

Legacy · Kelly Rowe

*for my father*

If you were the house,  
I was a room, the scratch  
on the wainscot, the torn screen  
of the cellar door.

If you were the room,  
I was the view  
of the apple house, the shed,  
the tall grass where the snake was killed.

If you were the view,  
I was the black sky  
bitten by light, a sieve,  
a simple drink after the day's work.

If you were the mule,  
I was the coal car,  
wheels on the bent track.  
If you were the shovel,  
I was the leaning into day,  
the first breath stepping out  
of the mine at dusk.

Father, you labor, I merely bloom.  
You lay the line,  
the dynamite, the black powder,

and if you are the vein  
of coal in the low wall,  
then I am the inevitable explosion  
at the end of day:  
I am the joyful noise.