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## The Mad Knotty Piner

Henry Stimpson

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Henry Stimpson

*The Mad Knotty Piner*

nailed up knotty pine panels  
in cabins all over New Hampshire,  
I told my little cousin one night  
in our dim rented cottage.

Look, I said, each dark knot  
marks a dead child's soul!  
Beside those staring eyes,  
Karen drifted into haunted sleep.

In her 50s, alone,  
she wrestles with the cancer  
that will pinch her soul  
into a dark knot soon.