

DEREK BERRY

Still Life with Escaped [Lamb]

In the beginning, a small []
split open upon an altar, blood
spilled from a body still
warm. This is how some men worship,
a father's blade against the neck of a boy,
his son a vessel of obedient sin.

How else to cleanse sin
except to slaughter the []?
Gush-warm as the thigh of a boy.
A body bathed in another's blood
learns how to properly worship,
shudders, gasps, then goes still.

What remains still
is the question of where sin
seeps when the body ceases worship,
how even what is ruined becomes []
when cleansed in blood,
a field of limb-wrecked boys.

The splatter of a boy
becomes bloodborne warship.
He grasps your head like a sacrificial [].
You clean your face & still
taste the sour tart of sin,
metallic, almost like blood.

A new song enters the blood,
cleanses the body in antithesis to worship.
How miraculous the factory of sin,
what slips in through the boy's
mouth, corrupts every organ until stilled.
An altar without a [].