

it took time for the green  
fur coat to line my back.

I'd been lying there years  
on the umber mud

since their decision –  
freshly beached where

no water flowed  
no breakers crashed.

they lay me down,  
my skin a rhinoceros.

often he walked past  
hurling dead sticks

for the black creature.  
his eyes searched in my

bark for questions.  
the green clothes of a decade

harboured not birds, not ticks,  
but songs.

he is annoyed,  
I am annoyed

by that anti-camber.  
the walk to my spot

tested his knees, his ankles –  
yet he can go home.

I strain  
at the brink of a slope.

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