

In August, I lost my appetite. Grief has many forms, one of which is to hunger. To be in a state of hunger and to be hungering. Like a terminal illness, eating away at the marrow, or a heartbreak, dissolving crumbs of tissue into the bloodstream. The body is a careful machine. It seems to have no regard for how its inhabitant feels about it; a process begins and its chains of transformations and transmutations unfold to completion, to a physical telos. A yolk won't set until 149 degrees. To rush a braise is to boil. I am beholden to my ingredients, to their properties of mass, density and water content, to the thinness of their skins and the plasticity of their tendons. Always use scissors to trim the fat. Only wash a tomato before slicing. Separate meat at the joint. To cook is to control and to be controlled, at once. To speak and to listen. I cannot make a radish bleed like a steak.

*We collaborate based on taste and what we are capable of. I used to only have two burners and a saucepan. It doesn't give much to make the metal sing.*

In September, I lost my appetite. It's like how we erase the trace of our hands on food. Displacing the sensual knowledge of cooking for the false safety of design. I want you to see that I made this for you, with these things and with my body, and all this making makes a sound. All making makes a sound, even when the naked ear can't hear it. Grief makes a sound and for me it is silence and by silence I mean the sound of everything around the sound that is gone. It is the memory of sound and the possibility of sound. Somehow, it resonates, a chord stuck in the inner ear. It is the absence of breath, of the low hum of another's body in the bed. The kitchen is a place to unmake and remake, bed-like, a place to dismantle bread and attach a glaze. To break down [the yolks] and be reborn [a quiche?]. The person who could die any day dies every day.

In October, I lost my appetite. It was as though I had left it somewhere. I went looking for it in my phone, in the scrolls of pictures and auto-generated movies with theme music and custom panning. I could see it in the cinema of my life. It had no scent. I felt no texture. I couldn't remember what it actually tasted like. I think I left it in that house, in the kitchen that wasn't there before I was. In the stocks of spices and pasta shapes, the carefully selected cast irons and microplanes, the good set of knives. The sound of a flame going out on low, the sound of the inability to simmer.

In November, I lost my appetite. It is very difficult to construct a cooking performance in this condition. I swear there is a sound to the dimness of a lamp, to the dimness of the lamp in the hood of the stove, a sound to its glow through the doorway from the kitchen, from the place of cooking to the place of eating—that sacred passageway of labor to pleasure, or reverse (says the stomach). I swear there was a sound to that light on the wall. To its absorption and refraction by the wall. Perhaps I remember this light most, in our kinship of being absorbed and refracted. I can record every sound and capture every picture and there is no retaining taste. It is not rare. It is singular.

I instinctively chop at the rate of my heartbeat. I dice on the exhale. To love is a process and it is a cooking process, as is to brown, to grate, and to sear. Still, to cook and serve a meal is not the same as, simply, to cook. It's like the meaninglessness of having love for another; one cannot have love, it is a thing given away. Consumed, biologic. Love doesn't keep well. Having is for other, inedible things.

*We collaborate based on hunger and what we are capable of. The will of my body is a tool in the kitchen.*

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