

Alien

Summer in San Antonio,
a crescendo of cicadas,
sighs of mourning doves,
the occasional sonic boom.

An ice cream truck perseverates
around the block.
I flag him down for a bomb pop.
I smell like root beer.

The doorbell rings. Incarnación
has come to do the backyard. *En Español*,
we chat about his goats, as
I let him in, take him through.

The house smells of Marta's beans nestled back
of the stove. She's rolling balls of masa.
I lean against her pillowy thigh.
Querida, she murmurs.

Dark skinned from sun,
I am barefoot,
tough feet from tarpatch standing contests.
I outlast the boys.

So hot. I pour lemonade
for Incarnación.
Mother stops me at the door, says—
“Water is fine. Use a jar.”

I wait until she retreats upstairs.
From the china cabinet, I pick the best crystal,
lever the metal tray to free the ice,
deliver *limonada* to my friend.

We sit on prickly grass,
under the pecans.

Kintsugi

*(Japanese ceramic repair with no attempt to hide the damage,
the repair literally illuminated)*

Fifteen years gone.
Still you work in me.
Therapy and reflection
feeble against hard wiring
laid down deep in the pith,
burrowing, buckling.

Each time I have a win
I step back and hide,
worry the cost to sibling, to friend.
You suck out the marrow
of each acceptance,
instead implant your fears.

I no longer rewrite your admonitions
pride goeth before a fall
too big for your britches
no longer excuse your parenting as
unskilled, meaning no harm,
typical for your era.

I see jealousy.
Your basket propped over my light.
But now—
I shroud my own.
My inner saboteur
umbilicaled to you.

Her name is Jewel.
From my minds corner,
she waves a wrist-flick
of pronouncements—
*You're too old, too slow,
too hippy, too much.*

Sorting her faulty ways,
I see how to patch her up.
Though I can't fix the
crack in your cup,
I am mending mine with gold.

