

## **BIRTH DAY**

Green forage all around,  
a hefty dark red cow is busy,  
head down, tail end  
facing out so I can see.

A calf, likely hers, days old  
and stout, noses along the ground.  
Then, lifts its forelegs up  
to the cow's behind,  
like a dog or a cat begging  
for a lap.

And there grazing along,  
not bawling or batting an eye  
the mother's vulva swells,  
sags open from under her tail,  
yawns wide almost marsupial.

So, as I look on, the stocky calf  
simply births itself back in,  
climbs up and circles out of sight  
to curl and settle, infant folded  
in its mother's nest.

Heavy again, the cow takes no notice,  
going on about her business. Huddled tight  
inside, the calf grows still and happy,  
forgetting in there, I fear, all the birth  
day reflexes and taste for air.

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