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Amaranth

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Amaranth · Laurie Sheck

Imagine it,
the Amaranth is said to be undying,
its petals like pearls
harboring the pink light
of sunsets.
It is forgiveness.
It is the peasant who refuses
to abdicate
his small patch of land.
Someone sad
must have invented it,
perhaps as he watched
thick flocks of sparrows
fleeing from winter,
and felt the hands of famine
cradling his home.
So he imagined its leaves
tender as butterflies,
and its stubborn center
domestic as hairpins.
In wind, it would rustle
like pages of a book
treasured since childhood,
“Far off and long ago,”
it might begin, and end,
“Although the oldest daughter
died as a child
in a cold, dark tower,
the others had many children
and lived for a long time
through many seasons
and through many
changes of heart.”