



quail eggs
eaten from
the hand
in fog make
everything
aphrodisiac

rachel schenberg

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written in rotterdam, autumn 2018.

special tnx to josie, pzi, adam, tim.

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i.

the question it occurs so many times clearing desks,
taking jackets off, putting them back on, residual
warmth, looking for notes, some arrive and some
seem missing, yet i still don't know how best to peel
an egg in one go?

i wake up to dodie bellamy reading of a colleague

*soft in a hard place, an egg yolk rolling
through a field of blades.*

i also wake up to chickens cooing in the level below.
this was sudden.

///
^ ^

i've just moved to rotterdam or mainly the local
durum time inheriting a friend's haven, a turkish
restaurant writing your meal of the day over an egg-
cheese pide. the dough folds in and the scramble
inside it, chivey.

i've spread the goods around, the table headphones
flies hovering over my notebook, a hairtie. await
a turkish coffee. waiting for it i wonder the true
fragility, what is it of a yolk? what happens in those
seven minutes for the egg to boil, for it to arrive on
my plate hard, in a soft mouth?

i fold the question right up and prod it into my back
pocket.

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ii.

it was last month when at the frick collection, new york
carpeted sponge and boots disk in the main room, i listened
to bellini's most supposedly famous piece *st francis* on a
phone which everyone was hooked into, the guide. i wrote
down in 0.4 mm font that bellini his signature he wrote it
on a folded bit of paper caught in the branches. it read
IOANNES BELLINVS and i thought how i might be
able to imbed the same within my sculptures, wondered
if poking (them) in were a thing? how to fold or unfold the
pocket inside, showing creases the spines of how it hides. the
guide said the scene is of a revelation and everyone in the
painting is silent, at that moment, when a woman comes over
wedging the phone between her chin and shoulder asking
could i please borrow your pen?

she's now approaching st francis, is her nose going to touch
it? it seems her nose will touch it, she unfolds the back of a
receipt, and writes on it leaning into the painting. returning
she looks me in the eye, then folds it right up still looking and
hands me back my pen.

i fiddle with it stuck around between my fingers wondering
where do all the folded bits of paper go?

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hands me back my den.

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my landlord in paris scattered notes throughout
the apartment. she had just renovated the
bathroom and wanted to make sure the resin
tiles wouldn't get eaten. just vinegar, she said,
no cleaning agents, no soap or ammonia. a
special trip into town and i'm considering
the options, would it be red, rice, (rich fig)
or malt? i go for classic, *classic white* the
vinegar. there were eight of them the notes,
i counted, i left them there for weeks.

they began to curl around the edges, i'd been
waiting for you to come over to do your post-pee
the one you do the second time but never the first
because you'd laugh at them say you'd do the same
those notes, a material fiend on tender care. but
i shouldn't have let slip your leaving was sexy, so i
took photos of them and folded each into the bin.

my landlord in paris scattered notes throughout the apartment. she had just renovated the bathroom and wanted to make sure the resin tiles wouldn't get eaten. just vinegar, she said, no cleaning agents, no soap or ammonias. a special trip into town and i'm considering the options, would it be red, rice (rich fig) or malf? i go for classic, classic wine the vinegar. there were eight of them the notes, i counted, i left them there for weeks.

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so many areas so many different types of music and lights i can't even find the lifts any more, people carrying *it's a girl!* and i find another note in the hospital bin bathroom. a message printed at the local hp laser, it says *no squatting* and with handwritten 'justments *we're in australia* exclamation point. we're in australia, an exclamation pointing—but i'm pressing buttons with my bent finger finally in the elevator.

i arrive and they're serving omelettes for dad, to me it smells like airplane food i gag but try shift my mind to mornings with him at the age of seven years. he taught my sister and i how to make a hybrid french omelette scramble. it's all in the fold, he would say, it's about bringing in the edges. the trick is, to trick the eggs into thinking they're an omelette—you let the mixture spread over the pan for seven minutes until you say, now come to the middle and spatula in the sides (making (french) folds), because it's already a little cooked the creases remain hence a more organised scramble.

squinting into my phone as if the sun, i'm (brought) back to *durum time* food finished and half my coffee left in a cup. muddy sediment; the level suspended with creases—it's seeing the future but i can't see it for myself. in this bend, i think my elbows feel misused.

so many areas so many different types of music and lights i can't even find the lifts any more, people carrying it's a guy and i find another note in the hospital pin bathroom a message printed at the local hp laser, it says no swimming and with handwritten 'instruments were in various exclamation point. we're in australia, an exclamation pointing—but i'm pressing buttons with my bent finger finally in the elevator.

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it's the egg cracker i remember most from the philosophy school in the swiss alps getting all heady after three-day seminars, and you poaching me like i liked your tattoos. so the next morning as you were waking i went downstairs for breakfast, i can't do the a.m. i say, must be the cockatoo inside me i seem to like 'em sole.

and i'm contemplating that hard-egg, put the ball up top to crack it? when you come down fuzzy to join me (it's perfect) and show me the proper way to *Crack an Egg With a Clean Head*.

it's with that swiss-egg-device *An Amazing Little Tool*, helps you take the top of an egg shell in a line without damaging the insides. No Mess! No Fuss! what an easy way to tip one's hat.

my fingers now receive your images on my phone. the next one i see during my transfer in brussels, it's a photo of marcel broodthaers giving his hat to somebody and that body is magritte you say he's giving his hat to magritte. it's like a handshake though, difficult to know who's giving it to who.

the cold here makes me come to suspect that an exposed head is both revealing and concealing. exposed a head reflects its surroundings when greased, giving space to another kind of hat(Te), another logic.

i've pondered this, not believing everything that's in one's mind.

[]

an exterior vessel.

is't (all) hidden in one's hat?

no, a hat is no substitute for a head. but it is exciting.

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no, a hat is no substitute for a head. but it is exciting.

on the train to nice i realise it's not the time of year to be
eating aubergines. oh, but jeans.

you tell me you'd just realised this, that the French Aubergine
is the English Eggplant—show me a found photo of a set of
chicken eggs, with one wearing an aubergine's hat. they all sit
together in an eggcart-on, and i wonder how E-G-G sounds
sitting on a stave.

the only true logic is sound, if you don't know, listen, you say.
but the voice of your work, is it a cuckoo bird egg? using your
other art as host nests, mimicing their eggs, accumulating
different shells? at the gallery your friend told me that builders
used to put eggs in the panels of houses, insurance until they
got paid, hidden eggs in the walls. i ask if you think this is
like when we blink it's morse code, falling into alphabets of
languages not yet invented. is the hidden sound a blink?

maybe it's like how while coasting over the arabian sea, that
i learnt how to reveal an egg in one move. i didn't realise i had
so much to say about it. david attenborough was teaching us
about the *world of eggs* on the small airplane screen. he said it's
not the shell that keeps the egg together, it's the membrane
underneath it. there are ways to prove this.

so here again i'm in aldi on a vinegar outing, this time i go
for a bottle of red. i pour it in a glass over a shelled egg, and
in the next morning i have a deshelled egg. the vinegar, ate it.

from where, would you say, is the strangest spot you've cooked an egg?

i'm one pot down, meaning none left to boil my egg for breakfast. reminded of the time we visited your dad in the blue mountains. it was the last morning sleeping in a tent i was the first one to meet him, you said, a drummer with a rhythm erratic, frying potatoes his dish you seemed embarrassed by it, though i must say it was my favourite. *one-pot-frites*.

you took the kettle, and the tea bag there too, pressed for time, added in the eggs. huzzah! a case of two in one!

i'd just given you a pre-birthday card, we weren't sure how it might continue, wrote to you inside it that my mind was at peace, something about *moths and dust*. a dusty mouth. i was at such a calm on that flight over, thought if it were to fall, i'd swallow it easy. believe that's where i lost my strain, on that plane. which i know now sounds like a bit of a mixed bag of lollies, but i didn't even mean it dramatically. i think i was just peeling then. and when you're peeling my egg for me now i ask if you think an egg always has some sort of relation to a relation—is an egg the intimacy of a morning?

on a youtube video i once heard that the *just add one egg* in premix cake-mixes are not necessary for its cooking. they are a psychological play for a housewife to feel as if they are gifting their own egg to a husband, a greater sense of participation. the premix is too effortless, sans oeuf it breeds convenience guilt.

anyway—I'll have your eggshell tea any day. the kettle, an ingenious spot. and i actually hear from you (yesterday), don't even feel giddy, you tell (me) (about) the heat of it, that

everything here is pushed by something else.

and that of late in your dreams you've been able to cook, blink, fold and peel your eggs as perfectly as you've wanted, but it's you who can never eat them.

anyway i liked your billy-boiled eggs the most.

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