

## **A Small Death**

We've been dying from the moment  
we came together, peeled; bodies curved

like two damselflies connected head-  
to-tail to form the shape of a heart.

As our middles inch together and merge,  
flesh fills in gaps between skin surfaces,

suppressing the passage of light. Pressed flat,  
our abdomens create their own moist

darkness. Blind arms like wing-flutters,  
stroke the air warm. You, a water lily stem,

rooted in rusty mud, break the tension  
in the water's surface to claim your freedom.

I scale your stem—my colorful ascent;  
but there's no freedom in the rise to love,

only freedom in letting go and falling.  
We are condemned to impermanence

like rainbows clinging to dew-soaked,  
membranous wings, every time a small death.

Samantha Lê