

The Husband

by Joseph Mills

He comes every day to eat lunch and sit
with her in the sun room. Sometimes he reads
letters out loud from their children or friends;
sometimes he reads the paper as she sleeps.
One day the staff makes her favorite cake
to celebrate their anniversary,
and he tells how, to buy her ring, he worked
months of overtime at the factory,
so she thought he was seeing someone else.
"As if I would look at other women
when I have Pearl," he says, shaking his head.
She begins to cry and tells him, "You're sweet,
but I miss my husband." He pats her hand.
"I know," he says, "It's all right. Try some cake."