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"Here are the Fire and Wood"

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“Here are the fire and wood”

Robert J. De Smith

Pushes proud horns
Into the thicket,
Shoulders used to straining
Just a bit farther
For a tuft of hidden grass.

And then he's caught,
Brambles tangling
The curve of horn
Like a well-designed trap;
Shaking, tugging only tightens.

First, there's wild-eyed struggle:
Hooves scatter stones, even sparks,
As they dig in.
Loud bleats. Anger.
Strain. Rage. Blood.

But then, a heavy-breathing calm,
Or is it a hushing,
Airy touch,
Just as over the lip of the peak
Struggle
Father and son.

And at the right time,
The old man looks up,
Meeting the ram's unblinking eyes.