Gertrude of Helfta on Maternal-Fetal Microchimerism

by <u>Mia Schilling Grogan</u> in the <u>August 2024</u> issue Published on August 9, 2024

Gertrude saw quite clearly how it was: There were sisters, yes, who had known the same womb, but it didn't end there. Somehow cells were circulating: those sisters also shared some whit of their mother and perhaps an older sibling—sister or brother deep in their livers, kidneys, hearts, and bones, the microchimeristic presence of these distant others enlarging every hour's choir. And far away, in some cold castle, the sisters sat at table in other bodies, imperceptible emissaries from Helfta cloistered in their mother's blood, a brother's marrow. What would be so marvelous in this truth yet to be discovered? It tells no more than what we all live daily: sweet honey overflows the cells that form the comb. Every body's integral to Body.