“The Liz Christy-Bowery Houston Garden”

Two thousand varieties of plants grow in this garden where the child on her back, conversing with the leaves, suddenly laughs. A patchwork of light spangles the ecstatic movements of her limbs, as she waves and kicks at the sky.
I watch a Green Guerilla harvest tomatoes; another tidies an orchard of cherry, peach and plum trees. Before their industry, I feel my unemployment is a disfigurement, not the sweet luxury I’d planned. Because I took her for a normal child and am embarrassed by her enormous teeth and little howls, because she reminds me of my sister and the epilepsy that took her from the row house streets of childhood to the corridors of strange clinics, I must accept my day’s accomplishment: gratitude to the volunteer who placed this child on a tarp, by the fish pond, and shame at my heart’s refusal to acknowledge the many forms of neglected beauty with which we might identify, from which we run.

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