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Hotdog



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Some foods stir up memories, nostalgia, and patriotism more than others. One food that seems to just as much, if not more than the hamburger, is the hotdog.

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The hotdog has been a prominent menu item for ball parks and race tracks.

Whenever there is a work free holiday you are always asked, "hamburger or hotdog?"

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Early memories of being surrounded by other 3 to 5 year olds and our cut up hotdogs arranged on a paper plate with rippled edges, and sogged by the ketchup and mustard concoctions.

Red and yellow swirled together presenting a picture of the Fibonacci sequence.

IV

The hotdog is cooked of course; but did you know you could snack on it cold?

Right out of the package.

Right out of the fridge.

The lights are out in the house,

except for this illumination beaming from the kitchen;
and your breath smells of raw hotdogs.

V

My brother showed me how a wiener can shake
when he put a hotdog in front of his crotch and wagged it up and down.
It was only a hotdog;
but the sight of it still made me look away.

VI

In junior high, sixth grade in fact,
I sat across from an Iraqi kid in the cafeteria.
Unknowingly, he chowed down on the flesh forbidden by his religion
wrapped deliciously in fried bread.
When he thought to ask a standing adult what it was he was eating,
I saw his face turn white in terror of the shame he could not seem to let
pass.
I couldn't grasp the magnitude of the sin that suddenly branded his soul,
but I knew it was because his God had commanded not to eat the flesh of
pig...Or is it cow? ...Or is it both?

VII

My grandmother and her family used to picnic by the Speedway track;
and trying to do something normal,
they made no exceptions after the second world war.
Her oldest brother had recently arrived safe from the explosions in Italy.
That day at the park became a literal tale of the brother who bit off more
than he could chew.
(I don't think they had hotdogs in Italy.)

VIII

I dreamt I was being chased by the dead,
and I was enthralled by the familiar smell of hotdog.
Nearing a parking lot I looked up in the trees
and there from the trees hung hundreds of naked hotdogs,
like leaves or the rosaries draped on tree limbs
to mark some holy landmark.