

JONATHAN WEI

*Capybara*

The plaque didn't say whether they'd been "abandoned" or "donated." It was a rescue zoo, which meant that it took in only animals that needed a place to go, and these capybaras apparently fit the bill, for reasons unknown.

There were four of them in the enclosure, to Ree's eye identical, like small antelope with beaver heads. And splay-toed feet with claws. And fur like muskrats, or maybe beavers too. They were definitely beaver-*ish*, which made sense as they were "the largest member of the rodent family." The plaque admitted this much.

Ree wanted to smoke. She hadn't smoked in years, but she wanted to now, probably because she was standing and staring at a pen full of capybaras and would be for the next half-hour while her son finished up with his Saturday zoo class. Of course it wasn't the capybaras that inspired this old urge in her. It was the half-hour. She hadn't had a half-hour in which she was required to stand and stare — capybaras or otherwise — in she didn't know how long. Since she'd stopped smoking, which was when she'd gotten pregnant. Eleven years.

One of the creatures moved slowly from where it was standing next to the enclosure's water feature (a cement-bottomed pond filled with brownish, greenish water), to the gradually sloped edge of the water feature. It was going to go swimming. Yea! Something to watch. The creatures had been like statues since Ree had been standing there, lying in the shade and apparently staring back at her, though it was hard to tell through their long eyelashes. A little action was welcome and maybe would help with the urge to smoke.

The animal took three steps into the stagnant pool, then turned around and faced Ree. It took another two steps backwards, awkwardly. Like it was preparing to defecate. It spread its hindlegs and started to do just that.

Really? In its own pond? Was that normal? Ree reminded herself that human standards of hygiene were not animal standards. Some animals ate their own feces. Wait — that didn't sound

right. Maybe they ate other animals' feces. It didn't make any sense to eat one's own feces. That would indicate an inefficiency in the digestive system of the creature that was counter-evolutionary, to say the least.

Anyway, that's not what the capybara was doing. Nobody was eating anything. It was, however, pooping in its own pond, which was like pooping in your bathtub. Comparing one creature to another wasn't going to get you anywhere, Ree knew. Pooping in your pond as a capybara isn't pooping in your tub as a human. When it came right down to it, pooping as a capybara probably wasn't pooping as a human, location notwithstanding. Asymmetry; the ineluctable divergence of worlds.

That was something Ree knew something about. Her son, Alex, was right now at a class that introduced him to some of the animals at the zoo and taught him about how they were taken care of. Last week, he had chopped up unfrozen mice for raptors. This week, he would be putting together plates of vegetables to feed to the tortoises. It made Ree nervous to think about it. Maybe that's why she wanted to smoke. Because plates of vegetables for tortoises made her nervous. Because plates of vegetables weren't just plates of vegetables, but Alex didn't know that. To Alex, her own son, plates of vegetables were just plates of vegetables and, if she did her job as mom right, would remain ever thus. Doing her job right meant, in the case of vegetables—and any number of other things—keeping one part of her separate from another. The ineluctable divergence of worlds, in this case, Ree's worlds.

The capybara continued defecating. There must have been a dozen turds or more now, and not small. Where were they coming from? Plates of vegetables, probably, though Ree didn't actually know what the creatures ate, either here in the rescue zoo or in the wild. They might eat hay, or corn or algae. Probably not cut-up unfrozen mice, but she didn't even know that for sure. They looked a little too much like mice to eat mice, but that might just be a misguided sensibility on Ree's part. Whatever it was, they ate a lot of it.

When she'd heard from Alex after last week's class that they would be making plates of vegetables this week for the tortoises, Ree had, for a few days, considered what a plate of vegetables was to her.

Actually, her initial reaction had been to ask furiously if the

people at the zoo even understood what a plate of vegetables was to someone who actually needed it, and whether they should be feeding plates of vegetables to discarded tortoises rather than sending them to kids who might not have had a plate of vegetables for goodness knows how long. Did that seem right to them? All of this questioning, of course, was contained inside her head. There was no good place for these questions here in Texas. Here in Austin, Texas, with its rescue zoos and longhorn cows and electric scooters. Plates of vegetables were taken for granted in Austin, Texas.

Outside her head, she'd nodded to Alex, smiled, and said, "That sounds like fun. Do they bite?" They were driving home from the zoo, through a strip mall section at the outskirts of the city. Alex was sitting in the backseat.

He'd shrugged. "They're slow. They do everything slow. If they bite, I'll just —*yaha!*— pull my hand away like that fast!" He grinned. "I'm fast. They can't bite me."

Alex wasn't the smallest kid in his class, but he was on the smaller side. And he wasn't blond, or pink-skinned either, but he wasn't as dark as some of the Mexican children. He looked like he could be American, just normal American, though Ree could see the hint of a single-fold lid at the edge of his eye and knew that some of the tone of his smooth cheeks wasn't just the Texas sun.

The ineluctable divergence. What would this little zoo be like if war came to Austin the way it had come to Vientiane in her childhood? If planes screamed overhead daily and the ground shook with the explosions of their bombs? If groups of men with watchful eyes and guns walked the paths between the bears and foxes and antelope? What would happen to the capybaras? Or the tortoises? When the little pieces of paper came fluttering down out of the sky, what would the zookeepers think? Had there been zookeepers? Or a zoo in Vientiane? Maybe not. She'd never seen one.

Ree's first reaction was that it looked like confetti, and someone was throwing a party.

Her brother had laughed at her. "You can't read so you think it's a party." He was only a few years older than her, but he acted like he was an adult. She could have punched him, but she didn't.

"I can read better than you, hairy lip." She'd started calling him this a year before, when the shadow had first appeared there.

"Then you should know they're telling us to run. They're going to drop bombs and you're thinking about parties."

“I just said it *looked* like one.” It did look like a party, millions of rectangles of white paper flipping slowly down through the afternoon sun like the sky had been fragmented. “I know what they say.”

They said, “Leave.” They said, “Your city will be destroyed.” They said, “Your beautiful house will be blown up, your mother and father killed in the explosion, and then your brother shot when he tries to go back and find them. Your city will be reduced to a pile of rocks and you will be left with no one. No one except the ones who destroyed everything, and they will take you away.”

That’s what the white pieces of paper said, and she knew that only because, contrary to her brother’s notion, it wasn’t reading that saved her. It was not reading. She had been the only one in her family who hadn’t been able to read, not yet, even though she was learning. And she was the only one who lived.

That was what Ree thought sometimes, what she was thinking now as she stood looking at the capybaras and not smoking. Of course, it wasn’t not reading, not exactly. She had been the youngest, so she had been the most protected, the one sent out, away from the city, with her brother. The one who had been kept away from the city after the planes and bombs had come and gone. She had been the one at the center when the family had circled. Everyone else had died from the bombs and the bullets. She had been trapped in a bubble of innocence, a bubble that had kept her alive.

Alive with no vegetables, which is what the zookeepers here in Austin would never understand. Neither would Alex, not if she could help it.

The capybara finally stopped. It had been defecating for longer than seemed physically possible for a creature of its size, for so long it seemed to Ree that it should have disappeared by now, or at least have deflated. It had done neither. It looked exactly the same size as before. It stepped back out of the water and stood in a patch of sun on the edge of the water feature, maybe looking at her, but maybe just staring into space. Maybe it had memories of its own.

Ree checked her watch. Twenty-five more minutes. What was she going to do for twenty-five minutes? Not, she decided, wait for another capybara to do something. She turned away from the enclosure and started walking, not sure where she was going. It was a small zoo so there was only so far she could go. Last week she’d brought along her laptop and gotten some work done, sitting

at a picnic table near the entrance in the shade. It had been pleasant enough, and certainly felt better than this waiting and watching.

But it wasn't, apparently, good for her, working all the time. This is what her doctor had told her this week. Dr. Barton was a nice woman, and quite intelligent, so Ree thought. She had a businesslike tone and demeanor that made Ree comfortable, made her feel like she was looking at Ree in the way a good mechanic would look at a machine. This neutrality gave Ree confidence in Dr. Barton's opinion.

The zoo path split just past the capybara enclosure. To the left were monkeys and wolves—which was a strange combination by any standard, and made Ree wonder if the monkeys might not be a little anxious with this grouping. To the right was the rest of the zoo, including but not limited to lions, tigers, and panthers. And presumably some animals they might find tempting as well, though there was no specific mention of which animals. Ree wondered if they ever got used to it, living so near their enemies, but captive, and unable to give chase or flee.

Ree went right, over a shabby plank bridge that led toward the lions. Dusty live oaks overhung the bridge, weaving the brilliant sun into a lacework of shadow on the gray, weathered wood. It was a difficult quality to find, neutrality. Ree felt like, given a neutral standard, she would be, could be, just fine. She *was* fine, she reminded herself. She could be better than fine. She could excel. She worked harder than she had to, and longer, and better. She was an accountant for real estate agents, an independent contractor, and she knew for a fact that she was very, very good at her job. She didn't make mistakes.

At least, she didn't allow mistakes into the world. She did everything three times: first pass, proof, and then proof the proof. She was fast, so it didn't take her three times as long. It took her maybe twice as long, but that's why she worked as much as she did. To be better, she did more, and she was better than anyone else in town. There were a few of them, accountants who handled small firm, residential real estate brokers, and the others, Ree knew for a fact, weren't as good as her. They were perfectly fine and competent, but she was perfect. Not a single mistake in fifteen years. In a neutral world, none of the others would still be in business. In a neutral world, every small firm in Austin would be her

client. But it wasn't a neutral world—that went without saying, at least to Ree.

It was a matter of some disagreement between Rob and her. Rob was her husband, a Texan, white. Rob was tall and warm—this was what had distinguished him when they'd met as students at UT. He hadn't thrown his chest out or squared his shoulders to her. He'd led with his smile, with his eyes that had looked straight into hers and, when they'd seen whatever was there, hadn't looked away.

Rob also believed that people were more neutral than Ree thought them to be. Actually, Ree wasn't sure about that. Rob *professed* to believe that people were generally neutral, but that might have been him being protective of Ree, projecting a world that was gentler than the one she saw.

At any rate, Dr. Barton had told her, in her neutral tone, that her blood pressure was on the high side, and that she might consider taking some measures to lower it. Apparently, this involved working less, though perhaps Dr. Barton hadn't understood that, for Ree, working less meant perseverating more.

Like at the moment, standing in front of one of two lions' enclosures and thinking, of all things, about neutrality and perfection. The enclosure consisted of concrete walls on two sides and very high chainlink fence on the other two. About four feet of space and a low rail separated the chainlink from the path. In the middle of the enclosure, in the shade of a large pecan tree, lay what looked like two large, dead lions. They weren't dead, of course, and the twitching of the ends of their tails betrayed them. But they weren't very dynamic, that was for certain. The enclosure was scattered with a few lion-scaled toys, balls the size of chairs, a ten-foot piece of rope as thick as Ree's wrist, some logs. She wondered what it looked like when they were playing with these things, and then she wondered if they ever actually played with them, or if they were there because responsible zoos gave animals toys to play with, thereby covering the fact that the animals were chronically depressed and never played. The dun-colored beasts were lounging next to one another, back to back, both of them male, both of them immense, with puffy, dusty manes. They looked like they could have been one lion lying against a mirror, but they were actually brothers, Ree read. Kobo and Simba.

"Hey, Kobo! Here, Kobo!" A child of around Alex's age with

buzzcut blond hair and a round, freckled face shouted at the lions, in spite of another sign that said, "This zoo has a zero-tolerance policy for disturbing the animals." The kid's mother, a large woman in spandex tights and a Dallas Cowboys shirt, stood by with an infant in her arms.

"Sim-baaaaa!" the kid screamed.

"They're sleepin', Cody," the mother barked.

"Wake up! Wake up, Simba!" The kid banged on the railing with the palm of his hand, making it ring. The lions did not wake up or acknowledge the child in any way.

"Are they dead?" the boy asked.

"The tail's movin'," the mother replied, her tone suggesting this was indicative of their having been ripped off by the zoo. "They ain't dead."

"WAKE! UP!" The kid's face was even redder now for the effort of screaming.

Ree glanced at him, and tried to pretend he wasn't screaming, which he was, and even if he was, it was okay, which it wasn't. It specifically wasn't okay, as outlined in clear terms by the sign. The woman noticed Ree's glance and in response glared at her, even though Ree's face retained a small, fixed smile.

"C'mon, Cody," the mother said, still glaring at Ree, who was now looking fixedly away from them, at the lions but not really seeing the lions at all, instead feeling the warmth of the woman's attention on the back of her neck like a hot towel. "They ain't goin' to wake up and maybe they don't never. Maybe they keep 'em drugged 'r somethin' so they don't get excited." She said this in a tone that seemed to accuse Ree of being part of a conspiracy to disappoint her child.

"What's drugged?" the kid asked.

"Pills 'r somethin'," she said. She passed behind Ree. "Whatever it is, it's stupid to watch 'em." This last remark was directed at Ree, who was, as far as the woman was concerned, still watching the lions. Ree continued to pretend to watch them for another several seconds as the woman, the baby, and the boy moved away to the enclosure on the other side of the cement wall.

Ree breathed again only when they had turned their attention away from her and toward the lioness in the next pen.

"Look, it's a girl lion!" the kid yelled. "And it's movin'!"

That had been singularly unpleasant, Ree thought. Ugly. But

Ree wondered if she'd brought it on herself, if her thinking about neutrality had attracted the woman's attention. Or if Ree hadn't had something in her expression that had betrayed her feelings about the boy and his overweight mother. Creatures intuited the thoughts of other creatures all the time. They had to in order to survive. Humans must do so as well.

Ree felt slightly bad about the possibility of having made the woman feel crappy about her crappy son. She stole a sidelong look at the pair of them, a ways down the path now. The woman's back was to Ree, and the boy was leaning over the railing toward the lioness's cage with his mouth open and one arm extended, pointing at the creature. The lioness was moving along the chainlink fence near the boy, pacing exactly as you might think it would—like a caged animal. It paced to the far end of the fence, turned around and paced back. It was, now that Ree could see it in proximity to the child, truly huge, bigger than any dog, as big as a pony.

"Kitty! Kitty, kitty, kitty!" the kid yelled.

"It ain't a kitty," his mom warned him. "You can't pet it. Get back on this side of the railing, Cody."

"Kitty, kitty, kitty!" the kid yelled again, ignoring his mother and extending his arm farther toward the chainlink.

The lion, to Ree's consternation, seemed to be agitated by the child. On its next pass along the fence, it took a few running steps in the middle of its pacing, a few steps that hinted at just how fast it could be, should it have the inclination.

"Step *back*, Cody!" the mother yelled at her son.

Cody did not. "Kitty!"

Ree wasn't sure what to do. The woman had her arms full with the baby, who was now beginning to cry, Cody was not going to listen to her, and the lioness was becoming increasingly agitated. It broke into a trot as it angled up and away from the mother and boy, toward the far end of the fence, and then when it turned and came back down, it did so at a full gallop.

"Cody!" shrieked the woman.

"Mom!" screamed Cody, finally seeming to notice the size and intent of the creature.

According to Ree's citizenship papers, she had been three years old, but she knew that wasn't right. She knew it wasn't right be-



cause of how well she remembered: her brother, her mother, and father, their house in Vientiane with its arched doorway and stucco façade, the windowboxes where her mother grew flowers, the faded blue bike her father parked next to the door when he came home from teaching, the smell of his cigarettes as she sat between his knees on the front stoop, saying hello to their neighbors, the narrow, curving street that they lived on. These were vivid memories, not those of a three-year-old. At least she didn't think so.

But she didn't actually know how old she had been. That she couldn't remember. Which meant, obviously, and at the same time bizarrely, that she didn't know how old she was now. Maybe she was 45. Maybe she was 42. She celebrated her birthday on December 2, but a few years ago she'd discovered that this was the day that Vientiane had been overtaken by the Pathet Lao, the day her parents had died. She'd probably been given this birthday by her rescuers, the Americans.

As a joke? A convenience? A commemoration? Her birthday — another casualty of war.

She remembered the day they'd found her. She had made a nest under the stairs in her aunt and uncle's house, blankets on the floor and another to cover her when it was cool enough at night. A little picture of her parents she'd found on her aunt and uncle's wall, standing next to each other in front of their house in the city, was the only other furnishing for the small, dark space. She couldn't see it at night, but she propped it next to her so that it was the first thing she saw in the morning when she awoke.

It had been days by that point — days since her aunt and uncle had rushed her out to the well and told her to stand in the bucket and hold onto the rope, and not come out until they came back for her. They'd lowered her down into the darkness. It had been so quiet down there. Ree had never experienced such silence before or since that time. The earth around her absorbed everything, even the sound of her own breath, her own crying.

For hours. Or days. How long had she been down there? It's a blank space for her, but not a blank space for lack of memory. A remembered blank space. A blankness of terror, then pain, then rigidity, and then numbness. A long, blank numbness. No one came for her.

Eventually, she'd pulled herself out, though how she'd done this she does not remember and cannot comprehend. After hours

of standing in a bucket and clinging to a rope, she still had the strength?

Her aunt and uncle were gone. There were some reddish-brown stains on the floor near the back door of the house that hadn't been there before. And the house had been messed up in a way her aunt would never have tolerated, clothes and blankets strewn across the floor, her uncle's chair smashed into sticks, the fire pot kicked over. But a big bag of rice her aunt stored in a wooden crawlspace under the floor, to keep it away from rats, hadn't been discovered. Ree didn't know how to make a fire, so she'd soaked handfuls of rice in water and eaten the paste. It gave her a stomachache at first, and made it difficult to go to the bathroom, but it kept her alive. No plates of vegetables.

Maybe a week, maybe two. Maybe a month. Time didn't work the same way in her memory of her days at her aunt and uncle's—first in the well, then living under the stairs. There was no way to mark it, no parents to go and come at the beginning and end of the day; no bells in the mission church to ring for morning Mass; no morning lessons in reading and writing; no meals. In the deep, leafy forest, there wasn't even sunrise and sunset to speak of. Just long, shadowy days blending into long, shadowy nights, always listening, always hoping, always afraid.

Until the day she heard voices in the forest, deep voices coming from several directions, speaking words she didn't understand. She'd run to her nest and pulled the blanket over her head. When she'd think about this later, she'd realize that, in spite of her fear of being discovered, she was, more than anything else, lonely. She had never gone for even a few minutes before that point in her life without human contact, without someone there to speak to, to touch, to hold or be held by. She'd wanted to be found.

They were Americans—at least, she thinks they were. They smelled and sounded like Americans, though they could have been French or German or Swiss—she knows this now. But at the time and presiding in her memory, they were American. A man had pulled off her blanket and jumped back with an exclamation. A black man. He'd pointed his gun at her at first, hissing loudly, at her or at the other men. She'd just lain there, staring at him. She'd never seen a black man in person at that point in her life, only in pictures in magazines and newspapers that her father had read. He had a beard and a matchstick in his mouth, his face was long with

a few dark freckles on each cheek and a pointed chin. He'd said something to her, which she didn't understand. Then he'd offered her his hand and she'd taken it. She still remembered how his hand felt: rough and hard, the fingers thin, but gentle. She'd held his hand for the rest of the day, while they walked through the forest. When she'd gotten tired, he'd put her on top of his pack and she held onto his helmet for balance. She'd learned his name — Michael. That night, he'd slept next to her on his cloth, spread out on the forest floor, not touching her but near enough that she could hear him breathing, smell his skin.

The next day, the helicopter had dropped down into a clearing at the top of a hill. Michael had handed her to a white man in the helicopter, smiled at her and waved, and then they'd gone up into the sky, and she'd never seen him again.

She looked for him still, scanning faces in crowds, in the passersby downtown or when she and Rob traveled—to New York, California, Chicago. There was almost no chance she would ever see him, if he was even still alive. But then again, there was almost no chance he would have found her in the first place.

The lioness pounced, jumping the last ten feet before the concrete wall and landing with a heavy thump in a cloud of dust in the corner of the enclosure, a few feet from Cody. At a distance of thirty feet, Ree was terrified. Less than a yard from the animal, the boy was apoplectic, gasping and sobbing and leaping back into his mother's belly, who, through fortitude and ballast, only just managed to keep hold of the shrieking baby and not fall down from the impact of the terrified boy.

"Cody!" she yelled again.

"Holy shit!" Ree exclaimed, without thinking.

The lioness was the only one that seemed fully aware of the still intact chainlink fence. Its pounce, while very close, was also a very comfortable foot inside of it. Having clearly known this the entire time, the creature transitioned easily and, it seemed to Ree, amusedly from terrifying, man-eating predator to close cousin of the kitty-cat, its post-pounce posture switching to a stretch and yawn, extending its front legs and curving its back, opening its mouth wide and emitting a soft, almost gentle groan.

"Jesus Christ!" the mother exclaimed.

The boy was sobbing and driving his head into the hem of her Emmitt Smith shirt, seeming intent upon returning to her womb. She was holding the baby with one arm and cupping the terrified child's head with her other hand, casting still suspicious glances at the lioness. The lioness, having turned its back on the family, paused for a moment, still near the chainlink fence, eyes half-closed and nose seeming to test the air with the delicacy and attention of a sommelier. It gave every impression of not remembering what had just happened a few moments ago. Without so much as a backward look, the cat walked to a nearby tree and lay down, still facing away.

Ree sometimes wondered about her maternal instinct, whether it was strong enough or, well, maternal enough. She was grateful for Rob, who had a softness with Alex that compensated for Ree's moments of distraction. At that moment, however, without thinking about it she found herself searching for and drawing out of her purse a packet of tissues, and, walking toward the little family, offering them.

"I cannot believe that just happened," she said, her hand with the tissues extended.

Cody was now actually under his mother's shirt, head buried against her belly. He continued to wail, but he wasn't pushing against her anymore. Now he was just standing as a child might stand in the corner of the classroom, body angled against the wall, every molecule of him radiating embarrassment.

The mother looked up at Ree. All of the preceding acrimony seemed to have gone. She shook her head, clearly trying not to laugh at the poor child. "It ain't the first time, is the thing about it. Cody's good at gettin' the lions riled at him." She took the offered packet. "Thank you."

"But I've never seen that happen. I'm so sorry." Ree didn't know what else to say.

"Don't be. He'll learn sometime you can't mess with them lions." She pronounced lions *labns*. "Maybe now he'll r'member." She was smiling, rubbing the boy's head through her shirt. The baby had calmed now and was craning, wet mouth and eyes open as though surprised, to look at Ree.

"I hate lions," came Cody's muffled voice from under his mother's shirt. He said *labns* too.

Ree left them with the packet of tissues, reassured by the mother there was nothing more she could do to help. She still had fifteen minutes to kill. She walked a loop around the zoo, past tigers, panthers, llamas, ostriches. There was an alligator basking in a concrete pool, bobcats and bears, porcupines and parrots. Chickens and peacocks roamed the grounds freely. She skipped the reptile house, and eventually ended up back at the capybara enclosure, near the little hut that housed Alex's classroom, with a few minutes to spare.

She didn't see the boy and his mother again and figured they must have cut their visit to the zoo short. It was probably just as well. Smelling of panic might inspire any number of dramatic reactions from the rest of the animals. Which, Ree remembered, was what Cody seemed to have wanted at first, but maybe had changed his mind about. Sleeping lions—or llamas or alligators—might be his preference after today.

Ree paused at the railing. The capybaras had moved away from their water feature and were now lying in a group in a well of shade at the far side of the enclosure, resting, seemingly unaware of the zoo in which they now resided. Ree's desire for a cigarette returned, like a hollowed-out space in her chest, between her lungs, just under her ribcage.

What would Alex think if she told him about the plates of vegetables, of how there had been a moment in her life when she hadn't had a vegetable, and hadn't known if she would ever have a vegetable again? What if she told him there had been a moment when she'd had to defecate in the woods, clean herself with pieces of her aunt's and uncle's clothing that she tore off by biting them with her teeth? Or a moment when she'd bathed by splashing herself with well water while standing in the middle of the ruined, abandoned house in the middle of the jungle, naked and alone. What if she told him she'd stopped crying because she'd stopped thinking she was going to live, and that she'd never learned how to cry again? That there was a part of her that didn't trust this life, didn't believe that Austin, and scooters, and zoos and plates of vegetables, and even her own child and husband, existed, that thought this might all just be a dream being dreamt by a lost girl living under the stairs of her dead family's house in the middle of a lonely forest? What if she told him that?

What if she told him that sometimes—not all of the time,

not most of the time, but sometimes—she actually wished that all of this *was* a dream, and that she was still that little girl under the stairs in the ruins of a house in the forest, sleeping under blankets and not knowing what had happened to any of them—to her aunt and uncle, to her brother, her mother and father, and that she would wake up and find herself there, still waiting for something she thought possible. What if she told him there was a part of her that still wanted that, and would forever? Would it break his heart?

And if she told him that, if she dared to actually say it, would it, finally, break hers as well?

“Mom!” Alex’s voice came from behind. One of the capybaras raised its head at the sound, gazing across the enclosure toward Ree. She hesitated, then turned away from the beast, toward her son.



Kathryn Dunlevie, *Excavating*, photo montage on panel, 47" x 70"