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## Mastery

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# Mastery

by Shawn Pittard

Eggs sizzle  
when they hit  
the hot pan.

Hard shells,  
brown and speckled,  
require a certain

flick of the wrist  
to crack. Olive oil,  
brought slowly

to temperature,  
under a cover  
that seals in the heat

and cures both  
white and yolk  
patiently, while she reads

the morning paper. Coffee,  
ground fresh and pressed  
with water brought

almost to a boil, then  
poured into porcelain cups  
with little lids

that hold in the heat  
between sips. Toast  
pops when egg whites

firm, butter spread  
while toast is too hot to touch,  
melting uniformly



on the rough surface.  
Grandmother's plates,  
sized for the Depression,

white with yellow flowers  
emblazoned on the rims,  
just right for breakfast.

Coarse black pepper,  
a pinch of salt—  
she breaks the yolks

with her toast. Me,  
I cut them into little squares  
with knife and fork.

My wife can decipher  
archaic laws. My father helped  
put a man on the moon.

I, too, like being good at something.

