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# Adaptation

Elizabeth Olenzek

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## **Abstract**

Ma always said she couldn't trust him with that thing on his head -- my brother, in his coonskin cap. She said it reminded her too much of the real thing.

## **Keywords**

raccoons, brother, change



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## Adaptation

by Elizabeth Olenzek

Ma always said she couldn't trust him with that thing on his head— my brother, in his coonskin cap. She said it reminded her too much of the real thing. *Me, too*, I thought. My brother had a leering face that grinned beneath the same stiff fur I seen out by the woodpile. They were everywhere, the coons—lithe hands in bowls of cat food on the porch, whole families curled and dead on M-10 in summertime heat. I seen enough to know that they were never up to good, and I worried my brother'd adopt their snarling ways, their varmint stink. I worried they'd come late one night, the coons—smell out my brother and take him out, out—the waters and the wild, fresh fish raw in the mouth, the ways of animals, once so foreign, now clinging to his skin, lost and forever.

*Elizabeth Olenzek is an undergraduate at the University of Michigan. She studies English, lives in Ann Arbor, and works on farms in her spare time.*

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