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First Time

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First Time

The soles of my bare feet scuffed
tough enough to pad over gravel
of this old logging road, farther
than my new permit
and the car I stole from my father
will drive. I'd be lucky
if she were even fourteen.

With one pink digit she's hooked me
by the belt loop
and tags along,
complaining without her shoes.

No, she's pushing me.
I'm only a whisper in the pine boughs,
and the breath of her flesh
sways me, wafts me on.

We don't talk. Neither of us
can find what we're looking for
under her t-shirt, beyond
my unzipped surrender
and the slow clock of sunlight
beating us down.

Nothing lasts
in the flash of that day
more than a painful rise inside her
rib cage, her shoulders,
the deep bloodless welt
where she'd wormed herself against a gooseberry,
the imprint of thorn and needles
tattooed on my thigh.