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## Abundance

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Lisa Fishman

# Abundance

You say perhaps birch trees  
enclose the clearing we have in mind; I say cartwheels  
turn over like stars, like the tops of blue houses on fire  
or long hair streaming behind birds on their way to nest.  
Lately they've been swooping down on peoples' heads  
in San Francisco,  
desperate for lack of brush or trees.  
Have we come yet to the clearing

of odd light that equivocates the past and present, say,  
or belief and desire?

If the latter two come down to the same thing, I must  
tell you

I rode a silver bicycle today, I bought groceries.  
Later in my car I ran over a bird sitting in the road. The  
light was green

but I would have stopped had I seen the bird  
one second before. Split  
this image (the green light) into hours,  
days, the beginning

of more hours and days, but stop at the plumb line falling  
straight  
down the wall from which the mind descends: for  
instance and  
for instance . . . If we see further  
into the past it contradicts desired forward motion—but  
who would disbelieve

in claims to see what hasn't happened yet? Imagine  
believing

that human hair around the fruit trees  
would keep salt-tongued deer on the outskirts  
of the orchard, that they would take the scent of a thing  
for the thing itself. That summer we had one plum tree  
left,  
so much sweet bark chewed down to almost nothing.  
We got the hair from beauty shops in town  
and from the school bus I saw auburn,  
blonde and brunette tresses matted on the ground. The  
truth is I did not wonder which  
women were partly wound around our trees, it was too  
hot, if you remember—  
the heat riding waves of sweltering light  
all summer and all fall and the asparagus  
growing wild, growing all the way to seed.