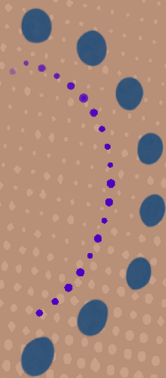
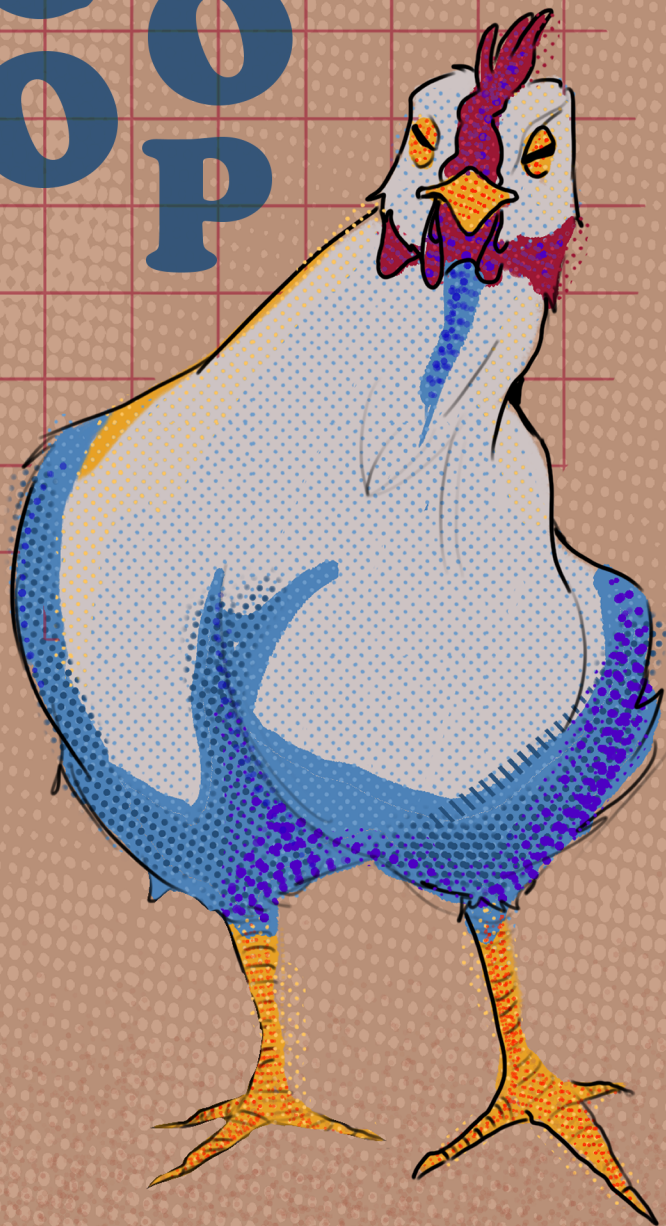


COOP



7/11/11

**COOP**

#16



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Content Warning:  
Some pieces portray violence and/or animal death.

Cover art: "Oh crow she didnt!"  
by Neko >^^<  
Digital

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# Egg by Egg

Úna Ní Nualláin

I wake up. I water my plants. I talk to my housemates. I set a timer to get my eggs the right amount of runny. I walk 10 minutes within my 5km to get a coffee. Oat mocha. The friends in my head I haven't seen in months make fun of me for it. I work on an essay for one paragraph and watch Glee for an hour. I eat a sandwich too late for lunch and too early for dinner. I think about showering and don't. I put my hair in plaits to hide the day's old grease. There are 9 empty bags of crisps at the end of my bed, rolled in blankets and abandoned jumpers. My floor is piles of paper and rubbish bags and mismatched socks. I get back into bed before the sun even begins setting. No one has texted me. I stare at the ceiling popcorn and change my LED lights' colours. No one has texted me. I ring my Mum and she tells me I don't come home enough. I get stoned to skip dinner and watch half a movie on our old velvet couch. My housemates wake me up at 1am. I go to bed. I watch TikTok for 2 hours. I sleep. I wake up. I water my plants. I talk to my housemates. I set a timer to get my eggs the right amount of runny.



I wake up. I check my laptop charged overnight. I take time putting on clothes I love my body in. I wear very little make up lately. I like the shape of my nose more. I eat eggs on toast and they are never the right amount of runny but I drown them in pepper anyways so who cares. The bus is

# The Free and Resilient Chickens of Kauai

Isabella Grecco

nearly always full on the N11. I smile at the couples half-asleep on each other's shoulders. I have 3 classes on a Monday and I love two, zone out for a third. I'm behind on lectures for it. I was meant to go home straight after but instead I get dragged to Clubhouse. I can't ah you will I can't ah you will I can't- oh fine! I buy three drinks and rob a fourth. I spill beer down my sleeves and split my seams laughing. I stumble into town somehow and end up dancing. I am with people I love and the world is so slow in these spotlights. I have never even heard of time. We miss the last train and I pay a fortune for a taxi. I talk his ear off on the way home. I fall asleep calling the boy I like, the one whose bed I've been sleeping in recently. I won't remember a word of it in the morning.

In the fall of 1992, a Category 4 hurricane hit Hawaii. It was named Hurricane Iniki, the most destructive hurricane to hit Hawaii in the 20th century and sixth costliest in US history. The island of Kauai took most of the damage, so severe that phones, power, and water weren't restored for three to four months after Iniki. The hurricane left Kauai in economic despair, as the tourist location was destroyed leaving 75% of jobs lost on the island, with the only remaining hotel at the time being the Hilton. After \$3.1 billion worth of damage to Kauai and an ongoing journey of repair, a new 'problem' arose (Lawson, 2018).

Chickens. Everywhere.

It turns out that Hurricane Iniki also destroyed lots of chicken coops on the island of Kauai, resulting in an overpopulation of chickens roaming free on the island, with no natural predators to aid population control.

While the bird is a sort of mascot for the island, with merch and all, some cannot stand the birds because of their constant noise and the amount of space they take up. I argue that the chickens of Kauai are not a burden, but a resilient companion that demonstrates resilience beyond humans and the co-creation of a livable world after disaster.

Using Patrice Buzzanell's Communication Theory of Resilience (2017), which frames resilience as more than just a trait one has, but something people do together through communication, and applying it to the chickens, we can understand how the amount of sound and movement chickens make is a communicative and co-created

assertion of identity. This is extended with Donna Haraway's concept of companion species (2003), which discusses humans and nonhumans not being separate from one another but actually mutually shaping each other's existence, in this case humans and chickens co-surviving after disaster.

Rather than seeking control over the chickens of Kauai, we should understand their presence to be grounded in a feminist, post-human model of resilience that contributes to the flourishing of the island after the devastation.

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## Chickens of Kauai

Isabella Grecco

Paper Collage

# broody

Kelly Mahan

a broody hen will starve herself for 21 days  
isn't that what mothers do?  
waste away  
whittle her body  
to nothing  
its barest form  
to bring forth warmth  
coax out life  
with potential of creating whole new existence  
born from her sacrifices  
her body  
her love  
her fear  
with possibility of failure at the very thing she's made to  
do

once pliant and simple  
a broody hen becomes a different animal altogether  
out for blood from anyone who comes too close  
brutality is suddenly an impulse  
she will strike out and bite the gentle hand that feeds her  
protection emerges as a vital instinct  
everyone and everything becomes secondary  
especially herself

everyone speaks of new life in spring  
soft sleepy eyes open to her  
then the world for the very first time

a chance in its most pure and basic form

however just as much does not take  
carefully prepared nests grow cold and quiet  
newly built cribs remain unslept in  
pastel painted nurseries are darkened behind closed doors

but sometimes  
sometimes, nature takes hold and blooms  
warmth and wet and cracking and pushing and hatching  
and here and alive

# Guajiras para Pangur Bán

Rebeca Dunn-Krahn

Tengo una polla blanca  
que esta mudando de plumas.  
Esta fea pa' ser franca  
pero a comentar, no presumas.  
Un día sus plumas volverán,  
una nueva belleza.  
Arrepentirás de tus palabras  
cuando la linda aparecerá  
y le da sus huevos a otra,  
recordando cómo eras.

# Guajiras para Pangur Bán

Rebeca Dunn-Krahn

I have a white chicken  
that's molting.  
She's ugly, to be frank,  
but don't presume to comment.  
One day her feathers will grow back,  
a new beauty.  
You'll regret your words  
when the pretty one appears  
and gives her eggs to another,  
remembering what you were like.

# Why did the chicken cross the street?

Alex

"Why did the chicken cross the street?"  
After decades of asking, it told me,  
"The farther worm is much more sweet."

Determined to not end up as meat  
The butcher pursued, so it had to flee—  
And that's why the chicken crossed the street.

Tired of pecking at seeds and wheat,  
Its heart longing to sail the foreign seas—  
After all, the farther worm is much more sweet.

Escape had seemed an impossible feat,  
but now it struts, proud and free.  
It's happy, having crossed the street.

Of course, it could be run over in a heartbeat,  
But it won't die in vain, becoming a feathery  
Legend who tasted the worm—oh, so sweet!

Dreams tide over the scorching heat;  
Each little struggle has its reason to be.  
You ask why the chicken crossed the street—  
Because worms of labor are incredibly sweet.



## Gallus Gallus

Meeda King

Digital

# The Lash Egg

Elliot Crane

They always came out smooth, round, and white. Except when they didn't. Chloe found it among the straw bedding and fluffy curved brown feathers. The strange egg was lumpy, soft, waxy, and yellow. She picked it up and ferried it into the house.

Chloe's mother, still in her bathrobe and curlers and waiting on the coffee maker, called the egg a disgusting monstrosity and ordered her to dispose of it in the aluminum outside trashcan. Instead she took it to school to show to her teacher Mrs. Miller, nestled between her baloney and mayonnaise sandwich and a bumpy-skinned gherkin.

Mrs. Miller always wore a brooch pinned to her cardigan. That morning Mrs. Miller's brooch was a basket of eggs because Easter wasn't far off. When she showed Mrs. Miller the egg, her lips bowed downward into a frown. She said it was called a lash egg, which isn't an egg at all but a great wad of pus and meant that one of their chickens had something called salpingitis. She insisted on throwing the lash egg away.

On the bus ride home from school, Chloe's friend Charlotte plopped down beside her.

"I saw you, Chloe Lambert. I saw you go into Mrs. Miller's room at recess and take something out of the garbage."

"No you didn't."

"Did too. What is it?"

"I didn't take anything out of the garbage. That's gross."

When she got home, Chloe went to her room and opened her closet, which was unusual because inside was another smaller door to a second smaller closet. She put the lash egg inside, hoping that Mrs. Miller was wrong and that one day she would open the tiny door and find a baby chick.

Each morning, she checked on the egg first thing and again when she got off the school bus in the afternoon. Days passed. The egg began to smell, a stench too powerful for air fresheners to subdue.

Chloe's mother set to work banishing the mysterious odor with every household cleaner in her arsenal, scrubbing and scrubbing, until one afternoon Chloe found her passed out supine on the kitchen linoleum.

Chloe shook her mother until her eyes flickered open in a state of confusion. It was hard for Chloe to admit, but as she saw her mother's limp body jerk awake, she knew. It was time to give up on the lash egg.

# Chicken Church

Chaitra Kotasthane

In the forests of Indonesia, there is a church made in the image of a chicken.

It was built by a man who was following instructions he claimed to have received in a divine vision, and it was originally meant to resemble a dove.

I wonder — what does a dove have that a chicken does not?

I recall, as a child, the simple joy of running barefoot in the yard as chicks poured out the coop, each one golden as a dandelion, and bright as a wish.

I remember reading William Carlos Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow" — glazed with rainwater, beside the white chickens — infused with a quiet wonder. Williams had been a doctor in New Jersey, scribbling little poems on prescription pads between treating his patients. I was in high school.

Just what depends on the old wheelbarrow, anyway?

Whilst in medical college, I came across Mary Rueffle's "Red", a crass and hilarious response to Williams' poem. By now, I'd become intensely familiar with frustration — you left the wheelbarrow out, and it rained, and now the chickens are filthy!

I think of the distant, inaccessible beauty of doves, and find myself filling with a silly sort of frustration again. Does anyone know what a dove sounds like? Have you heard a dove sing, or even squawk? Compare it now to the

emphatic cry of the rooster who heralds the dawn. Compare it now to the hen that provides us with eggs and meat, as the wine and bread one receives at communion. I ask myself — why should the dove be God's designated messenger, and not the chicken?

Today, the Chicken Church has become a popular tourist destination. Built into its catacombs are twelve rooms, which men and women of all religions use for worship. But before that, for the greater part of two decades, the building had fallen into disrepair. It is well, then, that the Chicken claimed the church, and like a patron saint, helped make it beloved.

# Workaway

Emily Eaton

If I'm thinking about chickens then I'm thinking about September. A suburb near Perth where the sky was eerily empty – no clouds, like a simulation. Us together, fresh out of Southeast Asia, rocking up to a hobby farm with big backpacks and doses of optimism. How things turned out to not be what they were promised, but honesty was found with the animals. Dogs, horses, cats, and chickens. I'd always been afraid of chickens, although I felt guilty about that. I knew they didn't deserve it – it's not their fault they walk like that, and look like that when they're hungry. I know you think I'm scarier when I'm hungry, and you're right.

When I first entered the coop alone, I pushed the gate cautiously, clutching kitchen scraps. Tip-toeing in wellies – terrified. A chicken flew up at me impatiently, wings flapping wildly – I dropped the bucket in panic. Pellets and food waste splattered over the ground and I quickly picked up the container in embarrassment. Collected the eggs with fear flaring up inside me.

It took some getting used to – the routine there. There was a lot not to like about the way the place was run and I was stressed sometimes, but we stuck out the month like we'd agreed to. Slept in bunk beds and ate dinner early, because we had to. Really got along with the other Workawayers – united in our complaints. Adored the dogs like they were our own. Got comfortable around horses and took good care of the cats. Ran up and down the road

in blazing heat. We gossiped in the evenings, sitting on wonky rocks. I'd stare at the sky with the brightest stars and think about how much had changed. How much I'd changed, getting lost in this "elsewhere" land that felt so far from home. But I had you, and you were home. I'd think about what it meant to be in a bubble characterised by reality – real nature, real obligations, real exploitation, and real living creatures depending on us, yearning for our burning under the strong Australian sun.

We were spinning slowly, using our hands for free where they were needed. Weeding. Cleaning. Reaching round each other's backs because I needed you. I need you and I always will.

I stopped feeling anxious when going to feed chickens.

# while feeding the chickens

Emily Eaton

revelations crack  
open, like runny  
eggs. poured into  
palms – bursting  
yellow yolks.

# Good morning

Siddiqua Sadaf

The sun is up  
And so are birds  
There are roosters  
crowing outside my house  
As I fight the urge to sleep  
I can see the heavens  
Waiting for me  
As I fight the urge to stay  
Just because I saw some dreams  
Too good to forget  
Just because I made some friends  
Too good to leave

# Contributors

**Alex** is a 19 year old med student from India, who has always had a passion for poetry. He keeps his phrasing simple, so that even a person not so learned in literature, can appreciate his poems. Find me on YWS (Young Writers Society) here: <https://www.youngwriterssociety.com/profile/AlexWrites>

**Chaitra Kotasthane** is a medical student whose work has appeared in various literary magazines and anthologies. She enjoys reading, writing, collecting strange trinkets, and walking in the rain, whenever she earns a respite from studying.

**Elliot Crane** lives in Richmond, Virginia with his wife and cat. He enjoys writing short stories, coding small video games with Pico-8, and a good deviled egg.

**Emily Eaton** is a lesbian writer from Essex, England. She loves Thai food and sunsets and words. She regularly writes on her Substack (<https://somerheresoftly.substack.com/>) and is building a soft place to land over at <https://www.somerheresoftly.com/>

**Isabella Grecco** is a museum educator and social justice researcher based in Connecticut. She earned her Master's degree in Social Justice Education from SUNY New Paltz, where her work focused on equity, critical pedagogy, and community-based learning. She is an enthusiastic post-qualitative researcher with a dedication exploration of how culture, education, and storytelling can be tools for anti-racist practice, among other social justice related goals!

**Kelly Mahan** is a mother of three from Delavan, Wisconsin. She lives with her children, her husband, her dog, and 10 occasionally broody chickens.

**Meeda King** (@meeda.draws.sometimes) is an 18 year old Irish artist studying biotechnology. As a student of biology he naturally loves all living things however in his art he particularly finds inspiration from animals and other organisms which only exist through human intervention, such as of course chickens.

**Neko** is a Texan psychology major minoring in art, with an affinity for chickens! They have studied animal psychology in the past and is currently excited about continuing by learning more about the psychology of chickens. Instagram: @Neko\_Masi\_Nya Twitter: @Niccogatto

**Rebeca Dunn-Krahn** is a writer and storyteller from Vancouver Island. Both her hens and her fiction have won first prize in the Sooke Fall Fair. More at [rebecadk.com](http://rebecadk.com).

**Siddiqua Sadaf** is a writer from Pakistan trying to express herself in words. She is from a town where nearly every house has chickens resting in most crooked places and most commonly walls. She is grateful to have found this platform, and even more grateful to wake up to roosters crowing every morning.

**Úna Ní Nualláin** is a theatremaker and writer from Dublin. Úna is editor-in-chief of the *Martello Journal*. Selected publications include *Bullshit Lit*, *Semaphore* and *Ragaire Journal*. She is a proud member of the Across the Narrow Sea Folklorists Group. She can be found saluting magpies and tricking editors into publishing her work.

**Find more at [coopzine.com](http://coopzine.com)**