

Dog, Deer, and Boy

by Jerry Ratch

A black and white Malamute chasing down a deer
to the edge of the water, and putting her mouth
on it. The hurt deer fallen into the water to escape.

Red blood floating out into the water like cloth.
The boy racing down the slope into the reeds to
stop that dog's killing the deer, and holding the deer's head
up out of the water in his arms, blood and head, out
of the water to keep it from drowning.

Holding it in his arms and dragging it back up
through the reeds, heavy and near death.
Up the bank and lay it out on the soil.
Keeping his dog at a distance with fierce yells,
fierce shouting. The dog wants to lunge for the deer's
small remainder of life.

Then the boy grabs the dog covered with blood
and dives back again with her in his arms,
into the water to be cleansed, both of them.

