

Still Life with Sacred Heart

by [Michael Shewmaker](#) in the [April 2024](#) issue

You haven't started sketching  
but you've arranged the scene:

a broken loaf, a glass of noir,  
the pomegranate, bruised,  
crowned with a blackberry vine.

Tomorrow, we celebrate  
another year together.

*Lord, have mercy on us,  
you say. Should we save the seeds?  
For the champagne?*

The moon stalls in the glass  
behind you. You turn  
the fruit to catch its light—

rearrange the flowering vine.  
Soon, you'll draw its likeness.

*Where is the flame?* I ask.  
You pause above the heart,  
pour a little more wine.

*Oh, it's there—you say,  
offering me your hands:*

Pricked by the vine,  
they blush with hives.  
*Even my palms are burning.*