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After the Great Rain

Cynthia Hogue

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AFTER THE GREAT RAIN

We tried remembering
about roots, mushrooms—all over
the place, but which ones?—
leaves, feces, fire

made from damp wood.
We breathed that smoke
as if it would bring back the dead.
Left emptied, our hands

fumbled for the braille
on runes chiseled on rocks
wedged like markers
in crevices high above the water line.

You came for me in sleep
prodding me with your stories:
listen for crows
when they reel from the branches

of crowned birch. Their calls
lead you to hidden fields
of berries just ripe. Cross
with salamanders the long breast

of road in darkness. Gold stripes
rippling down their backs
turn incandescent, smouldering
with the force of birth.

*It may take everything you have
to reach for that.—*

Though I knew next morning
we would not make it through.