

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## Walking to Latvia

By William Doeski

Setting out at ten a.m.,  
I hope to arrive by dusk.  
Electric eels illuminate  
the tunnel under the ocean,  
which I traverse briskly enough.  
Then a gaggle of anxious women  
greet me in Portugal where  
I pause for coffee and pastry.  
The women escort me to France.  
There I buy a fresh pair of socks  
and practice rolling my Rs.  
Now a guide who speaks German  
links arms and shuffles me sideways  
across an invisible border.  
A forest intervenes. Gnomes  
and trolls peer through their squints  
and sneer at my sweaty bulk.  
Distracted by these apparitions,  
my guide falls into a dry well,  
where I leave him howling in panic.  
Now an unfamiliar city  
squats on the path. It shimmers  
with plate glass, bronze, and granite.  
As I pass through, a mob shaped  
like a torpedo ignores me  
on its way to lynch an immigrant  
who fortunately isn't me.  
At last I push through a hedge  
and a peasant woman offers  
honey spread on tough black bread.  
I drop to my knees and thank  
the woman, and around me  
is Latvia, Latvia, Latvia  
with its wheat fields swaying  
and its famous vowels intact.