

# Renuka Raghavan

## Week of Diagnosis

The rotting rabbit in the corner of the yard  
was difficult to ignore on Sunday morning.

Mom's diagnosis was given on Monday  
afternoon: clinical depression, as if we didn't already know.

By Tuesday, the stench of the carcass wafted through the  
kitchen window, causing me to stop mid-pre-rinse.

Curiosity, the morbid variety, had built up. So on Wednesday,  
I had to go look again.

Fat black flies were buzzing around it's face.  
Plump maggots ate away the torso and legs.

Crows picked at its hind quarters, or what was left of it.  
Mom came for lunch the next afternoon.

We sat with glasses of sweet tea, our hands soaking with  
condensation, and I silently prayed to the Gods of serotonin.

*Did you take the new meds, Ma?*

She smiled serenely, shielding her face from the sun, from me, from herself?

*We should plant the azaleas in that corner*, she said pointing  
to the bunny's boneyard. I nodded, *Let's give it another week or so.*

By Friday, the corpse looked like an empty shell, its hollowed ribcage and skull  
reminding  
me of the sperm whale remains lying on the ocean floor that I saw on *Blue Planet*.

When I dug the hole for the azaleas, I chucked the rabbit's remains down to the very  
bottom.

**Renuka Raghavan's** previous work has appeared in *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, and *Nixes Mate Review*, among many others. She is the author of *Out of the Blue* (Big Table Publishing, 2017) a collection of poetry and prose. She writes and lives in Massachusetts. Visit her at [www.renukaraghavan\(dot\)com](http://www.renukaraghavan(dot)com)