

sarah anderson

CAUTION

Do not run on this trail. The ground
is wet pine needle and mistakes children made
a century ago could cost you your life. Beware
of falcons nesting. Their giant feathers
will lead you to believe a bridge exists. There's only air.
The path bends at the places where they thought
they were safe, where they left their voices.
Swinging toward the water
could start a war.

SWEET GUM SEED PODS

Sleepless, a body shifting
in my stomach, a fan
pulling strands of hair across my face.

I thought of the sharp giving and taking of a body,
my brother, the summer he died.

The fever of July is only
a night's drive away. Our hands
have lost their language.

What is the name of those pods I collected?
The tiny mouths of ravenous birds,
permanently open,
crowded into a round nest.

Brother gone, sweet gum lost.
We hold on to what we can.

My son's hair is thick, golden
wilderness.