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Disappearance of the Future Chickens

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DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FUTURE CHICKENS

I breed myself out
of my weakness, as confidently as
the poultryman: "In twenty years every chicken
will be perfect:

creamy, heavy breasts and no
wings, no waste. All
chickens will be as confinable as
completely useful as the best citizens—"

he told *Life*, sunken already to the thighs
in such ultimate chickens
twenty years ago. Was
it normal lust? Did he, all of them, himself?

Or were they slaughtered for his infinite comfort
like the concubines of Cheops, or parables
of a luckier Kafka; or thrashing in a disease
of the perfect, did they agonizingly beg

only to be still more useful like the ancient books
skimmed by the great fire of Alexandria?
Or, probably, do creatures need
most the nubs they do not need

at all—these growths, ancient, receding,
now no more than sores—wings, my wings
that enthusiastically, helplessly to my terror
chorus, Terrible! Terrible! Terrible!