

Queerfella

on the family farm in malew they feared
to speak its common name a manx sailor
rattus rattus superstition that made its haste
onto a shrouded land where, as a kid,
he earned a-penny-a-tail hanging
like that boy on a prairie fence.

life & death and four thousand miles
that separates us feels too deep in roots
our open faces hidden by blood & blood
striped by tears burning burnt cheeks.

longtails, joeys, their throwaway names,
the *queerfella* spits itself out.
no wonder we escape bodies that sink
or encage ourselves in a sewered shame.

from *Queerfella*, The Rialto

Joint Winner

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