

## **“THE BATS”**

---

BY MEG CALDWELL

WINNER OF THE 2018 ALLEN AND LYNN TURNER COMMENCEMENT POETRY COMPETITION

bats circle above me looking for food i throw a small pebble into the dusk they chase after it /  
my mother taught me to do that one hot night when we lived in the swamp / the bats circling  
around she told us all about echolocation while throwing that pebble / we spent hours throwing  
pebbles looking at bats until it was too dark to see / we did it again the next night and the next  
night and the next / my sisters and mother and i danced in the swamp like women / we hollered  
with the bats / my sister could hear alligators crooning past the fence / the bats hear it too / we  
chased after our own pebbles on the ground collecting anything we found pretty enough /  
pebbles screws broken bits of glass / we lay in the grass and stared at the bats chasing bugs in  
the air / real bugs / my sisters spun in circles and we waited for the bats to notice us but they  
never did / my mother kept throwing pebbles / my sister started singing with the alligators / i  
listened and watched and when it got too dark to see the bats we knew they were still there / we  
were still there throwing pebbles into the darkness / we were never afraid.