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Cancer is a Disease of Animals, Banishment

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of thick fur, bloodlines.
 Like a row of slip knots pulled straight
 from a shoelace. No one knows
 what they looked like anymore.
 Here – to tie a knot – lean towards
 this light, loop the strands through,
 hold the frayed ends tight

Michael Dumanis

Cancer is a Disease of Animals

When she said she would rather cut
 what was intimate out of her, out of her skin,
 out of the frame she was in, cut it out,

her involvement with him, like a tumor,
 when she said she would rather kill,
 if not for shame, herself, than stay beside,

through the continuance on one damp sheet
 of one more night, him, that she'd rather die
 than lay her shopworn body next to his again,

when she said, *it's no use, we're like having a cancer*
distend in and through me, he wanted to say,
 as he cut, for propriety's sake, himself off

from the saying of it, *it's a beautiful thing*,
 and she, not having heard him, did not ask,
why must you mumble so, which thing, and he,

she not having had asked him, could not reply, *cancer*,
I find cancer beautiful, were I to choose
a terminal illness to be, I would cancer,

not cystic fibrosis, not me, psoriatic arthritis,
would cancer and not beriberi what have you,
had I some say in it. He would have liked

to mean by what he could not find the breath inside
 the fog-and-wetness of his lungs enough to say,
the frenzy of it, cancer's sprawl and raw,

the spring of thing from nothing, the tense bloom
of the imperative give give like moss on wall,
forsythia on snow, like wall on ivy.

He would have liked *give up* to lunge at her,
give in to push, onto a pillow, back her face,
 to pull *give give* into his throat her breath,

to rent her body for an endlessness,
 to cover her and swell and hold and say,
 to whisper *hi there* under her left breast,

to fog-and-wetness her and say and hold,
 to mean by what he could not find the breath inside,
 to say and say until all matter ceased.

Banishment

1

I've, for one, had it
 to here with the Food Channel,
 it's like they're always cooking
 a duck or something,
 carving a duck's carcass
 or whatever.
 Whaddaya say,
 just one road trip together,
 up the Menominee,
 through the Ardennes?
 We will sit in a rowboat.
 Will watch barges pass us.
 The moon I mean
 the sun is beautiful,
 settling down over
 what stays nearby,
 while someone not here
 starts intoning *Earth Angel*
 and we spot the moon
 through dense trees like a lost
 giant's flashlight.

2

The Banishment
 Capital of the World,
 you know, where they've
 sent all the witches,
 the two-headed oxen,

boys who insist
 they are mermaids,
 the bowlegged gymnasts,
 is oft confused
 with Elkhart, Indiana,
 the Band Instrument
 Capital of the World,
 and in certain fog
 with Sheboygan.
 Each after all
 has a barber
 named Felix
 and on occasion
 a lunar eclipse,
 half a hill
 strewn with marigolds.

Jim Daniels

Flight

I'm looking for the last cloud's
 dark lining, the last true sin
 for those who didn't stop counting.

Why demand bedtime stories
 when morning's shards
 slice them to ribbons?