

**S.M. Chianti**

## DEVOURING LIFE

(for Christopher)

The dad growls, a starved monster, whiskers salting unseasoned skin. "I'm gonna bite your tummy. Nip, nip. Eat it all up." The child shrieks, baring his own teeth, a comparative arc of perfection. His eyes shine, their lashes another luxury. "Again," he implores the dad. "Do more nip, nip," and the mum, secured by their antics, says quietly: "Don't ever stop, Dad." But the dad knows his appetite, his deepest love, is not enough. This fun, this storm in his heart, must eventually end.

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