

The sound of the knife cleaving against night,  
Had brought the ringing of it chopping flesh,  
Almost wurst—the butcher had felled its boar,  
Gored a jolly Joe finding their demise,  
—“Um—Excuse me,” A voice rang out and mused,  
The action halt; eyes peering over brow,  
Fingers clutched tight on the handle of cleave,

“Need meat—I’m here to purchase some damn meat.”  
The person had quickly said—eyes flitting,  
The shop clinical, a rigid cold front:  
Nestled in the back outside of shelves of flesh,  
Came the view of a few animal heads—  
Vivisection, and some others intact—  
Decapitated, surely—though for stew.

The boar from before’s untouched, waiting,  
Though its bones broken and pulled—lie in fire,  
The fat arranged ‘round the bones as it burned.  
An odd sight—khernip sitting atop stern,  
The man, he pointed and made his due choice:  
“I’ll take that one—” He quickly said, “Right there.”

“No, no.” The Butcher retorted as fast,  
“That’s not for sale.” It’s personage of love.  
The persons’ eyes had narrowed by thought,  
He found it odd that the seller won’t sell,  
Verily, he wanted something so fresh,  
For a delicious stew as he’d camped soon.

His eyes twinkled as he’d garnered an odd thought,  
He turns around and waves a person near,  
And soon, in view, came a young girl—a teen.  
She’d looked around before stepping in line,  
With him—her father and their eyes had met.  
She’d glanced in the back and her heart struck fear:  
Her view of the animal heads came near—

For a moment, her voice struggled with sound.  
Until she was able to voice her mind.  
Her tongue touched the inner meat of her lip,  
Slightly biting down, noting from a-head.  
“What did you need, Pa?” She had asked instead,  
Her eyes still focused on the heads ahead.

“Our dear butcher, won’t relent—I want that,  
That head of meat with the white mark on it,”  
The father said and looked to the butcher,  
“What say you, my girl—asunder it n’ stew?”  
As she processed his words—her mind did stew.

In the back—hung a cow, flayed and quite drained,  
On shelves stood the heads—eyes opal or black.  
Staring soullessly with a milky glare,  
Then there was that black boar with a white mark—  
Her heart raced into her throat as if she’d choked.

“The one with the mark, how’d that come about?”  
Her words turned intents on another track,  
Backwards did the feather step, allowing,  
“It was never supposed to be slain, not yet; explain?  
How’d this come? What has happened to the meat?”

She repeated herself once more, with a certain ire,  
The daughters question had aroused different desire,  
In the father as his lips shifted a grin,  
He glanced at the meat—then again, did he repeat.  
Not in words but in action his heart skipped in reaction.

“Don’t worry about that,” The butcher had spoke:  
His eyes assessing the situation,  
He breathed deep. A quick stratagem in mind,  
His lips parted—She’d interjected, “No.”  
“Whatever words you speak—Won’t be enough.”

The Butcher sighed—finally loud this time,  
The Butcher hadn’t seen—this young one from time,  
The Butcher did gleam—what her words had meant,  
The Butcher did know—the words hard to show,  
The Butcher couldn’t do much—the truth was scarce.

“I can’t explain why.” The Butcher slipped up.  
The Father found this odd—quite quaint to say,  
“Whatever do you mean, my dear meat slayer?”  
“Is the contents foul—did you leave it out?”  
“Or is it parasitic— eggs buried in it?”

“Is it not what you say—something longer in play?”  
“Or is it simply too exquisite—and you can’t part with it?”  
“Does the price cost the value of a life—you think I won’t pay the price?”  
“Or do you simply not like us—so you simply won’t purvey us?”  
The Father had interrogated the butcher—words like bullets.

“Why would you say that?!”  
“We don’t know what happened!”  
“There was an accident. It’s being corrected.”  
“--Corrected. How so?”  
“Well... I can’t tell you trade secrets.”  
“It’s bad luck to sell tainted meat.”

“You have a khernip.” She’d pointed out.

“I mean—yes—but not for that.”

The father had a certain craving—an inkling,  
Though would it truly be so bad, in pork so long?  
His thoughts were wrong but in a way right,  
By god—he hoped, he would sway the meat merchant,  
Perchance, it’s right—yet a chance for shakes—if so?  
Would he though? Tell his daughter? No, no.

“I’ll pay you enough for it, should that suffice,  
If not, surely, you would use my daughter ‘round the shop?”  
Though little he knew—again, right but wrong—  
Her father had persisted driven mad by the thought,  
Until no more—the Butcher turned and went in back,  
A sudden estranged exhale and the Father slumped.

His words were getting too sick—too deranged,  
“Father.” The girl had spoken, “Tell me, what truly happened?”  
“Did our god forsake us, did the vessel drop?”  
The Butcher took in the scene—he sighed, this time sad,  
Unbothered by her dear old dad,  
“You shouldn’t have done that. You know the tenets.”