

Hunting

by
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*When the fields
having given up their summer's work
to your wagons
rested
under grey blankets
of young winter sky
and the air
shivered me in my pink sweater,
you would take down your gun
and seeing me watching you
you would pretend you were only of a mind
to clean it,
but I would beg with little girl eyes
until
laughing
you would say
"Alright, Skeeter.
You can come with me hunting."
And Mother would bundle me up
in itchy wool
and make you wear your scarf*

*and we would start off
across the fields
behind the house,
Pepper bounding and leaping
and nosing,
the only sound
the crush of our feet
on dusty corn husks.
And then a rabbit would panic out
and you would raise your gun
and I would wail
“Don’t kill Peter Rabbit, Daddy”
and you would hesitate,
lose the rabbit in the greyness,
Pepper complaining
and it would go on like that
until grey turned toward black
and we’d start back
you carrying me
piggyback
because I was tired
and I liked the feel of my arms
around your neck.
My eyes dimly followed Pepper
bounding and leaping ahead
until easy jolting lulled me
and I would wake up in the morning
not remembering you tucked me in bed.*