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## Home Remedy

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## *Home Remedy*

Our world was slashed with irrigation ditches running  
Through the trees leaning over Grandma's hedge.  
Our Mama's cancer scar cleft shallowly across  
Her broken brow  
We took sticks and fished standing on a plank  
Watching last year's leaves turn and beckon under  
Slow brown water

And it could all be traced back here  
To leaf rot, and slime mold  
Generations of dead kittens  
Underneath the dead kitten tree

Traced to rhubarb growing wild behind Grandma's hedge  
In the trees in the  
Tall grasses  
And to the ragged lilac bushes forming rough arch  
Break in the double row of cariganas,  
Pale lilac flowers, scentless

Trace it to the gravelled rabbit  
Carried home in streaming arms  
Green corduroy coat, new  
The rabbit buried in the winter garden

Trace her scar back into the trees,  
Pry it loose  
Watch it slither across her brown-haired  
Brow

Wash her in the holy stream of  
Irrigation ditch  
Knock on plank with fishing sticks  
Three times round the dead kitten tree  
Her heels ploughing, turning up small bones

Bring her forth through the trees and the  
Tall grasses  
Through the hedge, out of reach of even the leaning-  
Over trees

Rest her on clipped grass, against shapely pruned evergreen,  
Sponge blue into her  
Thirsty eyes

—*Shelley Sanders*