

SUSAN B. A. SOMERS-WILLETT

OPPENHEIMER'S LAMENT

Like a good doctor, I am meant to wean
the thing from the love of its mother—
I will burn it, I will make it clean—

careful speed forced between
the patient poles, one circling the other
like a good doctor. I am meant to wean

strong from weak, the seam
of fire pulling from its cover.
I will burn it, I will. Make it clean,

this break: let the cloven atom shine in tourmaline
brilliance until brilliance is over.

Like a good doctor, I am meant to wean

my hand from its only career, my heart lean
as we cross the incandescent desert together.
I will burn it. I will make it clean

as a glass bowl, and the cracked globe will gleam—
for in this moment, the world has no tether.

A good doctor, I am meant to wean.
I will burn it. I will make it clean.

CAMPANOLOGY

The black crow righteously grips the fence while
the staccato of rain fills the pea blossoms' adolescent boats

to play like bone dice in a cup. Later, the collector
will gather them up, a lone bee ringing that word

behind him, *lust*, whatever it was this garden used to render.
For they wish to be shrill as a chorus of eunuchs, purple and
white lips

pursed against entry and the stamens clipped to lend
chastened blooms. And so their answer to desire is closure.

And so the perfume of the body becomes the green
song of their palms thrilling in the wind.

This afternoon, Mendel naps in his humid cell,
his shrugging penis curling fatly into his innocent thigh

while across the field, the rose bush casts its scent
like a dark meat over the city, black pungent silks folding

and folding back into a crown of soft decay. And so
in the heart of the rose is a knelling. And so in the opening

of a bloom to rain is an opening to want,
and the sound in the garden is youth

beating out its name like an anthem,
like rain on the body of a bell.