

CATHERINE CARTER

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THE FALL

One afternoon when he was seven, rocking on the porch-rail spelling out words about stars, his hooked-in heel slipped, and he pitched back into the grass. When he could look, the lawn's low clover was like something in his book: a vast reach thick with clusters, sweeps of stars, he thought, and winged things tending stars, carrying bright dust the short way between the stars' white tremors. It was only the usual thing, pain, which told him he wasn't dead, that these were not angels (which he knew about from Sundays) touching stars into shine. Only hurt whispered to him that this world was his world, that these were bees not angels, that the yards all white with clover were not the fields of heaven.

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