

YOU TELL STORIES OF GIRLS GONE WILD

It's forbidden to talk about them these days,
but Ma does it anyway. In hushed tones, by night,
when the last of the men have crawled back into
their holes and all that's left of the alcohol are its
dregs, she begins. Needle in through one end, the
big bellowing baby's mouth sewn shut. They can't
hear. Down the trash chute, all to avoid the brute's
questions. In whispers you warn. Bedtime stories
for girls in crisis. For girls who are guns. For girls
who are Gods. Ma, there are deaths and then there
are *deaths*. It was the framing of a shrew, I know,
that brought us here. In all your survival guides and
how-to's, you tell stories of girls gone wild. What
you neglect to mention, the fine print of the clause
is *this*: where have they gone, and how can I get
there? Curiosity is an inherited curse, Ma. I had to
know what lay beyond the fence. Ma, forgive me,
my knees are bruised purple. Ma, when you were a
girl gone wild, did they try to cull you too? I took
my hooves and galloped, I know you would've done
the same. I know you were the same. We are blood
and blades and bad. We are flesh and fresh and fun.
We forge belonging, branded with the searing iron
of cautionary tales. We throw ourselves to the wind.