

# The Swallow Who Stayed



Philip Giordano



This story is a tribute to where I spent my childhood.  
I go back there whenever I need to feel at home.  
—P. G.

*To become spring,  
means accepting the risk of winter.*  
—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

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Translated by Arielle Aaronson



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Every spring Iris returned to the forest where she was born.  
She was always the first to arrive, appearing suddenly  
over the tops of the cherry trees.





In summer, she liked chasing  
the clouds of insects  
that filled the sky.

At the end of the day, she would look out over the forest from her perch.  
Ripe red cherries peeked through the leaves.





One evening, all the swallows gathered.  
The wind was telling them something.  
Winter was coming, and it was time  
to fly south again.

Iris asked the other birds,  
"What happens to the forest when we leave?"  
But nobody knew the answer. No swallow  
had ever stayed long enough to see.

