Fall 1983

The Woman Who Called Whales Across the Fields

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You hear her first one evening in August, *click click click* over the fields, stone house, the tin roof of the barn. Then for months there’s nothing, just the changing air, roadside filling with asters and primrose, the slow overtaking of water by ice. You sit all day at the round wooden table listening for her between snowfalls.

Then it is April near chickweed, an afternoon of hepatica and celandine, and off by the pond, yes, a sound like rocks clicked off each other under water. You follow it through light that looks all wrong over the dirt road. And then there are clouds like belly pleats, sounds across the watercress like jug music, and in the morning the alfalfa pushed down, an old shawl on the fence, the kitchen quiet.

For weeks after, you walk back to that place where windows have been nailed shut, and remember the sound as though up through a small boat’s ribs, that thin oily film across trees and horizon.

And how as you closed the front gate, there were those sounds, as though someone were twisting rubber bands across the end of a long braid just before sleep.

THE WOMAN WHO CALLED WHALES ACROSS THE FIELDS