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Freak Show

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Fletcher: Freak Show

FREAK SHOW



GRETCHEN FLETCHER

The calf stared with one glass eye
in each of its two heads
from the box on the farmhouse floor
where Herb proudly displayed it.
My parents and their friends gathered
around to stare at Herb's stuffed freak,
the men forming a flank up front,
the women hanging back but curious,
sneaking peeks over the men's shoulders.
I, although a child, was allowed to stay.
Herb's wife came out of the kitchen
with plates of heavy, larded apple pie.
"Put that away, Herb," she said.
"The child" But it was too late.
I already knew the truth.