

Karl Plank

FOR THE TIME BEING

The pin oak at the back corner is listing
though no onrush of wind from the north
pushes it off plumb. It leans on its own,
now still, like the mast of a vessel aground,
bow lifted by the seabed suddenly below.

If we were to walk to the edge of the yard,
past the patch of obedient plants and their spikes
of lavender, we might kneel at the tree base
and offer ear to earth, listening for the strain
of gnarled roots as they grip the underground

to keep in place the leaning trunk, the branches
that reach out from its spine. We might wonder
about the softness of soil after rain and the steady
silence that soothes and holds fast, so different
from the loud crack that blares in our minds

from the rim of tomorrow.

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