

THROUGH THE TRANSOM

by Janet Ruth

The quick breath of bats, a breeze. They become something wild.
The old house murmurs through the dark transom—something wild.

They whisper in their beds, flashlights gleam beneath the sheets.
Three young girls don fur-bits and feathers, hum something wild.

The screen door slams. They step outside into firefly night.
Full moon with its pull, offers them light from something wild.

They shed screen-glow, man-touch, pain and tame expectations.
Tight muscles in their chests loosen and strum something wild.

Climbing rough trees by moonlight, they reclaim their own strength.
Free night creatures, they're beneath no one's thumb—something wild.

Hands joined in a ring, they dance and chant in feral tones.
Earth beneath their feet responds. A thrum of something wild!

Moon paints a silver path on water. Barefoot by the river.
In the slowly slipping water, toes plumb the depths of something wild.

Girls stretch questions into wonder on shimmering dream-hoops.
Brave and powerful, with their fists they drum something wild.

In the company of darkness, shivered with bat wings,
their secret quest adds up to the sum of something wild.

Beneath moonbeams and shadows the three girls have found the truth.
Coyote, Raven and Owl—they've succumbed to something wild.

*—the first line is from the poem "Something Wild," published in the anthology
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