ACORNS

By Diana Whitney

The girls can’t go to a party, but they can walk at night
  past the old cemetery: October fires, woodsmoke,
  two headlamps sweeping the dirt road.

A sedan glides by like a sorcerer, pulls over
  in front of them. Shuts its lights. Shadows
  stir in the car, one opens a door.

It plays like a movie they’ve both seen before. Headstones
  loom, the girls run a gauntlet of angels
  & towers, sprint through the dark

up the farm path to the hayfield, skirting the black oak
  with its pile of rocks where they once pounded
  acorns to powder. They run

dragging the history of dead girls everywhere, the hours
  of kill counts on YouTube, all 15 seasons
  of Criminal Minds, secrets

of psychopaths & serial killers. At 13, my girl’s seen
  a photo of the bearded man who nearly
  murdered her Nonna in a city apartment.

No one came to help, though they must have
  heard her scream. Lungs burning, the girls
  breach the front door, burst inside

in a storm of laughter. The kitchen is bright with them.
  They’ve circumnavigated the cemetery, gasped
  beneath the firmament

where even the celestials are predators, Orion
  the hunter with his club & sword
  chasing the seven sisters across the sky.