

No Ordinary Pig

by John Olson

Are potatoes subversive? I have built a gardenia out of air. I hope to prove the consequences of roots.

Tubers.

The experiment begins with a country like France. Collar stud swans. I surround my neck in silk and inch toward the skeleton of a whale.

The bones tell me that lyricism is sanguine. And that there are galaxies behind the ribs.

Galaxies of velvet. Galaxies of faith.

Maple and oak. Appliances in a greenhouse.

The object of life is to move toward a greater and greater resilience. And tell stories about it at the end of the day, when the sun has long been gone, and the night is full of grease and singing. It is then that we are frequented by huge emotions, words encased in cocoons that mature and hatch and fly about the room.

During the day we search for truffles. I have a pig named Henry. He is a big help. He wanders the forest sniffing for truffles like a parable of porcine inquisitiveness. He knows what he is doing. He is not just a pig. Nor ordinary pig. He is a French pig. A pig of the Perigord.

I have crossed many bridges in life but never have I seen such strange attempts at narration, as if life were a sequence of events, or waves crashing on a shore, wave upon wave upon wave, turning pages of foam as they go.

Space begins where the trees dance.

Giants whose limbs maneuver the clouds.

Moons and asteroids.

Mint and lavender.

May you never be a rock.

Be instead the snow in a globe. Be a potato. Be circumspect and round. Live in the earth. The good sweet earth. With its worms and decay. Its sand beneath the waves.

Sometimes a feeling is more than a religion. It becomes a swollen pink oval stirring in the water. And somewhere a phonograph crackles in an attic. And Edith Piaf sings *Regrette Rien*.

