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MEAT AND POTATOES BY NORA DELANEY

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Jim said "I do poetry on the side."
Poetry on the side – like potatoes, |
russet and knobby, attending a
side of beef. Not the main attraction –
not the meat – but the side-show:
the humble, eyed potato.

"On the side of what?" I ask and
scratch my wrist. (I am impatient
for answers; it shows in my itch.)

Jim teaches seventh grade geography.
The names of rivers: Mississippi,

(Em eye double ess eye double ess eye pee pee eye)

Missouri, Milk and Marias – all rivers run
by those old expeditionists, Lewis & Clark,

(whose names pair like Holmes & Watson,
without the pipe and hounds-tooth check or
Laurel & Hardy, without the humor).

Such admirable work: teaching children
the names of rivers – more substantial,
more filling, than, say,
playing with words.

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Nora Delaney currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts and works as an academic writing tutor at MIT. She has lived in Poland, South Africa, France, Holland, and Britain, and has worked as a journalist and Dutch-English translator. Her poetry has been published in *Farmhouse Magazine* and will appear in the upcoming issue of *Pulsar*.