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## The Funeral

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# The Funeral

Tom Hill

My father drove the little wooden cross  
into the ground, and I wondered,  
at age eleven, if it was sacrilege:  
burying the rabbit we'd found  
torn apart by a crow in the yard,  
its small heart still now,  
its fur and ears mangled with blood and dirt.  
We even said a prayer, I think,  
my mother bowing her head  
as a car shot down the alley,  
kicking up dust,  
and my father walked away,  
swinging the shovel he'd used  
to scrape the rabbit from the sidewalk,  
to dig its shallow grave.  
His hair was just beginning to grey,  
and as he walked to the porch,  
the sun sank behind him,  
throwing his shadow against the house.  
That left four of us standing  
by the grave, with the little cross  
one of us had made in Sunday school:  
two rough planks of wood fastened  
with a single nail. I never stopped  
to wonder what the neighbors might think.  
I only thought of what brave  
Catholics we were,  
that we could face this and go on.