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## Kinnell Is Serving Oatmeal

By: Allan Scherlen

### Abstract

A poem written in response to Galway Kinnell's poem, "Oatmeal," that was published in *The Galway Review*, the leading literary magazine of Galway, Ireland.

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<https://thegalwayreview.com/2023/11/26/allan-scherlen-kinnell-is-serving-oatmeal/>

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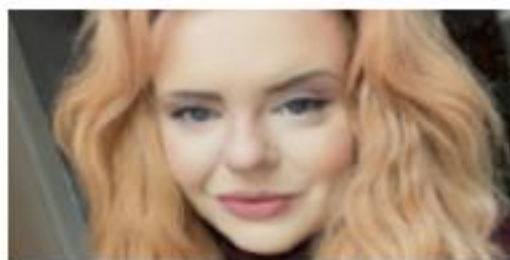
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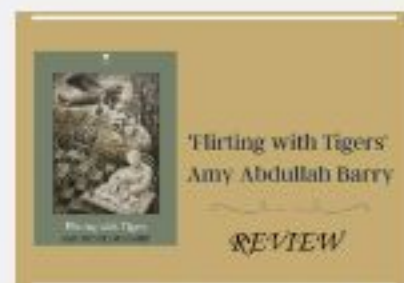
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## Allan Scherlen – Kinnell Is Serving Oatmeal

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Date: 26 Nov 2023



**Allan Scherlen** was born in San Antonio and is a librarian at Appalachian State University in the mountains of North Carolina. He travelled extensively through China and Mexico and is a lifelong poet. He has recently been published by Vermilion, Progenitor, new words, Axahares, and Hong Kong Review.

### Kinnell Is Serving Oatmeal

In his poem, "Oatmeal," Galway Kinnell shares his joy of this grain for breakfast. He advocates we invite imaginary companions – dead poets – to breakfast, thus creating a truly beneficial morning experience.

I generally don't have enough time in the morning to make oatmeal, let alone for guests to partake. Cooking on the stove, while pressed for time, is challenging;

not to mention the added chore of cleaning a dirty pot that will become encrusted if not rinsed. I'll pass.

So, no invitation to imaginary poets  
for oatmeal in the morning.  
I know there's a lot to learn from imaging  
a conversation with Spenser and Milton.

But I'd feel compelled to do some homework  
the night before, reviewing their work and literary criticism  
about them. And then getting up early to cook.  
No, I'll pass.

To confess, on a leisurely morning  
with lots of time, I'd prefer scrambled eggs  
with biscuits, (not from scratch, but from  
dough popped out of a tube).

I'd invite, as my preferred imaginary companions,  
musicians – like Hendrix or Coltrane –  
to enjoy a breakfast spread. They can  
be interesting dudes, worthy of an imaginary talk.

But for now, being a regular day,  
I'll pass on oatmeal –  
and have a coffee as usual.

***Galway Kinnell Reading 'Oatmeal'***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Xv8EY2vWJg>

<https://thegalwayreview.com/2023/11/26/allan-scherlen-kinnell-is-serving-oatmeal/>