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POETRY | FALL 2018

## Underground

By Caitlin Gildrien

“Yep, this left one’s still being a punk,” she sighs,  
twisting the ultrasound wand, which she has condomed,  
lubed, and slipped inside me. She twists it again,  
eyes fixed on the monitor, its reflection  
flashing her glasses to silver coins.

Funny, not to be looking  
for a heartbeat.

“Righty here seems fine,  
but that left ovary...”

She twists, peers  
into the dark water  
of the image, the map drawing itself  
inside my body, cyphered lines swirling,  
swimming, white blobs rising  
to the surface & blurring away.

The word “biopsy,” and then  
her mouth cinches closed. Silence  
fills the cavity of the room like fluid.

\*

I am to swallow one white seed each day,  
and this will rake Persephone’s garden clean.  
This will make an enemy of the sun.  
This will still the clever hand of the moon  
that plucks each ripened grain and builds it a raft  
and a river.

\*

“Try it for six months,” she says –

A frost in my belly. Copper on my tongue. The screen  
goes raven-black. Swallow.

“Then come back.”

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