

Some Things I Know Without the Field Guide

We were arguing about poppy seedlings, lacy green bits of leaf and stem scattered over the bank of dirt.

Him, sure they were weeds; me, convinced I knew what I saw even without their orange skirts

flaring. Why did it matter so? Flowers are women's domain, you know, someone else offered later,

but in fact, my father was the one who taught me their names: lupine, yarrow in the fields;

crystal palace lobelia in pots and trailing in the yard, its name painted the same

deep blue as its blossoms, even now. Why would I part with such pieces of knowledge

willingly? Demure, defer says some unwritten guide. But why? Either way, the poppies

have nothing at stake, little flares, colors still hidden, still burning at the gate.

