

Saguaros

By Javier Zamora

It was dusk for kilometers and bats in the lavender sky,

like spiders when a fly is caught, began to appear.
And there, not the promised land, but barbwire and barbwire

with nothing growing under it. I tried to fly that dusk
after a bat said *la sangre del saguaro nos seduce*. Sometimes

I wake and my throat is dry, so I drive to botanical gardens
to search for red fruit clutched to saguaros, the ones at dusk

I threw rocks at for the sake of slashing hunger.
But I never find them here. These bats say *speak English only*.

Sometimes in my car, that viscous red syrup
clings to my throat, and it's a tender seed toward my survival:

I also scraped needles first, then carved those tall torsos
for water, then spotlights drove me and thirty others dashing

into palos verdes, green-striped trucks surrounded us,
our empty bottles rattled and our breath spoke with rust.

When the trucks left, a cold cell swallowed us.

Source: *Poetry* (January 2016)