

Solace

On top of the eastern hill
half a dozen mule deer
feed in the field.

I am afraid if I howl
I will never stop.
The crosses etched on my body
are ripped open
as more children's graves
are revealed.

I seek the deer
for comfort.

When I was a child
I raced with twin fawns,
convinced I could out-run them.

In a forest I lifted a branch
came face to face
with another fawn.

On a prairie walk,
grass thigh high
I almost stepped on a curled
New-born.
Among the cattails yet another
trotted out, flew
into my arms.

In the mountains,
sitting on a step
a deer kissed me.

In front of my car a yearling
kicked up its heels in a little dance.

An Elder told the story of how
a deer laid on top of

her niece's murder site.

In howling winds at forty-below
a child curled up against a dog
and survived the night.

I know it's not a deer. Still
I seek the comfort of these
four legged relatives
to warm soul and skin.

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