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# POETRY

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## ODE TO *PULIA* (MOLE), EVERY MOTHER

A mother myself I find her in pieces  
of every tight piercing cry of alarm,  
the sharp-shinned hawk precursor  
to regret for one or more  
many times over. But I wish to unravel  
this inherent  
confusion, this umbilical  
expectation strung between  
off-spring and mother,  
twined into birth giving,  
the seemingly  
immortalizing ritual  
wherein  
the first mother  
is each one thereafter, passing  
her blood and being on and on

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and on.

Thus, we sometimes hold our  
im/mortal mothers  
to higher  
expectations (*protect us from every cruel vile thing*),  
but this will never  
do—  
because how we experience m/other  
frames the first iteration of self  
frames all  
that follows.

## SHELTER

We wove hip-high field grass  
into tunnels  
knotting the tops  
of bunched handfuls the drooping  
heads tied together.  
My seven siblings and I  
sheltered ourselves  
inside these labyrinths  
in a galaxy of grasses.

## PEREGRINE

I see her despite her silence.            Solitary  
among the twisting            leaves

    of chokecherries and ninebarks  
her finely-barred torso flashes into sight

    as her slate gray scapulars lift open.  
Twice she fly-hops among the brambles

before focusing on me.    Paused  
    in mutual watchfulness    I see

that like mine, hers is a body in conflict  
ever caught    between flight and fight.

