

Stew

The rabbit cries, a teething child.
Its timbre suspends crisp footsteps over shrubs,
blueberry mash on white rubber boots.
The boy waits, hears the beagle howl.

Steel wire looped on a birch limb.
An upturned teddy bear. Limp.
A slit along the underbelly
spews knotted worms and leeches.
His father explains, step by step:
This is how you skin a hare.
Hack the hind legs, pelvis, neck.
Fur peels like wet socks from warm feet.
The sharp sound of adhesive.
A monstrous glove on the boy's hand.
Vein mulch outside. Fur inside, still warm.
A cruel white rabbit, his beloved story.

His brother's colic starts at one a.m.
Awake, he smells warm blood of wild game.
Haunting flashes of cracking ribs
as night time scavengers relish
remains of liver, kidneys, heart.

Randy Drover