

## FAWM 2024 – Sherwood Anderson’s “The Egg”

14 dreadful cycle (reprise)

i wondered why eggs had to be  
and why from the egg came the hen  
who again laid the egg.  
the problem remains unsolved in my mind  
the final triumph of the egg

*Father came upstairs to mother and me with an egg in his hand. I do not know what he intended to do. I imagine he had some idea of destroying it, of destroying all eggs, and that he intended to let mother and me see him begin. When, however, he got into the presence of mother something happened to him. He laid the egg gently on the table and dropped on his knees by the bed as I have already explained. He later decided to close the restaurant for the night and to come upstairs and get into bed. When he did so he blew out the light and after much muttered conversation both he and mother went to sleep. I suppose I went to sleep also, but my sleep was troubled. I awoke at dawn and for a long time looked at the egg that lay on the table. I wondered why eggs had to be and why from the egg came the hen who again laid the egg. The question got into my blood. It has stayed there, I imagine, because I am the son of my father. At any rate, the problem remains unsolved in my mind. And that, I conclude, is but another evidence of the complete and final triumph of the egg—at least as far as my family is concerned.*

**Father came upstairs with an egg in his hand.**

**And I didn’t know what he had planned.**

**Perhaps he wanted all eggs everywhere to be done in,**

**And he intended to let mother and me see him begin.**

**But in the presence of my mother, something else happened instead:**

**He laid the egg on the table, dropped to his knees by the bed.**

**My mother stroked his head, while my father wept.**

**Then he closed the restaurant, and muttered till he slept.**

**And I wondered why eggs had to be...**

**Why from the egg came the hen**

**that laid the egg again.**

**The question stays in my blood no matter how I beg.**

**The complete and final triumph of the egg.**

**I went to sleep that night, but the troubled thoughts weren’t gone.**

**And I looked at the egg on the table when I awoke at dawn.**

**And I still dream of eggs, no matter what truths I find –**

**The problem remains unsolved in my mind.**

**The wheel keeps on turning, the world spins ‘round the sun.**

**I am my mother’s egg – I am my father’s son.**

**And I wonder why eggs have to be...**

**Why from the egg comes the hen**

**that lays the egg again.**

**The question stays in my blood no matter how I beg.**

**The complete and final triumph of the egg.**