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Stick/Poke

We realize the pot of ink is dry
after we sterilize the needle.

I want her to stamp me permanent
with the same dots she pressed above
her knuckles. I want an excuse for her fingers
to hold mine while she teases the skin,
a tempered science of hot pin and black smudge.
No name for love yet, just a sense the heart
she has curled into her inner elbow is a beat
I can feel, a visible root of blood and muscle
brought to life. My first tattoo took five minutes,
drawn from a bench in a town that grew me:
to the stars through rugged ways. Soon she'll leave
for a boy she just met, but not before they show me
the birds they traced above their elbows,
still glistening. Still her mark won't leave me.
I tumble through blank sky. She can't see my heart.