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A Vision of Death

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A Vision of Death

she'd been willing to wait. The slow-coming for Jedidiah with its fear, enmeshing nights, and petulant gut. The awful pressure of fearing the loss of Jed.

His shoulders slumped and he turned away.

In the quiet, the floor creaked and he looked over at her. Her crooked back was turned; he knew she would vanish. But she glanced back over her shoulder. On her face a fierce light burned, purging her features like sunlight in the trees. For an instant she was strikingly transfigured and straight. Then she was gone.

Slaughter put his face to the wall, leaned into the crook of his arm and wept.

Jed was a hewer with splendid vigor; he swung his axe with pithy might. Around the woods sun rays dashed to earth, and youth's

glad shout rang in the rhythmic swoop of his strokes. It resounded in the logging area up the banks of the Flambeau River.

He left off whacking at the red pine long enough to take a swig from the canteen his uncle handed him.

"Water's good and cold," he said. He equalized a stance between his real leg and the wooden one, and began throwing in his blade again.

Together the two men, one old, one young, watched the tree fall.

"You know," said Jed, looking about them at the woodland bristling with thin tall trunks. "It seems like a long time since white pine was great in the woods. Remember how big around those trunks were?--how tall they stood?"

Ave smiled slightly and nodded. He remembered.

A VISION OF DEATH by David Sparenberg

a raven
black as midnight
on a weatherworn
dark fencepost
the raven's eye
the morning sun
painting red
the raven's dark head

how much

truth of otherness
startling or fatal
intersects

the raven catches
blood
of the streaming sun
across
outstretched
soul-arms

golgotha
of a pole between
struts and barbs

shadow
of black night
changes
to this scream of fire:
a raven
in red flight