

## Bloom

There's a pit lurking  
in the bottom of your gut,  
dense walnut wrinkle  
weighing down walking,  
rolling around your stomach,  
bruising the tender lining,  
making laughing ache loads,  
speaking impossible, the stone  
traveling up your smooth throat.  
Who swallows a seed  
in the first place? they ask.  
Shame for being so careless.  
And after the deed is done:  
Who thinks something can grow  
out of bile and darkness?  
Bear the burden of your ignorance.

Slowly the pit becomes a pearl  
luminescent, there in the quiet.  
When it opens at last, divides  
with elegance unexpected,  
tendrils creep out to caress,  
filling your stomach  
with fiddleheads that mist,  
vine up through time  
and the body verdant,  
until you've got flowers  
peeping through the cage  
of your repentant ribs,  
bright against the white,  
bursting wide clenched jaw,  
spilling forth secrets.

And on your truth-telling breath—  
the slightest hint of jasmine.

*\*Originally appeared in Arroyo Literary Review*