



Marta Croll-Baehre

San Joaquin

I trace green graphics onto your hipbones –
in miniature circles of burnished gold
blue, blue – palms crookedly pinned onto the stiff, shanty carpeting
skeleton teeth streaked with small magnets, waterless seeds

pinned on my chest like blue devil's weeds –
not laid aside in the melting braes – you pinch
their roots with grass stained fingertips –
your nails embedded in my porous framework

I was sick when you stood away – bedding fiddleheads
in Panama, ground sunk back into the black Fresco soil
where you left my body to atrophy
in Panama, que está poco a poco me mata

where your red fingers had pushed up inside my ribs –
molested my brawny rabbit lungs – i quería morir
now they skulk with centipede tongues and sere moths
chewing through the fortress of Fresno

pray, pray – that you pierce my skeletal remnants
of insignificance entombed below the red poppy beds
that I will not have to wear away
in the blaring sun of San Joaquin Valley –