

Open Winter, 2009

Looking out the window I see
rabbit run to the relative safety
afforded by the sage and desert rose.
No hare, no boxing jackrabbit
standing tall on toe-tips,
no this is not Pennsylvania
but these are rabbits, cottontails.
A rabbit runs from underneath the scrub
to the quail block for nibble nibble nibble.
The desert is dangerous in many ways,
and not the least is the isolation it affords:
Basque shepherders had a word for it:
“sheeped” they called it, “sagebrushed.”
A shadow passes over the rabbit and
it runs again under the bush,
but it is no hawk circling above
only a pair of pigeons.
Hawks, coyotes, madness:
no one is safe forever,
even in Pennsylvania,
even the coyote, the dog’s death,
and pigeon feathers float to the ground
while the rabbit runs
for the final time.

– Jeffery Greb