

Bob Redmond Under the Chestnut Tree



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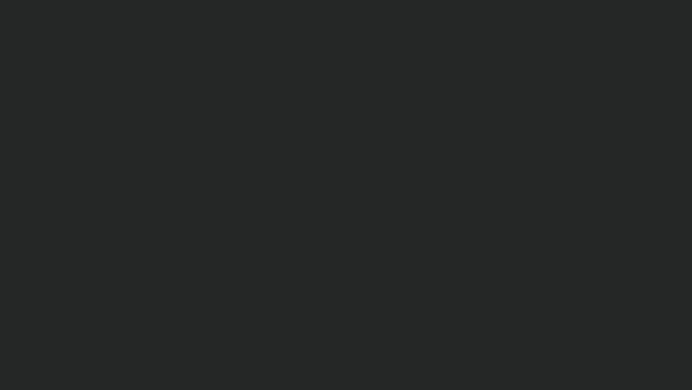
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Under the Chestnut Tree



i wake up

emergency room

from a butterfly's dream—

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 half a drone crawls home autumn dusk

torn by wasps,

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

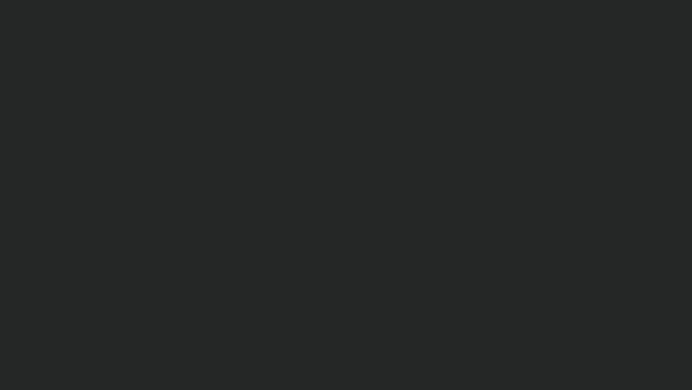
just for a night i am not sick sugar moon

saying goodbye under the chestnut tree pink petals in the breeze

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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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