

A Christian Burial

by John Cantey Knight

In memory of Cleo

The body had been in the box on the porch for two days, the weather cold, the ground frozen, only now thawing. Where the trees bordered the field, behind a rise where there were dormant cherry trees, I marked the corners and began digging. The clink of the shovel against stone was pulled from the clay to end in the thud of the clods forming a hill. Squaring up the sides, I was four feet down. Maybe, it wasn't deep enough. I'd cap it with rock. Don't believe a bear would dig her up. I pushed the box in. It's easier shoveling from up top. Pulled from where the foot of the mountain stood, the rocks covered the clay like a quilt. I took a breather, glad that the work was done. Could 'a used a shot of liquor. A Christian cross would have been out of place, but I said a prayer. A dog ain't got a soul, but it felt decent.