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Mission

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Mission

BY

REGINA BECHTLE, S.C.

Always the ones in need,
the door knocking at night,
always the call from far away:
“Send us women with strong hearts
and searching eyes.
Soon.”

More always went
than could be spared,
pulses of fire,
magnets of light,
into grimy streets,
rank caves,
stark sheds,
stern prairies,
swelling fields,
blinding trails,
pouring their love like sweat,
wearing the stench of the poor.

They served themselves up
like food, like bread.

What love they had! They spent it,
threw it into the wild wind,
let their seeds be eaten alive
or ground into furrows
of stone and soot.

We who follow, decades later,
find seeds sprouted, rooted,
flowers of light
to wave in the wind.
We bless those green spikes
that cracked the sidewalks,
bless roots tight and twined,
bless the stubborn love

that linked the cobbled lives and streets,
that holds them still,
from the underside —
sturdy legacy.