

DEAD DOE: I

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for Huck*

The doe lay dead on her back in a field of asters: no.

The doe lay dead on her back beside the school bus stop: yes.

Where we waited.

Her belly white as a cut pear. Where we waited: no: off

from where we waited: yes:

at a distance: making a distance

we kept,

as we kept her dead run in sight, that we might see if she chose

to go skyward;

that we might run, too, turn tail

if she came near

and troubled our fear with presence: with ghostly blossoming: with the
fountain's

unstoppable blossoming

and the black stain the algae makes when the water

stays near.

We can take the gilt-edged strolling of the clouds: yes.

But the risen from the dead: no!

The haloey trouble shooting of the goldfinches in the bush:

yes: but *in season*:

kept within bounds,

not in the pirated rows of corn,

not above winter's pittance of river.

The doe lay dead: she lent

her deadness to the morning, that the morning might have weight, that

our waiting might matter: be upheld by significance: by light

on the rhododendron, by the ribbons the sucked mint loosed

on the air,

by the treasonous gold-leaved passage of season, and you

from me/child/from me/

from . . . not mother: no:

but the weather that would hold you: yes:

hothouse you to fattest blooms: keep you in mild unceasing rain, and

the fixed

stations of heat: like a pedalled note: or the held
breath: sucked in, and stay: yes:

stay

but: no: not done: can't be:

the doe lay dead: she could
do nothing:

the dead can mother nothing . . . nothing
but our sight: they mother that, whether they will or no:

they mother our looking, the gap the tongue prods when the tooth is
missing, when

fancy seeks the space.

The doe lay dead: yes: and at a distance, with her legs up and frozen,
she tricked

our vision: at a distance she was
for a moment no deer

at all

but two swans: we saw two swans

and they were fighting
or they were coupling

or they were stabbing the ground for some prize
worth nothing, but fought over, so worth that, worth
the fought-over glossiness: the morning's fragile-tubed glory.

And this is the soul: like it or not. Yes: the soul comes down: yes: comes
into the deer: yes: who dies: yes: and in her death twins herself into
swans:

fools us with mist and accident into believing her newfound finery

and we are not afraid
though we should be

and we are not afraid as we watch her soul fly on: paired

as the soul always is: with itself:
with others.

Two swans . . .

Child. We are done for
in the most remarkable ways.