Transplant / Doctoring / Cancer Season

Sarah Kristin Andersen

Transplant

Hill grass sparrows
in the ditches
dry clover, black antler limbs of fallen oaks
gesture to us, speak
of Mendocino county

the alluvial
Navarro somewhere
east of Eden, west of Highway One

what am I trying to say—

except that the mosquitoes are biting tonight
and we make choices—this drug or that cut
shifting livers from the dead to the living
and whom to love

and so on.
Doctoring

Some lines are blurred of late—

in the liminal breakwater
we trade stale air back and forth
I look down
I see your flesh on my hands
*I must seem crazy to you, doc*
*I hear voices, I do bad things to others*

not at all—you see,
some days we are the same person
at night you crowd the clinic
candle wax faces melting into mine
multiplied
on the murky horizon between illness
and migration
where we bottom-dwellers swim.

Doctoring,
you must understand
is a lot like being a woman;

in the morning
we put on our other faces
we ride the subway quiet

hoping not to be seen.
Cancer Season

Inside now we are going gently to seed
not this, the world we knew before; I see
spores behind your eyes
like dandelions in August.

Still, the hot sun cakes our skin
leaves fall as they do
such are things.

Not a time we can cure
but can we live on in the warm earth
like nurse logs?

—perhaps

yes
and slowly slowly
the slowly burning forests will swallow us.

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