Directions for Use and Care

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Having turned away from the kitchen window
looking at wet morning roses and carrots fighting for space
in the small garden we made
with decking wood and too many nails,
I think love and this frying pan
have a lot in common.

How do you know when it’s ready?
A droplet or two of water.
When they dance, then you’ve got something.

But what about after the guilty
pleasure of bacon, or after the eggs that I stiffened,
or after the French toast—the trailing globs of egg milk
like the sopping bread might have found its way back
to the safety of the stainless steel bowl?

*The Directions for Care and Use* warns:
Overheat the pan and it warps.
Submerge it too quick in cold water, it warps.

So you let the faucet run somewhere
between too hot and too cold, licking a finger
of syrup while managing soap, and I give the pan
a quick orbital wipe with the soft side
of the two-sided sponge. Because pans scratch easily,
you know, on the surface.