

## Reprieve

At his feet I lie, rolling marbles on the rug,  
to see them bounce across the sculpted surface, as I wait  
for the inevitable: a three note chime from the television,  
the NBC 1950's signal for me to go to bed.

He reads his newspaper, scanning the columns,  
turning each page, one by one. When he finishes, he will  
announce my departure to dreamland.

But that's a few minutes into the future. I stare at his shoes,  
imagine them a pair of black 1954 Buick Roadmasters,  
tearing-ass across the sculpted field of heather,  
neck and neck, cop chasing robber, both steering away  
from land mines disguised as marbles.

Three notes sound, the Voice of God takes a breath  
before pronouncing, "Beddy Bye." Cops and robbers  
get out of their shoe cars, pick up the marbles  
and stuff them under his soles. God thinks  
he knows this trick, kicks away the marbles, giving me  
a five minute reprieve to search for them,  
put them safely in their box,  
before I give up and go  
Beddy Bye.

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