The broken heart of the road kill

The still-beating heart of the road kill.
In the fleshy, frustrated, February rain, the body
of a deer, palpitating.

I turn away from it as I always do.
What kind of people stare? Or sip their morning coffee under
blues skies instead?

I slow. The road to my house has become a map of the world
of lies and wars. I name the carcasses so to appease Gods
whose names I was never taught. I name them after great
families who built cities in ancient, Saharan locales unlike this
small road winding around a suburban American town. Here
there are no great granite sarcophagi; here only tree limbs
bend tediously over the asphalt, their tired fingers pointing
toward dead unburied, left to rot.

I want to name all of them. Other continents are strewn with
the golden epidermal parchment, their pillaged skies rain
blood and I obsess over squirrels flattened on the road where I
live.

Can I tell you how long I have known about death?
How I knew, as a small girl, the rabbits skinless bodies were
not a charm, but an omen hanging in the market of my
childhood, their only song the chimes of their bone and muscle
against the butcher’s window?
Lisa Konigsberg

Here, forty years later, I am the coroner still.
Is it that my family plundered their way through the world; is that the gene that winnows its way to the surface of all of my deeds?

There, in the worming wound of that animal,
There is a heart that beats long after the stain is washed down to the creek by another insidious and cleansing rain.

Can I make my way into the gully? Can I call out to the fur and the flesh, bring my balm of winter-dried leaves, matted with useless and abundant tears--
smooth the bent bones back into their original skin,
the Shining Coat luminescent with hope--
or will I ride on through the early morning rain?