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## POETRY

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### Bum Bam Boom

*J. S. Absher*

After school the Greer boy and I  
run home past the bottling plant  
where I glimpse through the plate-glass  
the endless capping of mouths.  
As a semi chugs past, we notice  
the trailer looks funny—cocked back

on its haunches—when we hear the thud  
of its rear tire, freed from the lug nuts,  
leaping the curb behind us. The tire  
races across a yard and half knocks down  
one fence before it bursts through airborne  
and rolls across the next yard to stop

upright against the far fence. *If we hadn't  
been running, we'd a-been squashed flat,*  
whispers the boy. *Jesus saved us.* His brother  
says he's slow, *under-growed  
and pigeon-toed, with one long horn  
and one big eye,* and the boy throws me

down the steps when I call him retard.  
I cry myself to sleep for shame. Daddy  
calls it rough justice. In the woods he shows me  
a white fawn. A freak of nature, he says,  
a goner. It looks at me with big pink eyes.  
It glows in the laurel like snow.