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## Old Earth

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# The Old Earth

by Mike Vanden Bosch

*“The wolf will live with the lamb . . . .”* Isaiah 11:6a

My two older brothers bought two white rabbits  
and named them Adam and Eve.  
I and my cat Rachel  
watched brothers cage the rabbits in wire netting  
framed with two-by-fours and  
bedded with yellow straw;  
watched the rabbits nibble on green lettuce.

Before anyone could imagine it  
Adam and Eve bore three rabbits.  
At three weeks my brothers took one out to show me.  
I held it, touched its soft fur to my cheek.

At four weeks, Rachel broke into paradise and  
killed all the rabbits, eating what she could.

When my brothers saw rabbits' red blood and bones  
strewn on the yellow straw, they cried for justice  
and asked me to get Rachel.  
Not knowing their intent, I brought her to them.

They tied baling wire around one back leg and  
hanged it from a nearby ash tree branch,  
ignoring my tears.

All morning I watched my brothers  
sitting on one bale of straw,  
their rifle resting on two bales stacked,  
zing bullets at Rachel, wreaking justice boys' style,  
but the quality of justice exploded on the tree.

All had cheered when Rachel had killed a rat;  
now she was killed for killing this weak species—  
which she was to my brothers.

What great species will dangle them for justice?

A half-remembered “A little child will lead them”  
urged me to the tree to let Rachel go  
but she was dead.