Boll Weevil Ode

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You wouldn’t deserve one either, pal,
if this scorched morning of sunflowers
twenty feet high didn’t mean
extinction—if immortal glory
didn’t require oblivion on the scale of Russian
tsars, the tears of at least one librarian
shelving old elegies in the soul.
But it does. So what the hell
youginhouseCaligula,yousex-nosed
Grendel raping the white cups
of great and sometime gods. World’s
Smallest Carpetbagger, Rio Grande Rider,
Glutton of the Mississippi Delta.
Your mouth full of cotton
that softly spoke oblivion to so many
hardened lives will soon exist
only in the Boll Weevil Blues
of the great Charlie Patton.
You, the winged Troy in destroyed,
the Black Ciudad of Scoured Throats.
Crossing Centerville, Texas today,
my radio says the cropdusters
have your number.
A twenty-first century hemlock
savvy enough to breech your bloody
cockpit and fry the Red Baron
blitzkrieging through your genes,
toxic enough to wind your trillion
music boxes into Darwin’s rotten teeth.
Oh I spread your onyx exoskeletons
unbolted, unhinged, unsprung—
over the barbwire fields of praise
and sing your epitaph:
You knew a good thing when you'd found it.  
You wore down horrible teeth  
against the fibrous heart of life  
and spent a thousand winters  
weaving the old epic in your stomach.  
Blind hunger was your innocence.  
You bested a century of science  
and found glory in a bard's gut strings.