SARAH BURKE

Dear Desert

I expected a wasteland of dead rock
whittled to dust. Instead I found you
alive, brimming with purple
wisps of lupine, cactus tips flaming
like candles and thought Fuck you.
All you needed to offer up a flower
was a white sheet of sand,
a seed, a thimble of rain. Fuck
every failure, every trail of blood
I thought might lead to a daughter,
a son. Under your sky I poured whiskey
into my cider, devoured raw fish,
smoked meat, soft cheese, all the fruits
I wanted so badly to be forbidden.