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Meadow

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MEADOW

jess greenwald

two sisters
sit in a meadow
small hands
wrapped
around skinny knees,
locked elbows
like wound knots
bitten lips,
chipped nail polish,
the older is all popped
pimple scars
the younger;
scabbed knees from
tree-climbing,
and pigtail braids
like two swings,
side by side.

sunset blooms,
and the sisters are gone,
home for dinner,
squabbling
over arguments they
had already argued.

in the twilight come two lovers,
hands twined
and knotted
like brine-washed rope
of an old sailboat
sloshing and creaking
and weaving.
they sit on an old towel
that she belonged to the girl
when she was little,
and eat green grapes
and refrigerated
peanut and butter jelly sandwiches.
they make plans to see *The Martian*
next weekend,
try to guess each other's
favorite candies and favorite colors,
laughing.
she throws a grape at him, he kisses
the nape of her neck, she
traces constellations
on the back of his
pianist fingers.

the sky darkens and bruises
and tiny needles like slivers of rain
form overhead
so the boy drives the girl home,
so she can do her chemistry homework.

in the evening
come two old friends,
who have known each other
for sixty years,
they sit in grass,
they hold hands,
they discuss the time
the older had been the
first to get color television
on their block, the time the
younger got married
and the other gave a
drunken bridesmaid
speech, when both their
brothers died in the war.
they will close their
eyes, they will go
home, and the meadow,
will wait.