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Peter Heller

I dreamt the bay

Charnel night decayed to stars—mazy, bright
in groundsel Malvine stretched—

beneath the salt stiff blanket slept

she ran

dead level

ridden by a shape not man

that gripped her shoulders—

eyes rolled white

claws

waited there. My father prayed

nailed up the door “More trouble,

Jesus—” the scattered grave

of sticks. his own

Waited. He came. A cat

rock to rock

glided

turned on me his eyes

In meadowrue

dead

night

I know, sleep on

and

You

You

A lion

elisioned out of silence

“SON”

Scream: Scream. Malvine woke. Breathed.

Above, the leaves—each star a shaken passage—

Looks the dun—whe—? Her aspen trails a broken rope.

Malvine springs At the tree the beaten

brush graveolent He gags.

Finds her in a shallow draw, nettled on her side she gasps

quivers one flank raked with blood He kneels

her heat—serval—