

The End of Another Day  
(a Wheat Soup story)

By

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situations from "Wheat Soup" by Gerald Saul and Brian  
Stocketon

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EXT. DAY: FIELD NEAR SUNSET

The camera moves erratically, looking for figures amongst the nearly ripe crop. Eventually they come into frame. They walk away from the camera, out of focus but eventually coming into focus at the horizon.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Hey Cous', wait up. Where are you goin'?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Hi. Oh, just up here. I just, uh...

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Mind if I tag along?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Well, I sort of wanted to get away, you know, to be alone.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Alone? Why? The party is just getting started.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I know but I ... I don't really like the crowds. I know this is all to celebrate Grandpa Sam and his journeys and so on, but I just don't see the point of gathering together like this.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

That's what we do. We grow, we sway, we gather.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Yeah, yeah, "The grain runs in our veins", I know, I know. ... But I just don't see the point.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

The point! The wheat farmer used to be one person, now it's like, I don't know, lots of us.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Did you learn to count?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

You don't need countin' skills to know a bunch is a lot more than one.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Still, I think the old days would have been cool. The lone man on the prairie, stoic, carrying the world on his shoulders.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

I've heard all about the "old days when the flattening was young and all the farmers were men".

WILLIAM OF WORDS

That's not what I meant.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

You don't think I can do what you do?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I didn't mean...

KATHERINE THE FIXER

I know more about seed and soil and rain than anyone.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I ....

KATHERINE THE FIXER

... and the appliances. Do you know what they do?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

no...

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Well I DO! At least some of them. I take them apart and put them together and sometimes I make them do stuff that's hard to imagine. So what makes you think you are so much better than me?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I don't. I don't want to be... I don't want to be a wheat farmer.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

... wh..? What!

WILLIAM OF WORDS

All my life, it has been the only option open to me. But now that I'm

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM OF WORDS (cont'd)  
in a barn filled with one hundred  
and seventeen wheat farmers... yes,  
I can and did count them... who  
have come together to remember the  
days gone by, the stories got me  
thinking.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Sounds to me that you've stopped  
thinking. There is no job better  
than being a wheat farmer.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
That's just it, being a wheat  
farmer is not a job. It is just  
theocratic servitude; a life  
committed to the labours outlined  
in the great almanac, doing the  
bidding of a goddess who has not  
spoken to anyone since our great  
great great grandfather Sam  
established the new order 200 years  
ago. Now we continue to abide the  
book and memorize his story of  
adventure, but never embark on  
adventures of our own.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
But the wheat farmer never leaves  
the farm.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Now you sound like an old movie,  
and by that I mean the sort of  
story that our ancestors used to  
tell each other that would be told  
the same way every time, word for  
word, without variation.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
We learn from our stories. If I  
tell the stories differently from  
the way they were told to me, and  
those I tell change it again, then  
soon all the knowledge within it  
will be lost.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
But the stories are dead and we are  
alive. So long as we adhere to the  
exact and literal word of every  
story passed down to us, we are

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM OF WORDS (cont'd)  
just as dead as the words and just  
as much slaves to history as we are  
to the land.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I am not a slave.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
You think you are not. I don't  
know, maybe you aren't. But I think  
that I am and therefore I am.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I'm sorry. Is there anything I can  
do?

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Can you fix me like you fixed the  
farseeing machine or the spinatron  
gadget, or the autoword device?  
Yes, I've heard about you. They  
call you the fixer, they say you're  
... touched ... by the goddess.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I just like to tinker.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
That's why they are scared of you.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
What!

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Even before you came here to my  
farm, when your name was mentioned,  
people looked down at the dirt and  
kick the gravel with their boots.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
They all say that what I'm doing is  
important. They even gave me my own  
barn.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
With a lock?

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Of course, in case someone comes to  
steal stuff.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

The poachers are no more, they are part of our blood, part of our stories, but no longer part of our nature.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

... still, there is always a chance that ...

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Is the lock on the inside or the outside?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

The outside of course, to make sure that ...

WILLIAM OF WORDS

That you are locked in.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

No. I ...

WILLIAM OF WORDS

....

KATHERINE THE FIXER

but ....

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Well, at least they let you out to come here.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Did you say that this was YOUR farm?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

That's what they keep telling me.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

But, this is the original farm, isn't it? The one that Sam lived on, and brought the others to?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

It's were all the bodies are buries.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

(small laugh)

That sounds like a joke.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM OF WORDS

If you can't laugh about your dead relatives, who can you laugh about?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

But living here, where it all began. That's amazing. How could you not be just... I don't know, zonkered just to be living here?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Zonkered?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

um, yeah, zonkered.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Do you know what that word means?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Yea, my dad uses it all the time. It means something like "I'm so in love with the land that I'm going to lie down on it right now and go to sleep".

WILLIAM OF WORDS

That's what zonkered means?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Yeah, well, I might be paraphrasing.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Paraphrasing one word into 21?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Who cares, it's only a word.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

But words are cool. I'd rather work a metaphor than a crop.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

You're weird.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

So are you.

both laugh a bit. Suddenly the frame is obliterated by a flash of white light then returns to normal.

(CONTINUED)

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Whoa!!! What was that!?

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Don't worry, they happen all the  
time.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
The world disappeared for a moment.  
I wasn't here.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
I call it "All The Time". From what  
I can figure, it comes from us  
questioning the nature of our  
world. Ever since the great earth  
flatteners rained the blue gold  
anvils down upon us, we have lived  
in a world held together as much by  
the weather as by the idea of the  
weather.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Grandpa Sam, he used to travel to a  
world beyond ours; a world of  
nothing.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Not nothing.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
No, you're right, not nothing. The  
goddess was there. Al. The almanac.  
But she was just a dream.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
She was not just a dream. She was  
THE Dream. She was an idea.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Then are you trying to suggest that  
there are two worlds, one that is  
physical, the one we are standing  
on now, and one that is conceptual,  
that we could travel to through the  
white, through the nothing rift?

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
No, I think what is happening is  
that we have always lived in both.  
One foot in one...

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
... and one foot in the other. I  
don't find this very comforting.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
But here you are, still on this  
path.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
This isn't a path. We are in a  
field of wheat.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Doesn't it bother you that this  
isn't even wheat?

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
Every crop we farm is wheat. That  
is where the name comes from.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
And yet it is not. That tool you  
carry...?

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
My restored tri-jabby.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Yea, it isn't useful for anything  
here. It just helps to visually  
define your role.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I could jab you with it.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
What I'm saying is...

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I could triple jab you.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
But you won't.

KATHERINE THE FIXER  
I will if I have to. I can't let  
you leave.

WILLIAM OF WORDS  
Get a grip.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

On my tool?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

On your view of reality. We're almost there.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Where?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I don't know.

They walk a bit further.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Things are starting to look different.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

I think so too.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

No one used to agree with me when I would say that. I once showed my dad a leaky fire bucket generator and told him it looked different and he said it looked the same and put it in a hole and started to bury it.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

But that;s not the end of the story.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

No. I went and dug it back up and took it to the back of the barn where I'd been collecting the bendies and popkeys and began bending and poking it. I couldn't sleep or eat until the difference I could see inside of it was on the outside where everyone could see it. In the morning, I could put wheat in the top and from the bottom came the fire water.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

That must have felt great.

(CONTINUED)

KATHERINE THE FIXER

It did... for a few days, until I wanted to do it again. They still didn't really believe me that the appliances, the things we'd been burying for all of these years, they are...

WILLIAM OF WORDS

...alive.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

Yes.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

... and we are blind most of the time, to this and to ...

KATHERINE THE FIXER

everything.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

And now here we are, at the edge of the world.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

How? Was this always here?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

You know the answer.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

It is only here when we need to find it.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Scary.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

That's for sure.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Yup.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

What do we do now?

WILLIAM OF WORDS

We could go back.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

We probably should. They'll be waiting for us.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM OF WORDS

They can wait.

KATHERINE THE FIXER

It is what they've always been good  
at.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Then you think we should go back?

KATHERINE THE FIXER

No, we should go on.

WILLIAM OF WORDS

Yeah, let's go.

They walk over the ridge and begin disappearing into the  
distance. Screen goes white.

Fade out.