Late Afternoon in California

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LATE AFTERNOON IN CALIFORNIA

We lived in the country when I was small. I tried to make houses in the bay trees and the live oaks, but it always got dark and time for supper. Now my father is dead and his name faded to a bruise. Mother is on the porch reading an old letter of his to prove he did not care about me. She says it was because I was sexual as a child. I remind her I always cut my hair short and wore only boys’ clothing. There was something about the way you walked she says and goes inside, saying there is nothing to eat and she is tired of cooking.

THE GOD

In my book it says Dionysos: Dendrites (tree god), Anthios (god of blossoming things), Braites, Sabazios. And tragedy (Tragos). I go outside thinking of the gods in Greek. The pony has been staked in front of the farmhouse across the road and is racing hard around at the end of the rope. The young man sits on a granite stone in front of his house. I did not see him at first in the shade. I continue along the side of our house toward the barn. I look back just before I go around the corner. He is riding the pony, his hands gripped down near her mouth. Man on horse, I think. He is doing this for me, I think, although I could never admit it.