

Two Poems

Megan Cowen

Early Bloom

This morning when you draped your ankle over
the bed sheet, I spotted the transfusion scar;
remembered that when I was six days

old, you followed me and I almost lost you.
You were meant for September, really,
but you broke through the soil,

fingers uncurling like centipedes
through the last placid drops of summer.
The sun lowered its bittersweet yolk

into a cloud of dusk as you freed
your blue, iris body, came out of your mother
still breathing behind your ears.

Postcard from a Palm Reader on Horseback

Yesterday I held a Palo Verde beetle in my hand.
We shared a moment of being
on the back of my burro.

It rested on my heartline, antennae
brushing the pillows of Saturn and Jupiter,
respectively.

I knew it started life in sodden blackness,
nursed by mildew
and the roots of wild conifers

as did its ancestors—who divided Pangea
with the steady hum
of their stained-glass wings;

who gave their bodies to the Anasazi
to be ground into mineral
and traced from memory

over white clay. Before taking off
it crawled to the sun
beneath my third finger,

trying to remember
which shadowed portal
was its own.

I imagined a layer of Arizona
dusted its brittle onyx head when it landed
beside broken pottery shards and rested,

contemplating its own fate
as evening's shadow cast and angled
thumb of compassion on the canyon floor.