

POETRY

B.J. Best

A RIVER IN EGYPT

since the diagnosis, i've been building
a crude ukulele. a few lengths of nylon,
some screws, and i'm tanning on the island
of my stygian basement. i've been welding
my eyes shut so tears won't rot them black.
instead, i use etched steel to measure
out harmonics, or how to take pleasure
in the way drill eats wood. time for facts:

it takes infinitely more muscles to smile
than to hear a chord or grow a tumor,
and the longest river in the world is denial,
where i'll strum on the bank like some sunburned crooner,
and you know all you've heard about crocodiles?
they don't exist. they're myths. they're rumors.