



Bob Redmond Under the Chestnut Tree



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Under the Chestnut Tree

i wake up
from a butterfly's dream—
emergency room

shadow and sunlight
play on the chestnut blossoms—
what cancer?

thunderheads—
waiting for something
not to happen

a crimson rose
turning gently in the bowl
my bloody bowels

fingernail moon
just beyond reach
cancer ward

torn by wasps,
half a drone crawls home
autumn dusk

rain pelts the window
between drops
of chemotherapy

another month of this my skeleton gaining on me

buttoning around
the tube in my chest
no nightbirds

warm winds
in January
fresh bandages

the chestnut tree
blooms again
i'm still here too

clean scan nausea and a white wind

the cancer's back
to rob me
muggy night

crowded bus
on the way to chemo—
who has a secret?

chestnut tree
full of tumors
standing still

the barber's fingers
gently in my hair
cancer treatment

blood lab
the receptionist's hair
dyed bright red

my wife and son
count rings in the felled tree
exactly my age

multiple nodules on the lungs here come those cherry buds anyway

that piercing in my hip a seagull's cry

just for a night i am not sick sugar moon

saying goodbye
under the chestnut tree
pink petals in the breeze

all the medicine i need this peach dripping with juice

geese reel north
in a pink dawn—
today i go home

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