Flying to Phoenix

Christine Bird

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Flying to Phoenix
Christine Bird

Locking the door on winter,
I journey pale,
hoping my arrival will coincide with yours.
Below me mountains wrap the valley
like a mother's arms.

At cruising speed,
I consider ratios: arc and length, weight and drag,
the physics of flight. Miracles
lost in clouds of everyday indifference—
A pilot's voice interrupts my thoughts warning of turbulence.
I try to imagine him in the dim cockpit
carefully gauging this passage.
I try to imagine you.

Grounded,
I pass from airport into desert sun
and blink until my eyes catch up
to emerald cuts of winter grass,
glossy oranges
half hidden in thick, citrus leaves,
bright as parrots.
Spring.

I am here to study you,
child of my child,
to remember the substance of first hours,
to hold the sweet weight of your smallness,
to see me in your eyes
unfocused.

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