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## The Lure

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## *The Lure*

Up ahead, a mother grouse  
clucks her chicks off the path  
and warns them to stay still.  
I veer around to observe  
from a stump, wait silently  
for spotted down to peep out  
from the bush.

The hen tries to lure me  
up the hill, fanning her gray tail  
in the open.

These things always happen  
when it's hot, when air rings with gnats  
and dry pines stand drooping  
under the weight of their cones.  
As I watch, I can't help  
feeling the danger I present,  
the hen's small heart fluttering  
in her eyes.

She wants me to follow her.

Everything quiets in the brush,  
but I know better.  
If I walk up and pull  
the branches apart, they'll be huddled  
in the dust, shivering,  
cowering away  
from the shadow of my hand.

*Albert Garcia*