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Between Hoodoo & Silver Falls

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Between Hoodoo and Silver Falls

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.