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Circus

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That was a storied summer. Hawks were haggard and the girls untamed.

I heard them before I saw them. Round the bend of a hoof-worn lane, two women, nut-brown and naked to the waist, wielding axes in dazzling syncopation.

We do not want some stories to end because the pause that ensues will be endless.

We want the harrier hawk to keep circling the rabbit forever.

We want there to be a next birth when a child has died, a next wife, next lover, next finch for the cage left empty, next pup in the house out back with the wrong name over the door.

But a new story will not end that silence.
These trees, those women, my father and mother, perhaps even their disappointments, their regrets, will be reborn—as paths in the garden, as beartongue and penstemon by the path, as blue butterflies or clouds of smoke.

I remember them standing, glistening, and also lying down. They are good ghosts and I am warm.