

Plotting

Follow these steps to a happy ending.
First, have something in your pocket.

Stones and crumbs are standard,
but to guarantee a sequel,

fill your pockets with loss.
Audiences will pay handsomely,

in a coin with no exchange rate.
Next, lie as well as they do.

When they say they'll come back,
claim you were just waving

to your cat on the roof, where she goes
when she's caught a mouse and just wants

to eat in peace. Then stoke the oven.
180° is remarkably effective,

though you've been raging hot
and think others should, too.

What I'm saying is look the other way
to achieve the best char. Last, skip

the homecoming. These woods are too dense,
too wild, to forsake your only chance

at a happiness that's clean
right down to the bone.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Patricia J. Miranda is a high school English teacher. Her work has also been published in *Bop Dead City*, *DASH Literary Journal*, *Into the Void*, *The Literary Nest*, and *Shot Glass Journal*. She lives in Columbus, Ohio.

HERON TREE
30 April 2017
herontree.com/miranda1

