

WOLF IN THE BASEMENT
(A villanelle)

The wolf is in the basement on a chain.
A bounty hunter, rancher, put her there.
The sky is blue, but thunder threatens rain.

Owl awakens, visioning arcane
Omens, whispers softly to beware:
The wolf in the basement paces on her chain.

He washes at the sink. A bloody stain
Is on his arm, his face, and in his hair.
The sky is gray, and thunder threatens rain

In distant hills, the hunter hears inflame
A thousand voices, howling from the lair.
The wolf's in the basement pulling on her chain,

And, twitching nose, can smell and taste the pain
Of hunter-trapper, twisting in his snare.
The sky is dark, and thunder threatens rain.

The owl, screaming, calls the hunter's name.
He cannot hide – he is the rightful heir.
The wolf in the basement's loosening her chain.
The sky is black, and thunder crashes rain.

© Casey Robb 1996

Published in *The Comstock Review*, Fall 1999, Vol. 13, No. 2.

First Honorable Mention, *The Poet's Guild* First Annual Open Poetry Competition, October 1996.