Carol Dorf: Blessing Myself **[1]**

November 27, 2013 Featured Poetry [2]



Coming Soon! TW's Holiday 2013 Issue

Stay tuned for our next issue—"Writing and Faith"—which lauches Monday, December 2. And don't miss our holiday cards featuring TW Poetry Editor Carol Dorf's "Blessing Myself."

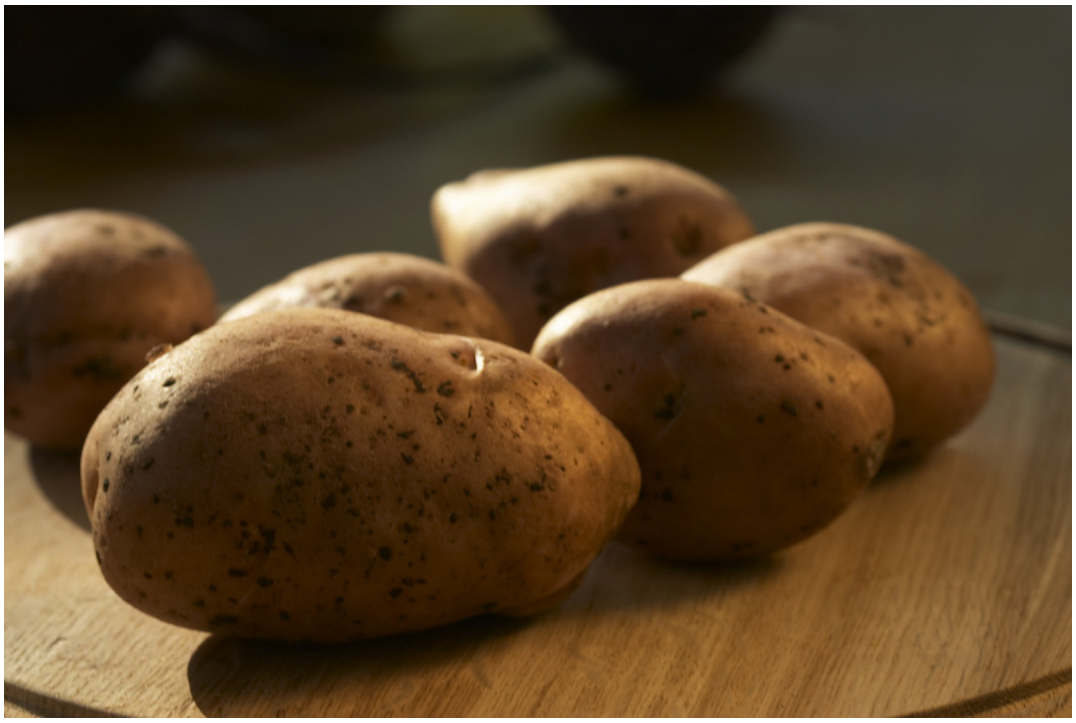
When you buy these limited-edition cards [3], you help support TW. Happy Chanukah—and Thanksgiving!

Latkes

I make space in the book of problems,
then begin to fry up latkes. The daughter
washes potatoes, I peel onions. She inserts
them in the food processor, which grates
(a job so labor intensive, we cannot
imagine latkes pre the age of kitchen
gizmos). Speed, I instruct, is the key,
the pacing that eludes us every morning
on our way to school/work; but here
in this moment, we can put aside the daily
in favor of the once a year. Let the olive
and grapeseed oil heat until almost
smoldering. Potatoes, onions, in the bowl,
a couple of eggs, and stir. Find the old spoon,
slip them into the oil. The smoke alarm
goes off, and the daughter climbs a chair
to fetch it down and put it on the back porch.
Then paper towels to sop some of the oil
back up, and latkes. These are for a party
so most are wrapped in foil for the freezer;

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but for breakfast—latkes and jelly.
The book of to-do waits in the other room,
buried beneath the Sunday paper.



[4]

Blessing Myself

If you make a list of all you are grateful for,
you will find happiness, there was a meeting
in San Francisco about this yesterday, more

than just being born on the happy side of the bed.
Wind curls through the eucalyptus,
while the fir across the street holds solid.

I don't come from a people who are naturally
blithe, though many find shrinks help.
Freud said the goal was to transform

neurotic misery into ordinary unhappiness.
I've always admired the people who could ask
directions, listen to the answer,

and hold the steps in their heads for several miles.
Gulls circle, negative space against the winter sky.
I pause, bless the god of creation; sometimes

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the forms provide comfort, a language
I partially understand more effective
for blessing than my native tongue.

This Thanksgiving, the cat sleeps on my chair.
The child still in bed, husband in the bathtub,
I narrate. Happiness?

Art Information

- "Eat Plant Cook [4]" © AGphotographer; Stock Image License

Carol Dorf is the poetry editor at *Talking Writing*.

"Latkes" originally appeared in the December 2011 issue of *Poetica Magazine: Contemporary Jewish Writing*.

Source URL: https://www.talkingwriting.com/carol-dorf-blessing-myself

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