

In the Desert Next to the Reservation

I.

I catch a Black Widow
and put her in a jar.

I watch her suffer
and spin her webs.

I shake her—

she spins her webs again.

II.

Once we caught a porcupine there.
Once we caught a skunk there.

Pashas father took care of them both.

(I will never forget the sound of that)

III.

She spins her webs.

I shake her—

she spins her webs again.

IV.

Brown recluse turn the flesh black.

Male mountain lions require 50 square miles of territory.

When hunting boar shoot once.

Always walk with the safety.

V.

Blowing softly
on the wings
of a Polyphemus moth
it flies away

as if it hadn't.

VI.

Shotgun pointed down,
thumb on the nape
of its spine,

I cut its head off,

watching its body
curl in the dirt;

nervous movements
shaken in the blazon day.

(the rattle hung on the wall until it began to stink)

VII.

(blunts will bleed you till death; be weary of quivers and warm sodden camo)

VIII.

The arrow did not stop
moving through the bull.

Oblivious to the death-wound,
life lingered on the fringes,

until blood had drained,
until sun had set,

and finally—

when both elk bedded,
the hunter understood;

(it was going to be tough finishing this before dark)

IX.

I caught her in the shed
 where children must not play
 else death
 or heavy beatings.

X.

Its last hop into the air,
the cruel curiosity of children;
the frog I placed on the end of my BB gun.

XI.

Eating its legs first,
one at a time,

spinning a stale web
and keeping busy

till the end.

XII.

The deer lay paralyzed
bleeding from the spine,

my father handed me
his father's pistol.

XIII.

I looked it in the eye.

I looked it in its flesh.

I touched my soul to its escape.

I smashed the jar next to the cliff.

XIV.

From the top of the Plataea
a mile from home

I can see

Warm Springs,
nestled between cliffs.