

LEE MACKENZIE

The Tick

I spent a month
trapping beetles
on hills of heather.

In daily brown sweat,
I crushed that heather,
spat at midges near my lips,
pushed decades' moss
down under foot, cut out
rude mouths made malleable
like water dammed. I laid out
my traps until the tick attached.

I'd find her in the shower later,
braving waves of soap growing
as wet minutes passed.

Dressing, I avoided breaking her
carcass. Gingered clothes
round her spot. Her head
in my bloodstream, drinking.

Cut short, she'd vomit
vein routes lead to my heart.
Now, she's growing again,
spilling ink: life's blot.

I will remove her
to avoid bloody troubles—
untie our knot.

I'll watch under the microscope,
her crabby head
screaming beneath a fiddle of legs,
swiping soundless.

I leave it on the slide,
move to the door
until it's a mere dot,
and walk away.

JACK WARREN

Sonnet for J.

When I think of
of the taciturn, his
vehement in his
death or sovereign
into the darkness
instead that Milton
who learned his
play the organ a

Then I imagine
in his last days,
histrionic Latin,
or cursing his p
softly with a tire
burning—as ch