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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.