

# Bound for Glory

by Melissa McKinstry

*Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day.  
Impress them upon your children.  
—Deuteronomy 6: 6-7*

Another Saturday. Johnny Cash chugs *This train is bound for glory*  
from the old Philco in the tack room. Kittens in the sack bound for the river.

Dogs bound against chains, wanting what's mewling in the sack.  
Rhode Island Reds done laying are caged—yellow eyes wild,

they growl and peck the wire in the truck bed next to the kittens.  
The sky is a week-old bruise over it all. At the auction barn,

someone's bound to bid low for chicken dinner. One of us kids  
will ride with Dad, fiddle the radio knob on the old Chevy,

watch when he chucks the kittens into the Green River.  
And we'll come home—empty cage, sack gone, oats and a bale of alfalfa

in the truck bed for the pony. Our barn coats smell like motor oil  
and petrichor. Mom's already ordered a new box of chicks

from Sears Roebuck. The postmaster will call in a few weeks  
to tell her she's got a package making a racket. We'll have a heat lamp ready.

As clouds lower over the corral, we'll sit on the top rail, kick small boots  
against the fence, and watch Clarence Mallory's step van open its maw

to swallow the pigs who squeal at what's coming. Each will hang  
to bleed from the hook, eyes leaking out the mystery. Bound to ritual,

Mom and Dad have shown us how to put faith in something unseen.  
Now Chinook winds cross the plateau, Mt. Rainier darkens.

Buckets of rain water soak blood into the dirt, and I latch the barn door  
for the night. We wash for dinner, hold hands for grace.

*God is great. God is good. Let us thank Him for our food.*



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