

Appendix: or (The Lullaby MARK LIANG

“You suffer from acute psoriasis,
coupled with a genetic predisposition
for acne vulgaris.”

like my mother
she touches my face
turns my hands
caresses my skin: stone

to polish, poise.

“I would recommend
salicylic acid
with applications of

per-ox-sighed.”

I think she’s talking to herself now
In this empty examination room.

“

it’s a shame there’ll be scars.”

I’m not sure who’s speaking now
My mother or her, my mother and her
their faces blend.

“Why do you scratch at --
You

Could have. A scalpel sinks into an incision.

as her pale hands hover over mine

I want to tell her

That my flesh sings in
rivulets and
blossoms

forms a constellation
of my tiger heart

of
ancient wars
breaking
unjustice
injustice

human nature dictates:
When given the chance
I will bask in the sun.

Never mind the SPF.

I wonder as she sighs
if she sighs for bleach.