

We blame the toaster.

A candle flame gyrates to the rhythm of a light breeze slipping through screen of the open kitchen window. The Cinnamon Sugar sweet fragrance of the candle is not full bodied enough to combat the toasted toaster smell of burnt bread. Windows, doors, vents work hard with mouths open wide enticing the smoke to run outdoors to play.

The bold burned bagel odor is not budging.

Cinder odors run up the stairwell traveling playfully upwards to snuggle in bedding, to hide in closets, to swirl around quilts; silently giggling all the way.

We blame the toaster. No heads nod, no eyebrows lift, and no fingers twitch owning up to causing the problem.

No one (it seems) has inserted the bagel into the toaster and then left the room. The toaster has nowhere to run and hide. So, the once shiny new appliance is now full of blackened crumbs. "So, what," it says. "I can do it again, often."

As tired wires captured the bagel slices, the toaster did its job. It toasted. It was having so much fun that it toasted again and again. "Yay, this is fun," it coughed, while black smoke reached for the sky...er the ceiling. Our toaster is not alarmed.

Now, a stiff wind is needed to huff and to puff and to blow the smoke out the doorway and down the street giving the neighbors a whiff of what happens when a toaster is left to its own whim. Toaster smoke attacks quilts!

Quilts do not repel toaster smoke. Instead, the smoke, and the smell embeds into each crevice. Perhaps, the trapped odor in the bed quilt and in the hanging artwork will eventually recede. Perhaps not. Maybe, an impromptu quilt show with quilts hanging out the upstairs windows and with quilts draping over the backyard fence will air out the problem. Neighbors will have a looksee, then toast the endeavor.

Perhaps not. The toaster does not give a care. It just sits on the countertop. It just waits for the next bagel. Well, not this toaster. It has toasted (burned) its last bagel.

This toaster is toast.

Lana Russ