

Tool Shed

It leaned against the blowhard-uncle wind,
Below a sour green persimmon
That bombarded its tin roof with fruit
Dense enough to give me a headache
For hours. It hid my grandmother's cat
From the rabid batbreath of neighbors'
German shepherds. I cannot forget
Climbing to its peak to come eye-to-eye
With the girl next door shadowed
By mimosas, her one-piece bathing-suit gold
With a blue horse above one hip,
The horse galloping into the sea
As she smiled and lifted one arm, waved,
As the horse plunged into the golden froth
Of surf and I lay hearing hooves beat
Beneath mimosas as cats floated
Out to sea in tubs, as the air stroked
By her hand came to rest somewhere
Long years later. A shed for the garden —
Some tools, a mower, and stiff brown gloves —
Could not contain such pulses, could it,
And yet I cannot forget the ooze
Of amber from pine boards, the knotholes
Through which I hissed to frighten grackles,
Knotholes that squeezed themselves shut
The day I walked away. Those boards, and metal
A dime a foot, grip my memory
Like the curve of hands around a hoe
Pressed into gloves that hang from a wall,
The ammonia reek of waving growth.

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