

The Yolk

by David Backer

Let me explain it. It's a house of eggs. Built from the ground up. Dozens upon dozens of eggs. There's a base and columns that rest on the base. The columns are two eggs wide, 2x2, supported by the base, which is sixteen eggs wide, to support the columns. I don't know how but there's a roof. A roof of eggs. And it's tall. It gets to be my height. It gets so that people start noticing. "Hey, look at that thing he's building, it's made of eggs." "Yes, it looks very impressive." It gets to the point where I'm proud of it. I want to finish it. So I'm putting a steeple on it, which seems appropriate, or, rather, that's how the house of eggs appears in my mind—with a steeple. I'm putting the steeple on it and there's a crowd. My friends have gathered and they've told their families, who know me, and they've all told their friends, and now it's an event. A happening, my finishing the house of eggs. It's a presentation. I'm wearing a suit and tie. I'm about to put the last egg on top of that steeple and I hear something. I don't know what it is. I don't let it phase me. I'm all about this house of eggs. It's me. Who I've become. People ask me about it. I have a blog and a twitter account. My facebook picture is a picture of the house of eggs. I have publications devoted to the philosophy and history and economics and anthropology of the house of eggs. I'm called "Mr. House of Eggs" in some circles. It won't, can't fail. If it fails then so do I. So I place the last egg upon the steeple and claps begin. But I hear the sound again. More frequently now. A tick. A crack. The shells are breaking. First the bottom and then throughout, yellow amniotic fluid slithering down the columns. Dripping. The house of eggs is bleeding. Crying. Then the shells, only ever shells, double and fold upon themselves and the house of eggs falls into a soup, chaos, destruction. No one can believe it. Some time passes and people walk away. My friends put their hands on my shoulders but they have lives too and they leave. My family, eventually, does the same. I'm left with the entropic pile of my great failure, myself in shambles, the universe in ruin. The

yolk of the eggs creeps toward me. I think of chickens. I think of all the people in the world who just want an omelet. I think: The yolk is on me.

