

Meditations on the Egg of Winter

I trudge over the crust of frost, falter over frozen shoals,
The carpet of winter crunches underfoot like eggshells.
I am a rich, fragile orb of goo,
Whatever warmth or nourishment I hold
Is protected only by my eggshell coat
And the clear film lining just beneath.

But the shell isn't strictly solid,
It's a permeable membrane,
A communicable boundary
Porous portal, through which I now speak.

I speak even though I have nothing to say,
And I speak although being heard is precarious.
I speak because being beheld is precious,
And because I know here I will be held delicately
Like a new chick, or a valuable pokemon card.

I collect thoughts like eggs in a basket,
Set them down gingerly at your feet,
And I will be grateful to see them cracked open,
Mixed up, and sandwiched or suspended in soup.

The warm feeling in my chest that soup causes
Is a lot like the tight-hotness of sorrow swelling up.
The swell that I try to tamp down with routine
And an analgesic God and cartons of content,
But which sorrow emerges sometimes nevertheless
Like a chick beak chipping through from the inside.

I associate January with suicide,
Both kinds: the slow and the sudden,
Deaths that germinate in places dark and sodden.
“Germ” is a Janus word, both disease and gamete,
Simultaneous source of life and source of death,
So if your seed is sown don’t hold it back:
If it’s your winter let me see your breath.

I had something wise to say but I forgot;
All anything ever grows from is rot.
I garble an elegy and fumble onward.

On the first of the year, I determine to clean up the limbs of my heart.
I resolve to employ sunlight as disinfectant. I commit to a life of elegant
Solidarity, exquisite camaraderie, sensitive routines of radical altruism,
Crafting a persona unadorned by ego and garlanded with vulnerability,
And finally cultivating a thoroughgoing practical understanding of Marx.

I promptly pervert all these efforts and more.
I revise my resolve: Just survive until March.
I march on, try to offer meaningfully empathetic glances of understanding
To other people who are trying to mask their madness/sadness
I peer through the albumen of my eye, which is the egg
And see the yokes that weigh heavy on your shoulders
You hug me, between your shoulders I take shelter
Irises blossom despite the white of winter
Rather than wither, take comfort that good medicine is bitter.
We hunker down and eat great chunks of ballast slathered with butter
And trust that we can weather any season with each other.

