tried to make a cake from scratch, it was not all that easy in fact, it was one of the hardest things I did during my four years in college – making an orange sponge cake that baked into a hideous color, a color like the left over snack bags in the dollar aisle at Wal-Mart after Halloween, when all of the candy is fake fruit shapes and all of the children are dull-eyed and hungry and make you feel guilty to even be alive since you, lucky you, had a veggie omelet this morning and got enough protein to fill three of these poor children, children whose shoes are so tight that one girl's parents have to cut the toe away from the sole of her shoe to fit the little foot in so she can go to school where she worries that someone – anyone, really, but especially that snotty girl whose braids are always even – will notice the hole in her shoe, and then she will have to pretend that she likes it that way, that it is cool to have shoes with a front toe hole, and she will have to say aggressively, "Everyone knows that this is cool, Marta, everyone but you," hoping against hope that somehow people will be convinced, but knowing all the while that no one will be convinced and that once again the girls whose uniforms have designer buttons will link arms and turn their backs to her and walk away giggling as if they just saw the teacher fall out of the window, because the teacher did that once, and even though the mean girls laughed, she was horrified, because what kind of a world is it where teachers fall out of windows and some people have holes in their shoes but other people have designer buttons and chocolate chip gluten free cookies in their lunch that cost a whole two dollars each, more than her family would ever spend on an entire sandwich much less just the dessert, and anyway, they never serve cookies like that when she gets her free school lunch, which really is not free because the price she pays is the look on the lunch lady's face when she scans her lunch card instead of taking money from her hand, and that's what makes the unfairness of it all come thundering down on her shoulders, and it makes her kick at the ground and then at the chair and maybe even (when she's really mad) at the teacher because after all, that teacher fell out of a window and ruined the whole lovely picture of it all, the picture that it was a good and fair world, a world where some sort of God rewarded the poor and the meek and the kind and the well balanced and the well behaved and made it easy, or at least fair, like that American dream that her mother told her they sell at Wal-Mart – but that I no longer believe in.