Medicinals

PJ Harvey

I was walking through the national mall
Thinking about medicinals, how they used to grow thereWhen the ground was a marshland
Undisturbed by human hands, and I heard their voices:Sumac said we're always here
Witch hazel we're always here
Sassafras we're always here
Bluestem grasses always hereI looked about, and what I see?
Medicinals grow around me, rising from the gravel
Sumac and the witch hazel
Come to soothe our primal sores, come to soothe our troublesSumac said we're always here
Witch hazel we're always here
Sassafras we're always here
Bluestem grass is always hereBut do you see that woman, sitting in the wheelchair?
With her redskins cap on backwards
What's that she's singing?
As from inside a paper wrapper
She sips from a bottle
A new painkiller
For the native people

Published by
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