

FRANCINE J. HARRIS

the day after *12 Years a Slave*

I make a stew. While one side of the landlord's futon gives out, the other
rests on one bolt. It all tips sideways and then

the mailman's footprints in snow.

The pot is on the stove, but the meat is off.

Do I throw out the meat. or eat the meat. The meat smells like a
slaughterhouse, it did. When it opened, a dead pigeon lay in a pan
blowflies, the squeal of a small calf.

No one mentions the smell on their recipe blogs. The snow
piles windrift. One screw and then the other.

The maintenance man is suspicious of callers. also, I think, on heroin.

Your control is
out.

So be it, a fishsauce, a splatter of thyme and cabbage.

The cat is a perched killer. The cutting board smeared parsley.

(Northrup had his own tune. Choke sometimes. An ulcer of blear.

I cry at the black rendering. the festival finish.
The chair squeals when I forget and fall on it. The house has it now.

It's all in the curtains. You cook until you have to give up and give
in.

a dutch oven keeps centuries' vapor

and a cow. What becomes of it, to wind up in the
trash.

A starter. A hope for something
right.

I can see it there, marooned.

There was that breath on the caterpillar.
It ruined the whole crop.