

# First Argument

An ache like a seed  
caught in teeth, acrid after-  
taste of unripe fruit;

astonishment. *That  
is not what I meant.* Sudden  
drop of a gaze, new  
heaviness. *Where are  
you going?* Strange entrapment  
within skin, like the tree-  
gum that had to be  
cut from Eve's hair. *I  
just didn't hear you.*

The twitch of a brow.  
She remembers the bitterness  
of a beetle crunched  
accidentally, hidden in the spinach;  
she remembers  
the first rasp of ivy rash on the wrist.

*Look at me  
when I'm talking.* Heart pounding  
in her ears. A shoulder

shrugs away from a hand. Skin  
is not just for pleasure; it  
can chafe. She is learning

what a weed is,  
and what it does.

—Darlene Young

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