

PAMPHLETS

It's always sparkling, wet, the cobblestone trailing
around downtown, and in my memories it's always
night, during a season that can only be described

a half summer, because autumn doesn't hold weight
here. Rain and blue clouds against blue sky, street
lamps, heat rising, breath. We walk to the top of Lion's

Bridge just to see the blinking lights reflected in the bay,
to see what it's like to have something beneath us.
Late sailboats and manatees drift in the salt bath,

moonlight morphs their gray calm heads into floating
Spanish bodies lost to St. Augustine's namesake: *matanzas*.
The breeze isn't enough to chill to the veins, but listen

for Fate's whispers, *warnings always come too late*.
The townspeople brag because they have the oldest haunted
places in America, complete with splintering steel bars

and walls, sharp palm fronds, blue orbs. Once, I was walking
through all the cemeteries around town, while skipping over Tolomato
tribe plinths, a red orb drifted. A dandelion seed to my mouth,

it floated bitterly and cold in my throat. Early in the morning
the cobblestone begins to dry and the ghosts come out, grasp
on to sunbeams. They pass out pamphlets about their macabre

parables of dying, most of the tales conclude: *tell your
heart to be cautious of a lover trying to tame you* in that
flowing quill-on-parchment script, but no one's listening

to the omens in St. Augustine anymore. Late at night, try
to test an orange wrapped in magnolia leaves for honesty
over Mai Tai's and it will roll right into the ocean,

it just doesn't care for light, nothing does, except maybe
the jellyfish jumping red tide to stick in the sand... even they
aren't alive, and like the ghosts, don't have tongues to speak.