

## Egg Noir

The boys were talking about her hair, lovely curls, so perfect. And I said something about what about my hair, and doesn't it count, because, you know, my hair is curly like hers. He put his G & T down and turned to me. "It's the Goldilocks effect," he said. He shrugged, her hair was blonde, mine was brown, end of story. What could I do?

I egged her house. I drove by the next night when she was out, riding her bike, or riding him, or he was fixing her bike on his porch, or she was blowing him in a bathroom. I don't know. I circled the block to make sure she was gone and I parked on the next street, underneath a palmetto tree. In the grass, a stately Siamese sat in the shape of a vase. He might have been my valet. The eggs were next to me in the passenger seat, buckled in like they were my living babies. I took off their seatbelt and said a few words to them:

"You come into this world alone, and you leave with nothing but a smile on your face from the night you ruined the facade of your enemy's house. And that's it, no bike, no hair, no dignity. Don't look back, or all you'll see are heaps of wasted eggs. Eggs—I mean all kinds of them." They didn't seem to be getting my drift. "Can't get caught up thinking about the omelets you could've made, or the babies you could have had with the man you could've married. And I'm serious, don't you dare think about those babies all grown up."

The eggs looked up at me, still not catching my meaning. "You know. Future presidents, little jerks, podiatrists. Obsessive seductresses, 7-11 clerks, lights of your life, all those millions of white pinpricks covered in heaps of garbage somewhere." My rush of nostalgia for a thousand children I never had gave way to an anger, dull and slippery like a frozen lake.

I stood on the sidewalk with the eggs in my arms and I picked one, threw it like an out-of-shape young woman who quit yoga after three classes and didn't have the balls to ask for a refund. The egg hit the door, and I wanted it to feel like when he used to call me up and announce his plans to demolish me in the sack, but it didn't, though there was a little wet clap, sort of nice. The remaining eggs in the carton were hopeless, and the valet cat ran away. I still had brown hair, and those nights were gone when I could hear his saucy, slurry shtick on the phone and imagine the pine tree gin smell on his breath. I decided to dump the eggs on the sidewalk and hope to find some other way to make her suffer.

Maybe my being alive was enough, a second-rate version of herself to haunt her fantasies—yeah, she'd see me when she circled the block, so to speak, and she'd remember that he had been so many other places, he would always trade up, never settle down, bargaining with the world until he was with a girl with strands of pure spider silk, and like my dad told me when I was a kid and sat in the passenger seat, he said, Remember, there's always someone better than you. If I was lucky that thought would follow her for decades, until her golden hair turned a pasty piss white, the curls fraying into pubic frizz.

I let the carton slip from my hands like it wasn't on purpose, so if anyone in the neighborhood saw I could have told them: Listen, I was making a cake for my dear dear friend, that girl with the golden curls, because she's actually my fraternal twin, and here are the eggs, and I dropped them by accident, and I will never forgive myself.