

Hares

Not mine but I'll take some—
not too much,
just part. Not the best part—
It could be best, though,
no way
of knowing, I'll take
just the blue part,
the part that includes
a cantilever bridge,
or maybe the brown part, that includes
a horse's halter, I'll take the part
that is cream and gray, like the mushroom
in my path, maybe the roughed-up
part, teeth marks on it,
dragged from a dank cellar,
the part that has deliquesced,
the part just painted
to resemble a mouse, the part vaccinated
by flood, the part
that has rubbed
against roses. The part with dropsy. The part
that flusters some; that flusters no one.
The part that brandishes endorphins,
the part that returned to life, sorely
inconveniencing the staff, the part that knows
whereof it speaks, the part that waits longest
with no coffee, no chips, no cigarettes, the part

that locks my gaze, asks my pity,
rests close against me,
watches with me as two hares begin boxing
in the solemnity of dawn.

James

I made a clay sculpture
He had broad shoulders
and slim hips I was working on
what Rilke calls “the center
of procreation” when James offered
his help *If you’d like I can do
that part* I was galvanized
Powerless to stop The slip felt
cool eager I thought of Camille
Claudel and her courage
But it was loneliness
that bent me to the task
I should confess that the statue
was tiny its broad shoulders
about one and one-half inches
wide I once knew someone who made
tiny horses from straw He gave me one
to give someone else
That person died I kept the horse
My house ate it as it has eaten
James I imagine finding him
astride the tiny horse

Half-Sister Who Floated Out to Sea

A calm day; a few boats
on the water, sails jaunty

as a dandy's pocket square.
In the distance, one cumulus.

Nearer, the promontory
of an island, its bristling crown.

A dog sniffing the shoreline resembled "Tige,"
who used to sell Buster Brown shoes.

The tide spread itself like a delicate shawl.
Every night, in my sleep, my older half-sister

tried to live with me. She thought I would
introduce her to people, men
in particular. Every night

she was bitter, disappointed. I failed
to bring her anything she wanted,
though I asked a man, while fondling him,
did he have friends;

and, what's more, seldom asked her to sleep
in her own room with her paintings,
their redolent wet oils.

For my part, I hoped to find generous
friends I could emulate, learn from;

I looked everywhere there was. Found
a cemetery's obelisk; a fire station's
row of high boots.

Meanwhile,
my half-sister held one corner

of my blouse, the one she had declared
a great color for me. Cotton
voile. I love the word "voile"; I pull it
close.

At Dairy Queen, I ordered for her;
the "Monkey Tail," since her lips wouldn't say it.

Under the sky, the same pine tops, shape
cut by pinking shears.

I take note of days: the one for the number Pi;
various eating contests; eclipses, complete
and partial; the time and place for disposal
of white goods.

How long since she went floating? Long.
I pull on time like clear tape; I reach cardboard;
a new roll begins.