Euonymus Alatus

Brit Morse

She tended to the burning bushes, my mother. The bottom six inches were stripped naked by rabbits, so she shoveled pockets of mulch from behind the radiator to the empty branches, filling the void with soil.

She'd spent summer afternoons trimming Boxwoods and Arborvitae, hedging blooming hydrangeas, and arranging pots of Dahlias, so in August when her infusions began once again she could return from the hospital, put her feet up on the patio table, rest her head on the back of a chair, her chin hanging, and pull her shorts to her bikini line, baring her Varicose veins to the sun. But it was September now and for two hour she shoveled soil, so no dog walker, no visiting neighbor would see the poison in her bones, the rabbits nibbling her fire.