**Sunflowers Bloom in December**

Mistee St. Clair

When the sunflowers bloom in December,

pomegranates split and hang from branches like stars.

The season is late, the figs have dried and fallen to dirt.

My grandmother now lives here like she belongs,

her face darkened and ripe.

My grandmother lives here as if she belongs,

a bougainvillea in full bloom.

Her thickened fingers point,

her voice speaking the language of the land

in the naming of things,

by now the language familiar

and swelling with adoration:

javelina, ocotillo, kumquat,

pinacate. She may say one word-

but it may have many meanings.

Like when we say “die,” we mean

*let me lie under this sun and ask for entrance.*

When the day goes dark,

I understand, grandmother, this is the place.

The stars explode in the body and still.

In the desert, everything dies.

Eventually, we find their black shells

and remember life’s brilliance.

We pocket the shells and say their names.