Lassoing the Family

a triptych

[1] My family shares one lightbulb. Father strings it to his head. Sister follows father. Mother walks in darkness. I, Son, hum in place. At night, the world beyond the light is our loyal cave. In the morning, we talk weather. It's better. The breakfasts are always okay.

[2] When we lose power, I cut a hole in a cardboard box and start to deliver the daily news. Mother and Father and Sister sit on the couch and laugh like jackrabbits, a cackle my family happily debuts. When the power returns, my family throws away our television and keeps me inside the box, throwing popcorn and coffee whenever my content flops, whenever my newscasts backfre. I'm still inside the box. They've locked it. The whole neighborhood is here. Soon, they promise, it will be enough.

[3] At the dinner table, Mother sculpts a falcon out of foil. Father forms a forest out of knives. I try to break free from the ropes I tie myself. My sister stands on her chair and stares through the window. My mother's laugh is her loudest yet. Her foil falcon is finished. We wait for it to talk.