

# BREAKFAST

*all day*





## PLATES

### LOTUS LEAF LOVE, OR HOW TO MAKE ZONGZI 粽子

(NP)

*spread out the leaves  
(smoothing and uncrinkling)  
now watch her hands:  
how she curves and folds  
them into a cone in her palm  
scoops sticky rice inside  
and seals them shut  
knotted tight with red string  
like small dragon hearts  
sealed in magic cloth  
to be secretly untied &  
bitten open in the dark.*

### RECIPE FROM A FRIEND

(DD)

*I try it after a long weekend in Horton Bay  
gather eggs, flour, sugar, per the New York Times'  
instructions, pour the mixture into a cast iron pan.  
Bake for thirty. Waiting, I recall the pan's history:  
my crisp battered chicken packed for a picnic  
where it snagged the man I later married,  
the man now who sniffs the confectioned air,  
raises his fork for the pancake: golden, puffed,  
served with pears simmered in butter.  
Vanilla scent spills from the kitchen, drifts  
to a summer morning spent with childhood friends  
on a porch near Horton Creek, the same spangled  
waters where Hemingway honeymooned,  
spun out his reel, before setting out for Paris.*

### TEA-MAKING

(EK)

*The old wisdom says to use freshly-drawn water,  
so I do because I'm just awake enough to conform.  
The electric kettle has four settings—80°, 85°, 90°, 100°—  
and so do I: confused, suggestible, confident, stubborn.  
A bit of all of them is what makes a good cup  
of tea. That and leaves picked by young princes just as  
the sun comes up  
on the longest day of the year, or whatever wild,  
wonderful  
guff the tea-sellers tell you. To be honest, I've always wondered  
who believes that stuff. You needn't be especially conscious or informed  
to know that's not what makes leaves leafier or water wetter.*

### HOW TO SCRAMBLE AN EGG

(RK)

*Edges like a brown paper bag,  
fat yellow curds? I worked too long.  
It will lurch on my stomach as if  
I'd had gobbled old tire rubber.  
He said: this is how to do it right,  
his arms spiderwebbed by burns.  
He must've known better than me.  
(I am forever thinking men must  
know things better than me.)  
The eggs, it must be said: sublime.  
He scrambled for fifteen minutes so I  
could wash up for twenty, water so hot  
it blistered my hands, melted fibers  
off my sponge. Chefs seem useful,  
don't they? Pedagogical and learned.  
In truth they're sadder even than poets.*

### POACH

(HC)

*Salt hits me. Egg, you say, is how the gods  
deliver. A tallow start from sleeping dark.  
Light fires the fork as if dawn was a socket.  
Last night, you say, I got you in the eggs.  
The velour Steelers blanket shifts  
from my left shoulder. On the window,  
a crack covered with some kind of wax or tape,  
old as vellum. My great-grandmother  
had a window like that one. Her man  
beat her but he did keep her. Mine  
needed to think things through  
which is how I got you, so young,  
with your plastic pepper grinder  
and a single frying pan. That's what  
she called them. The sun splits  
in two through the fissure, like  
one of those deformed double yolks.  
She would have put her hand out  
to trace it.*

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## CLASSICS

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### EAT THE PEARS

(JA)

*Eat the pears  
because they are yellow and have been sitting  
on the counter for days and days  
getting ripe.*

*Eat the pears  
because I hate wasting food  
—did you know that 90 billion pounds of food  
are thrown out every year by the average American family?*

*Eat the fucking pears  
because they are going to rot in the fridge  
and then get moldy and the mold will spread  
to other food,  
like the onion in its purple skin  
and the cheese in its red wax.*

*Eat the pears  
because pears are a shape like mine  
and you like to eat me.*

*Fine, taste the pears,  
I'll open them up for you, cut out their seeds  
and bad parts  
and serve them in a china bowl  
with shallots and spinach and bacon  
and a lemon vinaigrette.*

*Eat the pears;  
they used to fall by the hundreds  
in the backyard of our old apartment,  
and the squirrels would pick at them  
—there were so many to stuff their cheeks with,  
but the rest would melt into brown mush in the grass.*

*Eat the pears  
because they smell fairly strong right now, but pleasant  
and nutty  
—just you wait, though,  
like old ladies they will stink up your house  
and you'll never get rid of the smell.*

### COLD BREAKFAST

(PB)

*rising from the deep warmth  
of the snowday sheets  
i wake, fix coffee as paltry sun  
climbs pewter sky  
  
i crack eggs, sizzle bacon to match  
the hiss of plows pushing uptown  
the slither of sleds and cardboard boxes  
sliding down the slope outside  
  
my yolks run yellow, congeal to gold  
while i sit and read and slip the day  
i sip steaming coffee steeped  
til rich and black and strong*

### THIS HOUSE

(GP)

*The leftover scraps  
from our breakfast,  
bacon, eggs, coffee,  
cream and sausages  
the image of my feet  
wrapped around your legs  
dancing in my head and  
languishing on the counter  
while I'm washing the dishes  
this house seems empty without you in it.*

### MORNINGS

(GP)

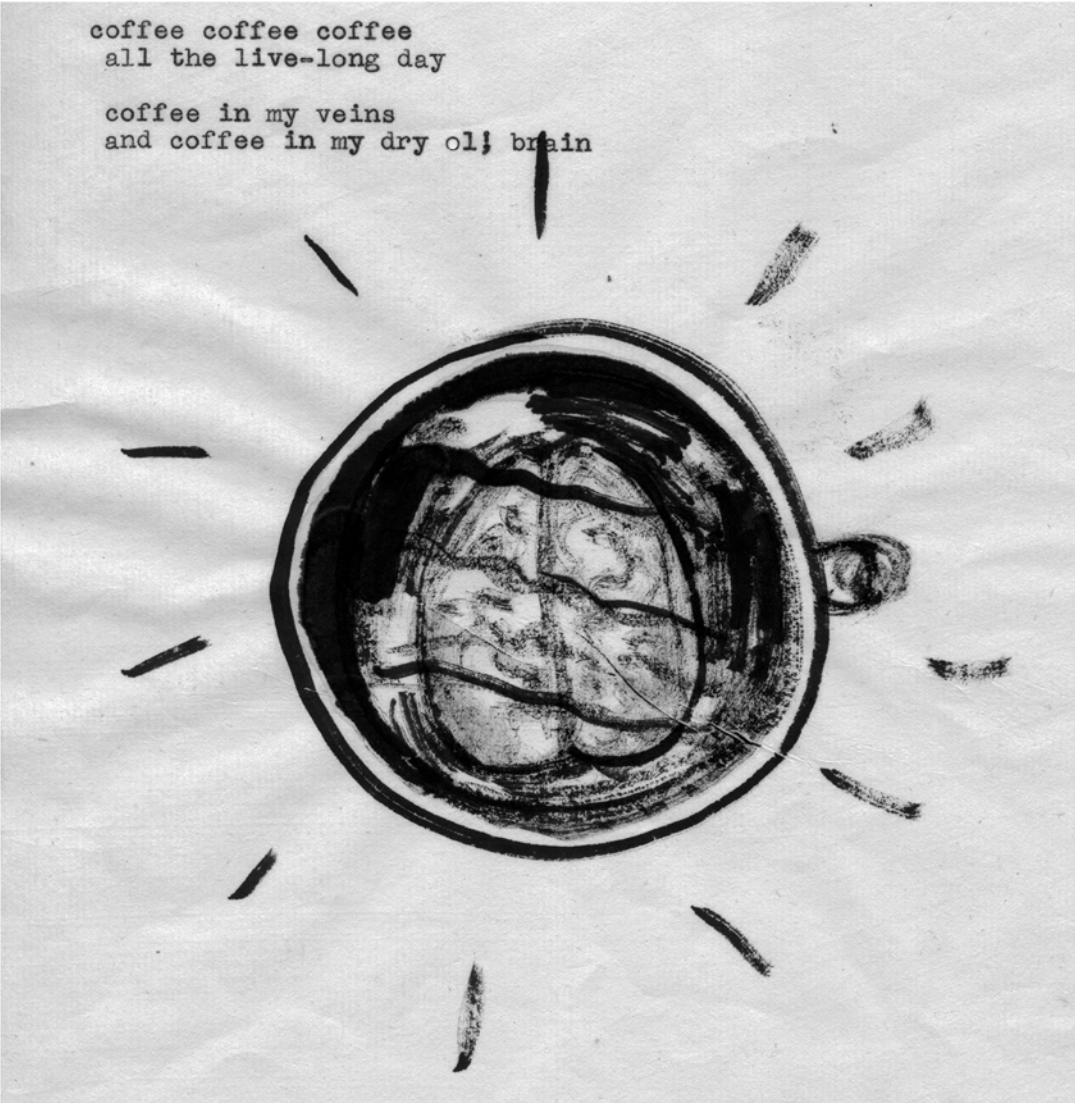
*Plunge the bread into the eggs  
Pull it out, dripping  
Toss it in the frying pan  
Bacon and coffee  
Oil jumping  
Burning skin  
And then  
your hand  
over my hand*

### CRÊPERIE

(EK)

*the moon enters aries  
i crack the eggs against the sink &  
empty them into a bowl, fingertips  
feeling the shells' insides.  
my girl's nine thousand kilometres away  
& that's how the crow flies.  
i'm making pancakes for myself.  
i eat them, too, sitting on the floor  
the whole stack next to me  
fingers sticky with sugary jam/  
nutella/honey... wanna be sticky with you  
fingers in your mouth like i wake up every morning  
feeling god on my tongue  
& gravel in my throat.  
i love my girl like a 5am sunrise  
but i always wake up too late.*





**ORGANIC, SUSTAINABLE AND LOCALLY SOURCED:**

- |                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| (AP) ABAGAIL PETERSEN | (HF) HELGA FLOROS            |
| (DA) DIANA ADAMS      | (JA) JOSETTE AKRESH-GONZALES |
| (DD) DIANA DINVERNO   | (RB) RUSSELL BENNETTS        |
| (EK) ERIK KENNEDY     | (PB) PAUL D. BLUMER          |
| (GP) GEORGIA PARK     | (NP) NINA POWLES             |
| (HC) HANNAH CRAIG     | (RK) RAX KING                |

AND FEATURING THE ARTWORK OF **WHISKEY RADISH**

**FROM THE CHEF:**

*Breakfast foods bring me great joy in life. They are versatile: breakfast for dinner, for lunch, hell—breakfast for breakfast. Taking the time to cook a proper morning meal is a daily, feasible luxury, so long as you can muster the energy to roll out of bed. Breakfast is quiet by nature: waking up to the smell of bacon and burnt toast, or the tension of an empty stomach. And something about the act of cracking eggs over a sizzling frying pan invites examination of conscience. So reflect with me a while: the coffee is almost ready, and here are fifteen poems of breakfast for you to enjoy.*

CAT DOSSETT, EDITOR



# SPECIALS

**1/5/18**

**(AP)**

*Yesterday, I went out to breakfast with my family  
and only ordered a coffee, but the waiter still brought  
me a plate of strawberries and whipped cream,  
because he said I had to eat something. He made me  
a little flower.*

## **LESSONS FROM SUBURBIA**

**(JA)**

*I have finally learned / how to make muffins that  
come out of the muffin tin / how to butter and flour /  
don't check Facebook while making eggs or you will  
burn the eggs / when you're reading on the couch and  
your kids are at the in-laws / your husband is playing  
softball with old men / your hand tingles / resting in  
your crotch / don't burn the eggs! / the beeper is  
beeping / you hear it from the couch / don't finish  
reading! / rescue the muffins*

## **LEXICOGRAPHERS, LET US DO BRUNCH**

**(RB)**

*Word brunch  
peeves Tom,  
Parker-Bowles angers easily.*

*Boutros Boutros-Ghali  
held out every  
day until eleven,  
an altered Wiki lores.*

*Good morning, good morning.*

## **GOOD MORNING (WITH SARCASM)**

**(GP)**

*"What the fuck am I supposed to eat for breakfast?"  
"Oh, so you're talking to me again?"  
"I mean, I GUESS."  
"Ok, then. Eggs."*



# LOCAL FAVORITES

## BREAKFAST IN SHANGHAI

(NP)

a morning of coldest smog

*a cup of dark pu'er tea in your small bedroom & two fresh steamed buns (baozi) from the lady at the baozi shop who has red cheeks. take off your gloves, unpeel the thin square of paper from the bun's round bottom. breathe in the hot, sweet smell and a cloud of steam.*

the morning after a downpour

*layers of silken tofu float in the shape of a lotus slowly opening under swirls of soy sauce, chili oil and tiny fried shrimps sprinkled on top. each mouthful of doufu hua, literally 'tofu flower', goes down in one swallow. the smoothness reminds you of last night's rain, the way it came down fast and washed the city clean.*

a cure for homesickness

*on the table, matching tiny blue ceramic pots of chili, vinegar and soy sauce. in front of you, the one thing that will warm you: a plate of boiled dumplings filled with ginger, pork and chinese cabbage. dip once in vinegar, twice in soy sauce and eat while the woman rolls pieces of dumpling dough into small white moons that fit inside her palm.*

a morning in late spring, just as you are  
beginning to fall in love

*you pierce skin with the knife and pull, splitting the fruit open. pomelo are like fat, sweet grapefruits and you are addicted to the sucking sound of their flesh being pulled apart. you sit by the window and suck on the rinds, then you cut into a fresh zongzi with scissors, opening and unfurling lotus leaves to get at the sticky rice inside. you're left with bright skins and leaves sucked clean and you feel something inside you unfurling, a hunger that won't go away...*