Between Hoodoo & Silver Falls

Marilyn Folkestad
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A woman grows garlic, wild cucumber, pulls nettles, is stung and is caught by a passing bird, its fancy plume.

She bends to the wild blackberry, the weight of the axe. Hemmed in and torn, she hacks a clearing, reaches out to the flamboyant vine maple, one dogwood bloom. The woman rests on the trunk of an old alder, sees how it crawls, hugs the bank of the creek, the creek choked in blackberry, skunk cabbage, rotting logs. She digs rock from the pasture, pries and tugs, rip-raps the bank. The wild rose was planted by a woman. A woman panned gold in this creek, cleared land, reaped mushrooms, dandelion greens, shrivelled and died. A woman picks her way out of hemlock shadows, cleans the dirt from her nails, touches the trillium and hears the eagle perch, knows the limb bends, touches ground and her. She counts blooms, the years, picks one. And when there are twenty she twists blooms onto blackberry vines, twenty more she skewers with thorns and then there are six. A woman, barefoot in trillium, crushes petals and laughs. She is breaking the law, the seasons.