

## **Our Eggs**

We're eating breakfast at our kitchen table, Moira poring over the pamphlets the doctor gave us yesterday, when the birds start gathering outside the screen window.

"Two months prep before harvesting, then about a month for an implant to stick, and then the usual for gestation," Moira recites, scanning the procedural outline in front of her. She doesn't look up, doesn't notice the birds hovering, landing testily on the windowsill. I clear my throat.

Moira flicks her eyes up at me, and I motion toward the window.

She pushes it closed, gruffly, and locks it. "They smell the eggs."

"I don't think birds like scrambled eggs," I mumble. But she's already back to the pamphlet, drawing lopsided stars next to the important bits with a red pen. I watch the seagulls hopping on the ledge, beaks pointing in Moira's direction, black eyes staring.

I swallow a bite of toast, scoop up a glob of jam with my thumb, and wonder if Moira will stop talking long enough to notice the birds, to notice anything. I stick my thumb in my mouth.

"We both need ten viable oocytes. That's the first step."

One of the birds taps its beak against the glass. The hair stands up on my arms.

"Mine will be the holder oocyte. They'll implant your DNA."

The other birds join the first in tapping on the glass, but Moira doesn't seem to hear. It's almost rhythmic, it could almost be the percussion for the pop song turned low on the radio behind us. But then one seagull flies straight for the window, smashing into the glass with a muffled thud. I drop the last corner of my toast in my lap. Moira doesn't even blink.

I try to clear my throat again, but nothing comes out. The seagulls are all throwing their feathered bodies against the window now, trying to get inside.

"Our insurance only covers the first five attempts. But the success rates look good, so I'm not worried."

I grip my butter knife in my fist. The birds ram and ram. Still Moira leans over her pamphlets.

It's not until the seagulls crack the window, splinters raining over the table, over the medical papers and our plates of scrambled

eggs, that Moira finally looks up. But by then the seagulls have gotten to her. Their practiced beaks clamp down on her hair, pull it out in chunks, pull her every which way. She screams for me, but I'm not sure I can hear. The window's wide open, and I think it's time for me to go.

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