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BIRTHED YOU SECRETLY

by OAKLEY AYDEN

I wish I'd birthed you
secretly on forest earth,

canopied in autumn warmth,
wish i'd never told a soul, that

each night i could know you slept
safe beneath the stars, pressed intact

against my breast, that padlocked

country lips i'd kept, that we

were still
love

unscathed,

easeful, sipping
sky-soaked breathe,

moon
and rest.

AUTHOR BIO:

Oakley Ayden (she/her) is an autistic, bisexual writer from North Carolina. Her poems appear in Ghost City Review, The Cabinet of Heed, Maw: Poetry Journal, Not Very Quiet, Blue Bottle Journal, and elsewhere. She lives in Los Angeles with her two children. Find her online at oakleyayden.com.

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