On the Pleasure of Plain White Bread

Ingrid Wendt
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Such self-righteousness in denial, avoiding
what isn't original, how
long have we not had white bread?

Plain, with only butter or margarine.
Cold. Not crisply controlled into toast
or heated with garlic salt, soaked through
golden as stained glass: French or Italian
or Sourdough, calories justified
when they are foreign or even
from San Francisco. Plain
white bread no meal—for my father or mother-
in-law—would be complete without. Bread
unpretentious as aprons, something
to wipe the food down, who
needs sunflower soy? Today

what am I doing, returning for seconds of
Pueblo Indian bread, round as the outdoor adobe
ovens these loaves were baked in long before
tourists like me descended from conquerors thought
to give it a try. Simple white bread I need
no special serrated knife to cut, solid

as endurance. Taste so dense I am lost
to my tongue, the truth it would tell
if only it had a moment to speak.

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