

Rule of Life, the Sequel

by [Karen An-Hwei Lee](#) in the [April 2023](#) issue

What is a rule of life but this rustling chatter?
The dialogue of jackdaws, pigeons, and wrens—

where did you forage for seed, my good finch,
my flock? Is it spring light raising the bulbs,

the aroma of eucalyptus mint blessing our faces
as we taste the tossed morsels of sourdough?

Is it how we sport autumn's down coat and scarf
under the elms? Is it green apples, the fond eggs

rolling side to side on a table, the rule of life
wakened after a long winter with a gentleness

of radish, beets, and shallots in a redware pot,
midnight shimmering on terra-cotta rooftops,

swallows in a skyward bliss, orbiting the stars
and minutes of the season, flying into a solstice

of questions? Whom have you loved, and why
do you come here, my dear? How shall we live?

What does it mean for our work to feel like play,
and the labors of our hands to work like prayer?