

A recipe for Imperial Rice

One cup of rice and water —sink the rice, and on the
third day (or hour, if you're hungry) wash it clean—set
aside. Get your grandpa to kill a chicken. You can catch it
for him, if you're hungry. Remember all the
bits of food you didn't want this week: the ham
you skipped at breakfast, the peas you scooped into a
ziplock, those bell peppers you snacked on Monday and
Tuesday but were sick of by Wednesday and ignored
on Thursday and forgot by Friday— set them on the counter
while you weep over onions and smash garlic. In a skillet
with no handle, make the eating oil hot, add the garlic
and onions and lick your fingers clean or let a lover do
that for you. All your cousins live in the margins of this
recipe. Add the chicken, then your scraps.
Season the way you should. Do you know what the bible says
about Saaaaaffron? or that there are 5,348 miles be-
tween Benin and the place my grandpa first killed a
chicken? and 90 miles between that spot and the
apartment where my mother divined a way to hold all this
together? Do the same, after mixing in the cooked rice.
Figure out how. Top with shredded cheese, that's the Imperial part, and
bake until you are willing to singe your eyebrows
just to scoop
out a taste.