

Renee Norman

Last Supper

every evening he arrives for dinner
greet his daughters
asks about their day
on Sunday the meal is roast beef and potatoes
filling their stomachs
with rich gravy that slides them into next week

every evening he leaves after dinner
it's been 5 years since he announced
he would not stay
the fight about the recreation vehicle
the dynamite that blew apart
a half-demolished household
leaving a newborn rocking in the quake

even the neighbours haven't noticed his daily exodus
wonderful smells of lasagna and baked bread
still wafting through the cracks in the house
her hands kneading dough to kill the pain
the noodles neatly arranged between the layers
of sauce and cheese and children

tomorrow she'll barbecue hamburgers on the grill
wave to anyone she sees from the yard
prepare the evening meal for her family
pretend he is so busy at work
doesn't like to barbecue
can't predict his hours

when the red meat smokes and changes color
she'll see the placenta from the baby's birth
burst and splatter him with blood
she'll see stars from explosions
as if she were hit hard on the head