

someplace green and soft to sit

surprisingly quiet, for a Friday afternoon- I think. But, I did force myself out here, afterall,  
following some hidden instinct  
like a bird, perhaps, preparing for migration  
but then, it is just like me to presume comprehension  
of the hidden forces guiding  
my feathered observers.

They watch me now- journeying over a dying creek where one bathes  
I scare him up from ripe green brush,  
or so he lets me think.

Discussion up ahead  
unnerves me, more than usual  
the presence of others never fails to alert me  
of my own suspicion.

A hospital trip, though not our speaker's own experience-

Three hours in a waiting room!

They hadn't followed the instructions, "no visitors"

Our speaker sounds derogative, but from my seat among the cedars  
she could have just as easily been on the losing end  
of this invisible hospital and its assumedly  
sterile waiting room.

I've lost my way by now- impressively, as these trails have faced  
a fair amount of wear by my sneakers.

The ground is soft, red-brown and made up of pine needles and cedar fronds  
turning the dirt acidic,  
hostile to outsiders,  
perhaps in true pacific northwest fashion.

I grew up with a mother who took the time  
to compliment trees.

Cedars were her favorite, with their frayed strips of bark,  
and she would often guess the age,  
staring with awe at the weight  
of her predictions.

I come back to familiar parking lots  
and walk slowly, taking note of the balconies  
of each apartment I pass.

There is power in observation,  
as well as a loneliness  
that I do my best to ignore.

It does not feel  
like coming home.