Two Poems

Sarah Nichols

An Air Crackling With Blue Light[1]

(The idea of being electrocuted
makes me sick)

My mind went dead.

Don't worry
The nurse grinned down at me
Their first time
Everybody's scared
To death

I was so struck by the sight of the table
Where they were lifting the woman
It looked like some awful torture table
With instruments
And wires

Two metal plates on either side
Of my head.
A wire to bite.

Whee-ee-ee-ee-ee

An air crackling
With blue light
With each flash
A great jolt

Drubbed me
Till I thought

What did I *think* was wrong ?

A few more shock treatments
And I think you'll notice

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[1] All lines are taken from *The Bell Jar*, by Sylvia Plath

A wonderful improvement.

I knew my baby wasn't like that.
Like what ?
Like those awful dead people
At that hospital.

I knew you'd decide to be all right again.

The Moon is Not My Mother

(For Sylvia Plath)

You are a forest of tongues.
Polyglot ghost,
You come
handing me your declassified documents.

Your hands:
pushing the words into a light trip-wired with thorns,
palimpsest cadences.
It was the gorilla interior.
You said so.

My hands are as delicate as wounds.
I monitor their fading
As carefully as I monitor your words.

My words
arterial branches,
do not yet bloom.

My head turned
The night my words came forward.
I was bent to a finer work.

It was the needlework of blood:
A map of anemic, venous rivers
That gathered on the frugal plain of my arm.

My work continued:
It was not the push of birth
Or the obsidian planet we shared.

It was the mid-point, unfathomable
It was the aftermath of your light,
The survey of your damage.