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Toward the Tall Grass

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MICHAEL LEVAN

Toward the Tall Grass

The woman I love killed a rabbit once,
a baby the size of her heart which is the size
of a fist, four fingers and a thumb

some people curl into hate or, much more often,
me knocking on her red, blistered doorframe.
But on that chilled spring night, the kind that has always

begged me to test if my December breath still existed,
the rabbit found a crease in the tent floor, burrowed
under the nylon home we had made, together.

It slept at her feet, dreamt of morning, a mother's
love regained beneath the dawn fog, all the while
its gasps for air swelling as her leg's weight

settled for the night, pushed down, pushed down.
Folding the tent the next morning, I found
no beating heart, its muscles stiff and fur slick

from a small pool that had settled there, too.
I nudged the body toward the tall grass, laid some oak
leaves over what was—I have never shared

loss well—then moved to her. I kissed her hand
uneasily. All the way back home, my fist beat
for her on the steering wheel, slow and firm, slow and firm.

for Molly