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Daily Fare

Will Walker

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DAILY FARE

I chose oatmeal this morning because I always choose it;
it's a marriage really, a ritual, something I substitute
for prayer and good hygiene and civic pride
and responsible, disciplined behavior.

I don't smother my oatmeal
with these extensive extras, then top it
with fruit and nuts and vitamins and righteousness.
Oatmeal is a food of my ancestors, some of them,
Scots buried in churchyards I can only imagine,
speaking with a burr I can hardly decipher,

but, god, you know they loved their oatmeal,
you'd have to, to make haggis out of it,
the world's most maligned food, except for
Rocky Mountain oysters and no doubt
some obscure delicacy from New Guinea,
cow's bladder marinated in raven guano
and topped with especially prickly thistle.

No, I eat my oatmeal straight, no chaser,
no expectations, just the satisfaction of saying Hi
to the ancestors and nothing more,
a perfect food to eat alone, in silence,
while waiting for the brain to clock in,
suit up, pick up that scary, searing blowtorch

and begin shaping the cold, hard steel
of morning into something with holes in it,
maybe a moon, some stars, a stealthy fox,
and an expanse of something uncharted,
the windswept, quivering heath.

-Will Walker
Provincetown, MA