

NOEL CROOK

The Twins

Their teachers said they hadn't noticed
anything amiss, but I wasn't a bit
surprised when the sheriff called that morning
to tell us what they'd done,
their mama shot and left for dead, their father
with his head blown off.

A neighbor found them rocking on the porch,
one of them crying that the rabbit hutch
was open and his bunny had got out.
We found out later they'd used
their birthday gifts—two Rugers—
and their father's own shotgun as a back-up.

I happened on them once, hiding in a bunker
they'd dug out down by our creek, gibbering
in that twin-speak that would light up your spine.
“If you see those boys in the woods, you hightail it,”
I told my own babies, “and if they follow you,
you say your mama's on to them.”

Some months before it happened, I phoned their father
when I caught them fooling with our yearling colts.
He showed up in his fatigues. “That bay,” I said,
“will break their necks.” When he got them home,
we heard the yelling all the way across the creek.
Good, I'd thought, that'll be the end of it.

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