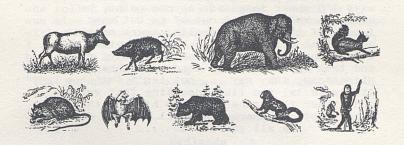
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TRICIA'S SKILLET

the aroma of crisp bacon has wakened me like no alarm clock ever could. I go to the kitchen and there is my wife, cracking eggs on the side of a hot, cast-iron skillet. "Over easy?" she asks. I nod ... she is using THE skillet; the one great aunt Eloise gave her grandmother as a wedding gift; the one her grandmother gave to her mother, who, in turn, passed down to Trish. it's the blackest pan I've ever seen and it's probably fried bushels of eggs. shaking a little pepper on the eggs' faces, she turns them over as gently as a kiss. our daughter comes in, pajama'd, rubbing the sleep out of one eye and asks, "How long 'til breakfast?" for some reason, I step into the future, thinking of that dark inheritance and this same scene, years and years from now