

When You Decided the Peach Tree that Produced No Fruit and Took Up the Sunniest Spot of the Yard Had to Go

You sawed at the trunk for more than an hour –
three times you thought you'd managed it, stood

yelling a "Timber!" that got less enthusiastic each time.

Finally the tree crackled under your weight, groaned

as it fell. That's when you saw the baby bird tucked
inside the trunk. We mourned what we had not known

was being destroyed. Then you got to work. Sawed off
the branch that held life inside it, a chickadee,

and strapped it to a nearby tree, the parents circling
and crying as you worked. After, we went inside

and watched from the window, unsure if what was broken
could be repaired. We remembered stories about baby birds

abandoned by their parents when humans got too near.

I imagined a possible future – you fishing out the body

from the branch, your head bowed, burying
the small creature in our backyard. Remembered

all the birds you've found on sidewalks before
and your attempts to save them – all the life you held

in your hands, only to watch it extinguish. What a gift
when the birds found their relocated nest, fluttered

inside to their baby. What a gift to be able to witness
the new ending you managed to write.