

Notes for a Life. In a Swing. No Wind to Speak of.

by Sam Rasnake

— *Sally Mann, Untitled (Deep South #23), 1998*

The field is the mouth of the dead.
Starlings drift the summer's late amber
as though a photograph's gelatin silver

has come to life, and you breathe in,
you breathe out — that other world.
Your lungs are sadness, full-measured.

A faultless tension. The scarred tree's
gift is silence. At the edge of hearing,
the slow river's story — all moss and

bush — slips its bridge between darkness
and darkness — while the sky, always
the patient doppelgänger, sits on water.

Whole forests & towns & time swallowed
in ivy. One trickle of sweat beside the ear.
Somewhere a banjo, somewhere a hound.

