

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

This poem won second place in the 2018
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sored by BYU Studies.