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Old Novitiates

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Old Novitiates

Surrounded by so much woods,
why should you worry about lovers?
On your way home through them at dusk
there's your friend, the owl, a tongue
who once flapped wild-eyed past you,
an auto wreck in the making, before
folding again, alarmed at himself,
on the top of his high stump, and just
one step off the path, the hole of a woodchuck,
that old novitiate you might take home for lunch.
Sure, you want your own baby,
a light bulb to hold with your name
written across it, and though you're growing older,
on Saturday afternoon there's your mother's
floors to mop as she tries not to watch.
Aren't there doctors, lawyers, young architects
who'd like a home? In the Grand Cayman
they wanted the native girls, not blonds. But here?
For a while on Sundays you went to concerts
and watched and watched. Then for a whole year
sat in your apartment reading the comic strips
in your robe, disgusted. It's not
what you want, but what you're willing
to give up, the therapist said.
But what fun is that? Meanwhile,
with one glass of wine, maybe two,
on Sunday nights there's your old farmhouse on a hill,
the City of God shining at the end of a dirt road,
and that's enough: he's flying up it, to stand
rustling all over before folding his arms around you.

Peter Wild