

Poke Salad

by Jasper Kennedy

I never learned how to pick it,
to crawl around in the dirt,
and you are too sick to show me,
to comb fingers through weeds,

to crawl around in the dirt
to find the first green in spring,
combing fingers through weeds,
the toxin, a sign of the times.

Find the first green in spring
boil it three times to purge
the toxin, a sign of the times,
like distillation in reverse.

Boil three times to purge,
a mother-daughter hand-me-down,
like distillation in reverse,
though no amount is safe,

a mother-daughter hand-me-down
I never learned
that no amount is safe,
and you cannot show me.