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The Drunken Cock

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The Drunken Cock

Nature always sides with the hidden flaw,
and the Hungarian farmers
simplified it to the slow burn.
Rumor or myth, no matter,
they know a single dose of grain alcohol
will make the cocks assume
maternal behavior.

Now the chickens worry less
about their offspring
and the farmers realize the wealth
of stress-free poultry.
Scrambled, poached, over-easy or fried,
grandmother's on budgets bake more soufflés
while teenagers drive nails through shells,
work lips and tongue, drinking dreams
of muscles taught and supple,
muscles strong enough to embrace girls
under moonlight, in cars, in foldout pages,
yes, there are enough eggs to go around.

For the chicken it's all routine.
The egg, the cold fingers ruffling feathers, the day
of pecking dirt for grain and insect,
while the uninterested cock drinks, shot for shot,
calls out the sun and parades around the yard,
all while nudging chicks toward adulthood.
At least it has enough decency
to wait for the afternoon sun to warm the feathers
before clawing home drunk, so proud
of its chicks, overconfident of its contribution.