

New Poetry from Lauren Davis: “The Flowers You Brought Back From Italy”



FACES TUMBLING DOWNWARD / *image by Amalie Flynn*

Each time I open my notebook the pages stick.
Because I've forgotten.

And onto the ground
they fall:
royal purple flowers fall
out,
emerald stemmed, blue veined,
life
from the coast of Italy.

You pulled them from the earth,
pinched their feet
with your fingertips,

you breathed into the sea

and thought of the way my hair
swayed between my shoulders,
while you once walked behind me
near an American riverside,
flowers sway in the field
the same way.

You placed the poppies then
into the spine of your bible
you pressed it,
punched the face
and rubbed the back
onto the ground
to release water
into sacred words
you pressed,
wanting me there
and you breathed into the sea.

Yesterday, you stood in the kitchen
of your new house
while the songbirds in the yard
called *good morning*,
you opened your bible
and pulled the flowers up
by the end of their stems
like tails,
their faces
tumbling downward

and I opened myself / my notebook
and tossed the flowers into

my spine / my book's spine

and there
I closed it
and pressed it into the granite
underneath
to press
wanting to stay there with you
out.

You asked me:
when again do you leave?
Two weeks.

Now,
one-thousand miles away
the pages stick
each time I open my notebook

and onto the ground they
fall,

and I remember how
you must have looked
collecting purple poppies
by the sea of Italy.

Our modern lives,
so set apart,
both
by miles
and unsteadiness.