

July 4th, 1981, candles of a Roman ilk  
Unloaded from a chevy truck  
Into the home her folks had built  
Patio was charcoals and extended fam in folding chairs  
Safely arced around the yard to focus on the smoking flares  
Couple cousins, uncles, aunts, mostly grown-ups, couple brats  
Baby Ruby's only two  
She's too close to the jumping jacks  
Mommy scoops her to the house  
Buckles up the booster seat  
Rolls her to the storm door  
Let her long for all the lunacy  
Telephone distracting Mom  
Ruby wriggles out her strap  
Fingers push the plexi-glass  
She's off into the sour patch  
Past the pyrotechnics undetected and invisible  
Woke the sleeping beagle skipping toward the kidney swimming pool  
Off into the yawning blue  
The splash would mummify the rocket-ships  
Ruby's lungs were filling by the time her kin were cognizant  
Many sprung and sprinted down  
All arrive belated but  
The beast she had earlier stirred had been alert since waking up  
Canine let his gainer fly  
Water top commotion grow  
Howling guests assumed the cloven hoofs had come to do-si-do  
Frenzied and congested deck  
Part to let the elders see  
Soggy beagle gently dragging Ruby in his yellow teeth  
Laid the tiny body in the sun before her Father's feet  
When she choked the liquid through her bluish lips he dropped his  
knee  
Helped the air to reconvene  
Towel his shaking Ruby off  
EMT confirm the save  
Everybody say  
"Good dog! "