

Frozen Chicken

by Michael Seidel

The order of fried chicken came in one of those red net baskets lined with that waxy paper. It was a fairly poor order, just a few pieces. My friend was eating and I happened to look over out of a kind of bored curiosity.

Nobody was saying anything.

One of the pieces, I noticed, had the real shape of a miniature chicken, its mohawk, pin legs, and small definition of wing. "Look at that," I said to my friend. And just then, the wing twitched.

We both looked at each other. Then we saw a lung expand.

"It's still alive, I think," I said.

"It can't be," my friend said.

"How else could it be moving?"

For a long time, as we watched different parts of it move, I ran over our options. Who could I call to help ? The Human Society? Animal Control? An animal rights organization? No. They all had their own agendas, none of which dealt with deep-fried chickens with active blood.

I ran over more options, using a mental stick to smack all parts of my piñata brain. Then I thought about the breeding and cooking and shipping and freezing process. The time it all takes.

The thing had life in it, but the quality of it was as good as a necklace purchased from a vending machine, its spirit stained green.

I considered a rock. My friend continued to eat around the movements.

-Unpublished

