

# Lemon Cake

## Andrew Touhy

I am supposed to be concentrating, while beside me, this wedge of lemon cake.

What is worse—*what is worse*—I have taken a bite. I have experienced the pleasure I now deny myself beginning with the following: buttercream frosting; multiple shavings (as if from a sweet pale Crayon) of white chocolate; one ribbony canary-yellow letter of my name made, possibly, of marzipan; moist: the cake itself smells richly of just-squeezed lemons, likely Meyers.

It is a silly thought, but I think it: If there was an acoustic guitar nearby I would at this moment write the song “Lemon Cake,” in which the chorus is “Lemon cake, lemon cake, O,” both to celebrate the singular deliciousness of the bite I have taken (which has within it the promise of equally delightful bites to come, not to mention the collective pleasure of “whole piece”) and to further distract myself from the bites I do not take right now. This song might be three or more minutes long. It might contain the words “fork,” “lick,” and “tea.” Or it might contain the words “hands,” “lips,” and “tree.” Though maybe there will be no lyrics at all.

Maybe I will press and strum the strings only, knock the guitar’s woody, grained face, shake it some as I attempt to groan and whimper sounds not *representative of the essence of lemon cake plus my desire/thwarted desire for it* (lemon cakeness compounded by my intense individual cravingness) but rather *lemon cake and my longings themselves*. THEMSELVES. And if someone, say a stranger, was to walk in during my wordless, truly visceral channeling of the very souls of these cathexes they would be rapt, perhaps *enrapt*, and I suspect hungry, too, for a little of you-know-what, while at the same time—*at the same time*—inexplicably drawn to the gustatory abstinence I am now heroically demonstrating . . . yes . . . yes they would. . . .

. . . oh where was I? Where was I then? I mean, no matter. No matter you see I lost my concentration long ago, back in 1994, and don’t really know if I have the means or character to find it, and keep it, once found.

Thankfully, O! At my elbow, there is lemon cake.